

ICBL Overview on Stockpile Destruction
Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction
20 June 2011, Geneva Switzerland



Without any doubt, there is no one in this room that is pleased to still be discussing these four serious cases of non-compliance with the treaty. Belarus, Greece, and Turkey missed their stockpile destruction deadlines more than three years ago, and Ukraine one year ago.

We are pleased, however, to have just heard of positive developments in each country. Still, these states and their international partners can act with a greater sense of urgency, an urgency that should be expected after failing to meet a critical treaty deadline.

We are certain that with greater efforts, at least Greece and Turkey could have finished stockpile destruction by now, and Belarus and Ukraine, despite the complexity of their destruction requirements, could have been far closer to completion. We encourage each state to do all in its capacity to speed up the processes that will lead toward final stockpile destruction.

With respect to **Belarus**, we are very encouraged to hear that a contract has now been signed with funds from the European Commission. As we heard, the contract was granted in December 2011, and destruction is expected to be completed in 2013. Unfortunately six months after signing, the parties are still in the process of working on technical and administrative arrangements. It is important to know when actual destruction is expected to begin and more specifically when it is expected to end. Is there an end date on the contract? Is completion expected at the beginning of 2013 or the end?

We continue to be concerned about the situation in **Greece**. On the one hand, we were pleased to learn that the 480 mines that were missing from a shipment to Bulgaria were found in a Greek warehouse, and that this prompted Greece to conduct a review of all the stocks. We appreciate Greece's thoroughness and transparency on both of these points. It is a lesson for other States Parties to be vigilant and recognize that additional stockpiled mines could still exist undetected in their own military stores.

It also seems positive that the lawsuit that was holding up progress since last year is now over, and plans for destruction are again underway. On the other hand, Greece's plan to renew a contract with the contractor that won the lawsuit has some troubling aspects. The contract with the company in question, EAS, was cancelled last year because of a number of delays and other complications in getting the destruction done in an efficient and transparent manner. It would be useful to have more information about what steps Greece will take to ensure a different outcome this time. Greece just told us that the Army will be more involved, and earlier it said that the Ministry of Defense will take charge of packaging the mines and bringing them to the Bulgarian border. But we would like to suggest that government officials also conduct periodic inspections of the destruction. EAS should also provide regular reports on the number of mines received and destroyed so that the Greek and Bulgarian authorities will be alerted to any discrepancies in numbers in a timely manner.

We are also concerned about the timeframe Greece has planned for the destruction. A long six-month period is planned just to negotiate a new contract, and the current proposal is for 22 months for the destruction. We would like to strongly encourage Greece to require a much shorter timeframe in the contract. We understood that the original contract with EAS was for the destruction of approximately 1.6 million mines within 15 months, so it is unclear why with around 40% already destroyed it will take even longer.

Turkey is closest to finishing its obligations under Article 4 of the treaty. We were pleased to hear that the destruction of the final group of ADAM mines has already begun in Germany, and will be completed by the end of August. We look forward to celebrating the end of the destruction at that time. Until then, the mines remain under the jurisdiction of the government of Turkey, and it maintains a legal responsibility to ensure their final destruction. We hope Turkey will continue to provide updates on the status of destruction, including an announcement of the final destruction when it is completed so that we may all offer our congratulations.

Finally, the situation in Ukraine also seems to be taking much longer than expected. We have been hearing for a while that Ukraine has the capacity with its existing incinerator to destroy one million mines a year, but so far only around 150,000 PFM mines have been destroyed because of environmental concerns. We greatly appreciate Norway's partnership with Ukraine to upgrade the equipment so that it can expand capacity.

We are uncertain after listening to Ukraine's statement about the status of a second kiln. We understand that Ukraine will need a second kiln if it is to take less than another six years to finish destruction, but we are not clear what progress has been made in this regard. We strongly encourage Ukraine to work harder mobilize either the international or national funds needed to acquire and put into operation a second kiln.

In closing, we would like to state once again that it is clear none of these states are in willful violation of Article 4, and we take note of all the efforts they are making to carry forward their stockpile destruction. We would just like to stress the need to place a higher national priority on finishing such destruction in the shortest possible timeframe so we can put this long period of non-compliance behind us.

Thank you.