

**STATEMENT BY THE TURKISH DELEGATION
DURING THE MEETING OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION
(2 June 2008)**

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

I congratulate you on your assumption of the Co-Chairmanship. Please rest assured, you have my delegation's full confidence and support.

As a testimony of our sincere and transparent approach, I would like to share our views regarding the process of destruction of our stockpiled landmines.

Following the circulation of our Note Verbale dated 28 February 2008 of which I will not repeat the content, colleagues from ICRC, ICBL and ISU have visited Turkey a fortnight ago. They did visit the Turkish Munitions Disposal Facility and were briefed on the progress of work. They also visited the Rehabilitation and Health Care Center for mine victims.

They may wish to share their findings and impressions.

I can assure you that this disposal facility is the product of intensive efforts, based exclusively on national resources, in co-operation with NAMSA.

Today, I would like to announce that the fuses of all anti-personel landmines have been removed and destroyed. Those remnant parts of the anti-personnel landmines cannot be used. This is an important and irreversible step accomplished within the destruction process, the stockpiled landmines are not useable.

However, the whole destruction process has not yet been completed.

As the facility operates under environmental scrutiny and with a recycling methodology, it requires time for complete destruction. "Open-air" detonation is totally disregarded.

I should like to underline that the facility increases its destruction capacity gradually. The personel is receiving intensive on the job training. Therefore getting more experienced. At this stage, I will refrain from making any predictions for the completion of the destruction of the remaining parts. We will continue to inform the State Parties regularly on the progress achieved. When we have an accurate estimate of our daily average destruction capacity, we will be able to give you an accurate time-frame for the completion of the process.

As of 20 May 2008, a total of 2.587.249 remaining parts of landmines need to be destroyed.

To conclude distinguished Co-Chairs, let me repeat that, our determination is strong, capacity is in place and the process is well under way. Remaining mines are not useable. It's only a matter of time for us to complete the whole process.

I thank you.