

MR CO-CHAIRS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

ON BEHALF OF THE OTHER PAST CO-CHAIR, MR. KAROL MISTRIK OF SLOVAKIA, ALLOW ME TO THANK BOTH CO-CHAIRS FOR GIVING US THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE A SNAPSHOT OF THE WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION LAST YEAR. I INTEND TO BRIEFLY PROVIDE YOU AN OVERVIEW OF THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION FOR THE PERIOD 2000-2001.

THE SC CARRIED OUT ITS TASKS BASED ON THE MANDATE GIVEN BY THE 2ND MEETING OF STATES PARTIES. IN PERFORMING ITS WORK, THE SC WAS GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLES OUTLINED IN THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION PLAN ADOPTED AT THE 2ND MEETING OF STATES PARTIES NAMELY:

- (1) PROVIDING ASSISTANCE FOR STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION,
- (2) IMPROVING THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION,
- (3) AND DESTROYING MINES IN AN EFFICIENT AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANNER.

DURING THE SC MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2000 AND MAY 2001, THE SC KEPT REMINDING STATES PARTIES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MEETING THE FOUR YEAR DEADLINE AS STIPULATED IN ARTICLE 4 OF THE CONVENTION. THE CO-CHAIRS WARNED STATES PARTIES NOT TO TAKE THE MATTER LIGHTLY AS THIS IS A LEGAL OBLIGATION UNDER THE TREATY.

THE NEED TO PROVIDE CONTINUOUS FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, BOTH AT BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL LEVELS WAS DISCUSSED AT GREAT LENGTH BY THE SC. THE SC ALSO EMPHASISED THE NEED TO IDENTIFY SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO ASSIST STATES WITH STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION PROGRAMS ALONG WITH APPROPRIATE MECHANISMS TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER THIS ASSISTANCE.

ANOTHER ACHIEVEMENT WORTH MENTIONING HERE WAS THE RECOGNITION BY THE SC WITH REGARD TO THE USEFULNESS OF REGIONAL APPROACH AS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL TO EXPEDITE STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION. THE 'MANAGUA CHALLENGE' WAS CONSTANTLY CITED AS THE BEST EXAMPLE ON HOW REGIONAL APPROACH COULD BE BEST USED AS A MEAN TO ACCELERATE STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION.

MANY PARTICIPANTS UNDERScoreD THE IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNMENTS TO HAVE POLITICAL WILL AND COMMITMENT IN ADDRESSING THE STOCKPILE ISSUE. MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL WILL WAS CONSIDERED AS MORE DIFFICULT THAN THE TECHNICAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION PROCESS.

AS IN THE PAST, DURING BOTH SC MEETINGS, DELEGATIONS UPDATED THE SC ON THE STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION PROGRESS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES. THE SC MEETINGS MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, WERE VERY 'ENTERTAINING' AND CERTAINLY NOT A DULL MEETING SIMPLY BECAUSE WE

WERE `ENTERTAINED` WITH NUMEROUS EXCELLENT AND HIGH QUALITY VIDEO PRESENTATIONS AND DOCUMENTARIES BY STATES PARTIES ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION.I AM SURE ALL OF YOU WILL AGREE WITH ME.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE SC WERE ALSO URGED TO MAKE OPTIMUM USE OF THE STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION DATABASES ESTABLISHED.IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THESE DATABASES BE FULLY UTILISED BY GOVERNMENTS, EXPERTS AND COMPANIES.

THE SC ALSO STRESSED THE NEED FOR THE PROCESS OF STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION TO BE CONDUCTED IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANNER ESPECIALLY CONCERNING CERTAIN TYPES OF ANTI PERSONNEL MINES WHICH DETONATION CAN HAVE SIDE EFFECTS SUCH AS THE PFM 1 MINE.

VARIOUS CASE STUDIES WERE ALSO PRESENTED AT BOTH SC MEETINGS AND THE SC FOUND THEM VERY USEFUL AND RELEVANT SO AS TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUES AND PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION PROGRAMS.

WHILE SERVING AS CO-CHAIRS OF THE SC,WE WERE ALSO PLEASED TO SEE THE HOLDING OF MANY STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION SENINARS AND COURSES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD NOTABLY THE REGIONAL SEMINAR IN BUENOS AIRES IN DECEMBER 2000, PFM 1 SEMINAR IN BUDAPEST, AND THE BAMAKO WORKSHOP, BOTH IN FEBRUARY 2001, THE STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT COURSE IN SWITZERLAND IN JUNE 2001 AND THE REGIONAL SEMINAR IN MALAYSIA IN AUGUST 2001.

IN SHORT, ALL THE ABOVE EFFORTS HAVE PRODUCED ONE IMPORTANT RESULT WHICH MATTERS MOST,THAT IS TODAY,WE HAVE REGISTERED ENCOURAGING PROGRESS ON THE ISSUE OF STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION WORLDWIDE AND MORE COUNTRIES HAD COMPLETED THEIR STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION THUS FULFILING THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE TREATY.PERHAPS, THIS IS THE MOST VISIBLE BUT MEANINGFUL RESULTS THAT CAN BE OFFERED BY THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE SC AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE PRESENT CO-CHAIRS COULD SPUR AND INSPIRE OTHER STATES PARTIES TO DESTROY THEIR STOCKPILES WELL AHEAD BEFORE THEIR RESPECTIVE DEADLINES.

MR CO-CHAIRS,

HAVING HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS CO-CHAIRS, IT WAS DEFINITELY A REWARDING EXPERIENCE FOR BOTH KAROL AND MYSELF AND INTERESTING ENOUGH, WE REALISED LATER, IT WAS DURING THE CO-CHAIRMANSHIP OF SLOVAKIA AND MALAYSIA, THAT BOTH COUNTRIES COMPLETED THEIR STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION.

TO BOTH THE CO-CHAIRS, CROATIA AND AUSTRALIA AND TIHE TWO CO-RAPPORTEURS, ROMANIA AND SWITZERLAND, I WISH YOU GOOD LUCK.

THANK YOU.