

Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

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MEETING REPORT

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DETAILED REPORT

Introduction

1. The Standing Committee of Experts on Stockpile Destruction (SCESD) established by the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction held its second meeting on May 22-23, 2000 at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Geneva .
2. At the first meeting of the SCESD held on December 9-10, 1999 , the meeting was tasked to identify areas of high priority for future consideration and action by the committee.
3. It was agreed at the said meeting that all States which have not submitted their reports under Article 7, are encouraged to do so as soon as possible.
4. The meeting also invited countries to share their experiences on the various aspects of stockpile destruction with the other participants during the second SCESD meeting.
5. More than 80 participants comprising governments, intergovernmental organizations, international organizations and non-governmental organizations participated in the deliberations of the SCESD and had an in-depth discussion and exchange of views on a broad range of issues concerning stockpile destruction.
6. During the two days meeting, the SCESD discussion was structured in four sessions moderated by four experts.

Session I – Stockpile Destruction As Preventive Mine Action

7. The session was moderated by Adrian Wilkinson, Mine Action Consultant, UNDP.
8. The meeting was informed that stockpile destruction is regarded as the fifth pillar of Mine Action.
9. As a matter of transparency, States Parties were reminded to make available the number of Anti-personnel Mines destroyed and also the number yet to be destroyed.
10. France presented to the meeting with a detailed information regarding its process of stockpile destruction. In this regard, the meeting was informed that France destroyed its last Anti-personnel Mines in December 1999.
11. Three salient points were mentioned as being important requirements in the stockpile destruction undertaken by France . A will of transparency is necessary to provide all actors with the useful items of information concerning the destruction of stockpiles. On the issue of security, measures had to be taken so as to ensure the security during the destruction process. Finally, the destruction was carried out without causing any damage to the environment.

12. The meeting acknowledged the need to have a better and closer co-ordination between the donors and recipients in the context of funding and providing the necessary financial assistance.
13. In addition, the meeting also discussed and explored the possibility of having additional reporting mechanism and would recommend that the issue be further considered by the Second Meeting of States Parties.

Session II – Co-operation Structures For Stockpile Destruction.

14. The session was conducted under the guidance of Ret. Gen. Gordon Reay, Advisor, Mine Action Team, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada.
15. The meeting considered various bilateral, multilateral and regional approaches as possible elements of co-operative structure to stockpile destruction.
16. The joint efforts and initiative between Canada and Ukraine was cited as a useful example of bilateral co-operation while the Partnership For Peace (PFP) program was singled out as an example of a multilateral initiative involving NATO members and 26 partner countries. The PFP Trust Fund is used for financing the stockpile destruction activities.
17. The participants was told by the representative from NATO that NATO prefers to be involved only in value added activities and they do not wish to duplicate the activities undertaken by others. In this respect, NATO is not involved in any victim assistance activities.
18. The meeting was further informed that NATO's Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA), which deals with stockpile destruction, follows strict guidelines such as prohibiting open detonation or burning in line with EU's guidelines.
19. Concerning PFP training centres, the representative from NATO pointed out that the centres can benefit both NATO's allies and their partners.
20. In general, Japan agreed to the idea of having joint co-operation in stockpile destruction such as the one initiated by Canada and Ukraine. Japan is a donor but it is still uncertain about setting its priorities between mine clearance and stockpile destruction.
21. Japan was hesitant about extending financial assistance to non-State Parties. It is of the view that a country willing the assistance would rather become a State Party.
22. Meanwhile, Australia informed the meeting that it has sent its defense personnel to Peru as a form of joint co-operation between the two countries. The personnel were sent to Peru with the objective to provide advice and ascertain the suitability of the techniques and methods used in Peru's stockpile destruction.
23. A brief presentation was made by Mr. Victor Popov of the Russian Federation on the issue of PFM mines which create a real worries in the countries of the former Soviet Union. The meeting was further informed that this type of mine was produced and used only in the former Soviet Union. 5,000,000 of such mines are estimated to be in the stockpiles of the Russian Federation. The members of the SCE were informed that the applicability of most of the PFM mines in Russia expired and leakage of their chemical component cause a serious environmental problem.

Session III - Case Studies

24. The following issues were proposed for consideration at this session: merits and constraints of various methods of destruction as experienced by individual countries; financial, technical, social and environmental considerations; planning and implementation of the process leading up to the actual destruction of stockpiles; engaging the media and the public at large in the process of stockpile destruction.
25. Keynote speaker and moderator of the this session was Patrick Blagden, Technical Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, who presented a proposal for a comparative table on stockpile destruction evaluation and noted that the case studies have a potential for identifying successful methods, planning tools and contact points.
26. A detailed account of the South African perspective on stockpile destruction was presented. South Africa decided to retain 10,000 APM's for the development of effective

demining techniques and for training its training requirements. While considering all elements of stockpile destruction (dismantling, burning and controlled detonation), transparency and verification aspect were among the highest priorities taken into account.

27. Albania provided its case study presentation on the stockpile destruction process. The country has faced and faces UXO problems, Kosovo crisis, Yugoslav army border attacks, etc. Albanian Mine Action Committee was created to supervise the implementation of the Ottawa Convention. Albania declared 1.6 mil. of APM 's in its initial Article 7 declaration. Estimated cost of stockpile destruction (detonation) is about 35 cents per mine.
28. Thailand has also presented a case study on its stockpile destruction. The country already destroyed 10,000 APM 's out of total 400,000 APM 's stockpiled and is expected to destroy about 400,000 APM 's within two years period at estimated costs 1 USD per mine. Destruction (detonation and burning) is under strict environmental control. Stockpile destruction process is facing budgetary restraints. 15,600 APM 's are planned to be retained, but the number can be reduced.
29. Japan also made a presentation of its case study on the experiences drawn from its destruction of APM stockpiles. About one million APMs would be destroyed by February 2003 at estimated cost 12 USD/mine. Controlled detonation is used for the models 67, 63, M3 and burning for the model 80. Environmental and social aspects, transparency and PR play a vital role in the destruction process realised both by the government and private sector. In the current financial year Japan expects to spend 8 mil USD for national stockpile destruction.
30. Italy informed about ongoing stockpile destruction up to 30 April this year. About 6,5 million APMs (mine models AUPS, MAUS, MK2, VAR40, PMC, V, VALMARA 69, detonator types OTO, M41) are still to be destroyed at that time. Destruction will be completed by November 2002. Based on updated data, the cost of stockpile destruction is 1.2 USD per mine so far. Applied technology for decomposition is available for interested countries and invitation for visit of destruction site was presented to all interested parties. Military plants as well as private industry take part at the APM destruction.
31. Slovakia in its presentation updated informations on the process of stockpile destruction. Out of total 180,000 stockpiled APM 's more than 130,000 APM 's have been already destroyed. Based on updated data the cost of stockpile destruction (dismantling) is 3.5 USD per mine so far. Stockpile destruction should be completed before the Second Meeting of State Parties in Geneva this year.
32. Chilean NGO 's representative reported slow but progress in Ottawa process implementation in his country. There is about 22.000 APMs stockpiled in Chile.
33. Belarus informed about recent seminar on landmines held in Minsk. Country is neither signatory to the Ottawa Convention, nor ratified Amended Protocol II of CCW, nevertheless it reported some implementation measures. At the rough estimate, 4 to 5 mil APM 's are stockpiled in Belarus out of which 1,7 million of expired PFMs are environmentally very dangerous. Due to the difficult economic and financial situation, the country is not in a position to destroy them without international assistance.
34. Bulgaria informed that stockpile destruction process should be completed by the end of this year. Out of total 800,000 APM 's estimated 100,000 have been already destroyed. The destruction is mostly realised by industry. On 22 March 2000 Bulgaria and Turkey signed a bilateral agreement on landmines.
35. Honduras presented information on its stockpile destruction program, that started back in 1995. The destruction method used by this country is detonation. It was noted that OAS plays important role in monitoring the destruction process. Out of 10,592 currently stockpiled APMs Honduras plans to retain 3,508 mines for training purposes. Destruction is planed to be finished by the end of this year under the condition of expected foreign assistance.
36. Nicaragua made also a presentation on stockpile destruction controlled by the National Demining Commission. A ceremony at the destruction and issue of certification were identified as useful approach for transparency and confidence building. Wide international assistance was reported: OAS, Program for Demining of Central America, etc.
37. Jordan also provided information on its stockpile destruction program. The country already destroyed 20,552 APM 's out of total 92,420 APM 's (models M14, M35)

stockpiled. The method used is open burning in desert. Destruction should be completed by the end of 2001, at estimated costs 1 USD per mine. A need for financial assistance was presented.

Session IV - The way ahead

38. The following issues were proposed for discussion: reporting, monitoring and compliance concerns; need for accounting and certification procedures; assessing overall progress with regard to stockpile destruction, report on global stockpiles and progress in their destruction; compilation of databases on donors, recipients, needs, methods, options, companies, experts; possible mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating Article 7 reports; possible mechanisms for engaging non-States Parties in reduction of their stockpiles.
39. Keynote speaker and moderator of this session was Stephen Goose (Human Rights Watch, USA), who identified following items for discussion: website database, questionnaire for needs/offers, monitoring and verification, accounting and certification procedures, progress report on Article 7 elements, specific recommendations for bilateral and multilateral approaches, advocacy and building political will for stockpile destruction, more proactive approach of States, national commissions for stockpile destruction, need to engage non-State Parties, „ICBL issues" (foreign stockpiles, reporting on Claymore stockpiles and reporting on AVM with AHD. During the discussion all these proposals were discussed and following elements summarise the discussion.
40. Website related to stockpile destruction should be prepared by UNMAS and Canada by September this year. Countries were encouraged to contribute to the questionnaire presented by Canada in this regard. UNDP guidelines will be available on the web as well.
41. With respect to monitoring and verification requirements a number of presentations have already established a good example that should be sustained.
42. With regard to a complementary database to the Article 7 reports the meeting recommended to the co-chair, in co-operation with interested parties, to work on a website questionnaire that would help to collect information on needs and assistance offers expressed by non-State Parties.
43. The co-chair also agreed - after consultations with interested parties - to come with a specific language on recommendations concerning bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for stockpile destruction.
44. It was acknowledged that case studies are useful tool for maintaining political enthusiasm and that a standardised format for the case study presentations could be identified from the case studies which have been presented up to date. National commissions for demining were discussed as useful tool for helping the progress in stockpile destruction.
45. The Committee agreed that at the Second Meeting of the State Parties of the Ottawa Convention the urgency and importance of the stockpile destruction should be reaffirmed.

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<http://www.apminebanconvention.org/intersessional-work-programme/march-may-2000/stockpile-destruction/meeting-report/>