

Mine ban Convention Intersessional Meetings May 2012
Article 3 – mines retained for training
Statement by Norway

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Thank you, md Chair

It is timely for us to move the discussion on mines retained under article 3 from a theoretical level to a more practical one. In this relation I like to thank the ICBL for their presentation. We need to base this discussion on actual numbers of mines retained over time.

Norway welcomes the cooperation and transparency demonstrated by the States that have reported their numbers, in line with the spirit of the Cartagena Action Plan. We are however seriously concerned about those states that have chosen to retain mines but who have chosen not to share information with states parties on their numbers as well as their actual and planned use.

Why do we have continued concerns with mines retained under Article 3? Firstly, in our view, it's not necessary to keep live anti-personnel mines for training or research. There are a number of alternatives available that do not include the need for live anti-personnel mines. That humanitarian mine clearance operators and international forces keep track of the kinds of mines found in their areas of operation to better understand the risk factors in their areas, is a completely different issue than states retaining parts of their own stockpiles.

Secondly continued, long-term stockpiling of thousands of live antipersonnel mines is contrary to the prohibition on stockpiling, and as consequence, threaten one of the core provisions of the Convention. Currently the twenty States Parties with most mines retained are reported to have more than 120.000 live antipersonnel mines between them. As many of those states have reported little or insignificant use of those mines over several years, we have to ask ourselves for what purpose those mines are retained, and for how long do they plan to retain them.

The best way for those states to demonstrate that the retained mines are for the purposes described in Article 3 are, as a minimum, to respond to Actions 56 and 58 in the Cartagena Plan, and share with other states parties their plans as well as undertake serious reviews of the needs.

We also encourage all the states with mines retained to do this in time for the 3rd Review Conference, so that the numbers presented there will be significantly lower than they are this year.

As we stated on many occasions before, the minimum number necessary of mines retained could also be zero.

Thank you