

Statement of Mr. Vitalie RUSU,  
Head of the Disarmament and Arms Control Section  
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova at Meeting of the Intersessional  
Standing Committees, Geneva, February 3-7 2003

Mr. Co-Chairs,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege and a pleasure for me to brief you on the stage of implementation in the Republic of Moldova, as State Party, of the Ottawa Convention on Prohibition of the Antipersonnel Mines.

From the very beginning the Ottawa Convention was ratified by the Republic of Moldova on 8 September 2000, we started to fulfil its provisions earlier. One of the remarkable achievements of the National Army of the Republic of Moldova in this field was the successful completing, in accordance with Article 5 of Convention, of the mines-clearance operation. Moldovan sappers cleared, in 2000, the last remaining 85 hectares of arable soils.

Moldova has cosponsored and voted, on 29 November 2001, for United Nations General Assembly Resolution 56/24 M in support of the Mine Ban Treaty.

The Republic of Moldova has never produced or purchased antipersonnel mines. All the mines, over 12121, were inherited from the Former Soviet Army. As I had mentioned in the framework of Fourth Meeting of the State Parties, last September, Government of the Republic of Moldova started, in 2002, the destruction of these stocks of mines. Today, I have the honour to inform you that in accordance with Article 4 of the Ottawa Convention, Republic of Moldova finished on 26 November 2002 the destruction of all stockpiles of antipersonnel that it had possessed. In this context, I would like to express our gratitude to the Governments of Holland and Switzerland which are provided the necessary financial assistance in the framework of relevant NAMSA project.

At the same time, I would like to inform you that the authority of Republic of Moldova does not have any information concerning antipersonnel land mines belongings to the Russian forces that are presently deploying in the transnistrean region of country, currently being controlled by anti-constitutional regime of Tiraspol.

In this respect, I would like to remind that in accordance with the relevant documents of the OSCE Istanbul Summit, 1999, and OSCE Porto Ministerial Council, December 2002, the Russian Federation undertook a commitment to complete the withdrawal of its military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova by 31 December 2003.

We are firmly convinced that through provided necessary political will and efforts, from all parties, the common goals will be achieved.

I would like to assure that Republic of Moldova will continue to support the efforts of the international community in the process of disarmament and arms control, particularly, in the full implementation of the Ottawa Convention.

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair.