

## Notes for ICRC Intervention on stockpile destruction

### Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction, Geneva, 27 May 2013

The ICRC would like to thank **Belarus, Greece, the Ukraine, Finland, Poland and Somalia** for their updates today.

Unfortunately, **Belarus** and **Greece** have now been non-compliant with their stockpile destruction obligations for more than five years, while **the Ukraine** has been non-compliant for almost three years. Specific circumstances have impeded compliance in each case, some of which have been out of their control. It is nonetheless important for the credibility of this Convention that efforts by these three States, as well by all States and organisations in a position to assist them, increase to ensure the rapid fulfilment of Article 4 obligations.

**Belarus** has announced today some progress towards the destruction of almost 3.3 million PFM mines. We regret, however, that destruction operations have not actually yet resumed and that Belarus has not yet announced an expected completion date in accordance with Action #9 of the Cartagena Action Plan. The ICRC appeals to Belarus and the European Commission to proceed with a greater sense of urgency to overcome all remaining obstacles and begin destruction operations. To this end, we encourage Belarus to fix a start-date for destruction and work solidly towards the destruction of most, if not all, of its stockpiled anti-personnel mines by the Third Review Conference in 2014.

In the case of **Greece**, the ICRC is pleased to see that since resolving the legal proceedings with the company contracted to ensure the destruction of Greece's stockpiled anti-personnel mines, concrete steps have been taken towards reinitiating destruction operations in Bulgaria. It is also pleasing that despite the current difficult economic environment in Greece, funds have been allocated to ensure stockpile destruction. On the other hand, as with Belarus, it is regrettable that destruction operations have not actually yet resumed and that Greece has not yet announced an expected completion date. We sincerely hope that the destruction of Greece's stockpile of 953,285 anti-personnel mines will be well underway by the 13MSP and that Greece will have fulfilled its stockpile destruction obligations by the Third Review Conference.

We thank the **Ukraine** for its very detailed presentation today. The Ukraine has the largest stockpile of anti-personnel mines among States Parties to this Convention. We commend the Ukraine for having finally commenced destruction of its PFM mines in March 2013, which we hope will now continue unabated for the next 3 years. We commend the Ukraine's efforts to find alternate means to ensure the rapid destruction of the other almost 3 million PFM mines, including through a second furnace and dismantling facility, and look forward to further details of these plans.

The ICRC hopes that the Ukraine's call to its donors for the necessary support to ensure the destruction of its stockpiled PFM mines at the earliest possible date will be heeded. It is nevertheless difficult to understand why the Ukraine has not yet managed to destroy its stockpile of 149,096 POM-2 mines, which we trust will be destroyed by the 13MSP.

Turning to newer States Parties, the ICRC wishes to congratulate **Finland** for its great progress in stockpile destruction. We note that since entry into force in July 2012, Finland has already destroyed over 220,000 anti-personnel mines and appears to be running well on track to destroy its remaining 800,000 plus anti-personnel mines by the end of 2015, and meet its Article 4 deadline ahead of time.

We also wish to recognise **Poland's** significant efforts with stockpile destruction, even prior to joining the Convention. We commend Poland for having reduced its previously substantial stockpile of anti-personnel mines to only 13,585 as of 31 December 2011. In light of progress to date, we are confident that Poland will also meet its Article 4 deadline ahead of time.

Finally, the ICRC acknowledges the efforts by **Somalia** to verify its stockpiles of anti-personnel mines and we look forward to its report as soon as possible on the outcomes of this process, in accordance with its reporting obligations under Article 7.