

Madam President,

The European Commission on behalf of the European Community and its Member States has the pleasure to introduce the 2006 publication on the contributions of the EU (Member States and European Community) to mine actions in the world available at the back of the room.

I would like to call your attention to page 6 and 7 of this publication presenting two political messages conveyed to this Assembly by Mrs. Paula Lehtomaeki, the Finnish Minister for Foreign Trade and Development and by Mrs. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the European Commissioner responsible for external relations. Both messages stress determination and continuity of the European institutions in pursuing the objectives of the MBT and the fight against armed violence and legacies of war.

The data contained in the brochure reflects - to the best of our knowledge - the support provided under 2005 budgets, but it also mentions a few projects funded under 2004 EC budget which had not been communicated in the previous publication.

The current publication gives the most comprehensive picture of the assistance provided globally to beneficiary countries around the world. The presentation of the assistance follows the methodology adopted by the OECD: the bilateral contribution by EU Member States is complemented by the assistance channeled through the European Community budget and/or the European Development Fund, both referred to by the acronym EC. Thus the bilateral contribution by Member States cannot be considered in isolation from their contribution to the above mentioned budget and fund. In this regard this brochure does not use the breakdown of net aid per capita, as this is misleading.

In this context we would like to point at the fact that the Landmine Monitor doesn't rightly reflect EC and MS commitments. On the one hand the break down per capita severely under represents the overall efforts made by MS and their citizens who are the EU taxpayers and the EU, both bilaterally and within the EC budget.

On the other hand information about EC activities is not complete. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to reiterate that the total EU contribution in 2005 amounted to 157 Million € which makes the EU the first world-wide contributor in mine-action.

We value the work of the Landmine Monitor, which we have substantially supported in the past. We and the incoming EU Presidency 2007 look forward to continue to work with the Landmine Monitor, in full confidence in its efforts to provide comprehensive and accurate data.

Check against delivery.