

CANADIAN PRESENTATION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE GENERAL STATUS AND OPERATION OF THE CONVENTION

13 JUNE 2005

ARTICLE THREE ACTION ITEM 54

Canada strongly supports Action Item 54 calling on States Parties that have retained mines under the terms of Article 3, to regularly report on the use of these mines in their annual Article 7 report. Reporting usage is important for a number of reasons and, at least two spring immediately to mind. Firstly and obviously, for transparency reasons, including that of demonstrating what the country is doing in the fields of technology, research and development and mine clearance. Secondly, and arguably as importantly, it provides an annual opportunity for any State Party to internally review the status and requirement for holdings permitted by Article 3.

Canada has retained the right to keep up to 2000 mines to be used for training in mine detection, mine clearance or mine destruction techniques. This quantity fits well within the often heralded proposal of “hundreds or thousands and not tens of thousands”. Non militarily significant holdings of this number will ensure that there are a sufficient number for testing in the field of mine detection, protection and clearance and includes sufficient mines for training in mine clearance and mine awareness in preparation for peace support operations.

Canada has reported the number of mines used every year since 2000; to this point some 206 mines. It should also be noted that our 2002 report included the acquisition of 290 mines for the purposes permitted under the terms of Article 3.

Canada acquired 180 M-14 mines because they represent a typical small blast mine with minimum metal content. In detection research and training it is important to work with such a target as it represents a very difficult mine to detect, and there are a considerable number of this type of mine in many mine-affected countries. The M-14 was also essential for collaborative research in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) undertaken by the Canada.

8 PMR-2A were acquired because they are found in many similar forms in many mine-affected countries. This small quantity was procured primarily for the testing and evaluation of Personal Protective Equipment. The fragment velocity and size distribution from this mine is quite different from the stock of mines originally retained for research, development and training purposes. Given the large numbers of this type of mine found in mine-affected countries, it is important that the protective equipment being developed is tested against such a threat.

Finally 102 PMA-2 were acquired because they too represent a difficult target for detection and using them ensures that detection systems under development are tested against a challenging target. If a detection system works against these mines, then it will perform well against a majority of mines found in mine-affected countries today. These mines have been used extensively for testing and evaluation of metal detectors and instrumented prodders and for the testing and evaluation of protective equipment such as blast resistant boots, visors, and clothing.

Canada was asked by the Co-Chairs to identify the type and quantity of mines retained and to indicate changes since the final report of the Review Conference was produced, to identify the uses of these mines and the results of this use and finally to provide an outline of the plans for further development that would result in the use of these retained mines in the future.

Firstly as to quantity and type, Canada currently holds 4 SB 33 mines of Italian manufacture; 962 C3A2 mines of Canadian manufacture; 478 M16 A1 and A2 mines of US manufacture; 171 PMA 1, PMA 2 and PMA 3 mines of former Yugoslavian manufacture; 60 PP-M1-NA1 mines of Czech manufacture; 30 VS50, VAL M69, and VS MK 2 mines of Italian manufacture; 51 PMN 2 mines of Russian manufacture; 2 PROM 1, 1 MRUD, and 3 PMR 2A of former Yugoslavian manufacture; and 145 M14 mines of US manufacture.

Since the report of the review conference Canada has used 6 PMA 2, 3 PP-M1-NA1, 6 PMN 2, 3 PMR 2A, and 3 M14 mines for a total of 21 AP mines. This leaves 1907 mines of the types provided earlier remaining. This past year the mines were used exclusively for research, development and testing and evaluation of detection, mechanical clearance and protective equipment. More explicitly they were used in support of the Canadian portion of the International Test and Evaluation Program (or ITEP) project to test additional mine detectors, for testing mechanical demining vehicles and for continuing research on blast effects on the human body.

This year the mines were not used for training deminers but they very often are used to prepare military engineering forces for peacekeeping operations. In this case having mines of the type to be found in a given theatre of operations is very important.

In regard to future plans, Canada maintains an organization called the Canadian Centre for Mine Action Technologies or CCMAT. CCMAT has as its mission to develop low cost, sustainable technologies for mine action and to work towards their successful deployment to the field. This goal is accomplished through a comprehensive program of R&D, test and evaluation and active communication with the demining community. The Centre will continue operations for at least two years and is examining possibilities to continue beyond that time. Of course Canada will continue to be involved in peace support activities over the very long term and will continue to use mines retained under Article 3 to properly prepare its forces for those operations.