

Monday, 2 June 2008

Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction
Addressing concerns about non-compliance with Article 4 of the Convention

Switzerland

Mr. President,

Let me start by congratulating you and the Co-Chairs, Lithuania and Serbia, for the efforts made in raising awareness on compliance issues with respect to Article 4 of the Convention.

Stockpile destruction is one of the mayor successes of the Convention. Yet we are concerned that some states have failed to comply with the four-years deadline obligation.

We are conscious of the serious challenge to comply with Article 4 and the high costs involved. We therefore congratulate those states that have been successful in fulfilling their obligations, like Sudan and Burundi this year. We also congratulate Ethiopia for having recently transmitted their initial transparency report and informed about initiating stockpile destruction. This is encouraging and a sign of political will, that Ethiopia can meet its 2009 deadline. We commend and encourage as well, countries in the process of completing destruction by 2009 and 2011, such as Indonesia and Ukraine.

There is no provision for extension of this deadline. Missing deadlines could damage the credibility of the Convention.

Therefore we call on the three states which have missed their stockpile destruction deadline, to all take the necessary steps in order to comply with the Convention.

Switzerland fully supports the Co-Chairs who are asking non-compliant States Parties to communicate immediately in a committed and transparent way, the extraordinary reasons for failing to comply with article 4, and, in addition, provide dates and plans to ensure compliance as soon as possible. Also, these states should rapidly commit all national resources available in order to fulfill their obligations and, if necessary, actively pursue assistance.

We agree with the Co-Chairs of the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction should hold regularly, and in advance, informal consultations with concerned States Parties, donors and relevant experts. These consultations can act as *preventative measures* to avoid further cases of non-compliance.

Switzerland agrees with the Co-chairs, that *preventative measures* should be taken if, *one year after entry into force*, a State Party does not have a plan to comply with stockpile destruction and if, *two years after entry into force*, no progress in the destruction of stockpiled mines has been reported.

On the other hand, States Parties implementing Article 4 should demonstrate, through transparency and cooperation, their full commitment to the Convention.

Transparent communication with other States Parties should be strengthened through:

- Annual transparency reports, and through statements at every meeting of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction, and at every meeting of the States Parties.