



Amsterdam, 5 December 2016

Ladies and gentlemen

My name is Bas Pellemans, Director of the Military Aviation Authority in the Netherlands.

It is my honour to welcome you again in The Netherlands and to do this on behalf of your co-host, mr. Rob Huyser from the Ministry of Transport and Environment, who I will introduce shortly.

I should say welcome you again in The Netherlands, especially in Amsterdam, where we had in the year 2000 the international conference with many of you participating as well. A smaller group attended the kick-off meeting of the WBA Global Action Plan in 2013 in the Keukenhof flower park.

I like to first of all extend my great appreciation to the management and staff of the Navy Complex and especially sailor Rifka Brand, for her willingness and flexibility to manage our very last minute request to host the Bird-Wildlife Strike Prevention Conference.

Unfortunately, we can only offer you a warm welcome but not the no doubt higher temperatures you were all anticipating for when planning your trip to the Sultanate of Oman.

Why the interest and involvement of the military, you might ask?

That is all about operations and safety. We as the military are responsible to execute the Security and Defence tasks as directed by our governments. The people and equipment we use are scarce, especially with the large implemented reductions, they are expensive and above all, valuable, and losing either of them results in the inability to adequately execute our tasks. Obviously, single engine fighter aircraft and helicopters are most prone to bird strikes when operating at our airbases and whilst flying at low altitudes not higher than 45 meters.

Our policy as the military and attempts to reduce risks that stem from bird strikes originated quite some time ago, in the late 70's, when we first started using radars to observe bird activity and becoming even more focused and knowledgeable on bird activity on our airbases with the Robin radar as pilot project. As a result after some five years of testing, we have

very recently published a tender to acquire a total of 6 radars on all our airbases. At the same time, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol decided to deploy more bird detection radars as well.

The military is in the fortunate position that we are in a less complex environment and can predominantly organize ourselves.

The civil environment is obviously much more complex with many more stakeholders. We however, regard ourselves as one of the stakeholders and believe that national cooperation is key. After all, the situation with geese around Schiphol Airport could easily in any form, occur also around our military airbases.

As said, cooperation is key, even more in the international context. Geese and other birds migrate to and from our country, almost resembling military aircraft training and operating across borders on a daily basis.

To be able to effectively reduce the associated risks, it is imperative that we join forces, both civil and military stakeholders, and continue to seek high level support from our governments and Pan-European and world wide organisations.

To conclude, I am fully aware that this initiative is largely carried by the WBA team and it requires your participation to make this conference a success for which I am grateful.

At the same time it is actually becoming more and more challenging for the team to carry this initiative forward. I don't want to express irrational fears on the future of the WBA but what I sincerely hope is that the results from this conference speak for themselves, and that it gets the attention that it deserves and that the Pan-European and world wide institutions take this initiative on board realizing that we are facing a global challenge. Perhaps that the ICAO symposium on Wildlife Strike Prevention in May 2017 could be the right moment.

Dear captain van Eekeren, dear Rob, with this in mind, I would like to compliment you on your initiative and your perseverance and that of the members of the WBA-team, to name from Greece mr. Anastasios (Tasos) Anagnostopoulos, Dr. Nick Carter from the United States of America and LTC Henrique Oliveira from Brasil, who unfortunately could not attend this time and of course last but not least from The Netherlands, the biologist of the Military Aviation Authority, mr. Albert de Hoon.

I wish you all great success with this conference.

And now it is my pleasure to hand the floor to mr. Rob Huyser from the Ministry of Transport and Environment