



Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer
of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

INTERSESSIONAL PROGRAMME 2002-2003

STANDING COMMITTEE ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION

Meeting Report 15 May 2003

I. Introduction:

Pursuant to the decisions of the Fourth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention, the meeting of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction was convened by its Co-Chairs, Mr. René Haug of Switzerland and Mr. Radu Horumba of Romania, with the support of its Co-Rapporteurs, Mr. Luigi Scotto of Italy and Mr. Carlos J. Arroyave of Guatemala. The meeting was held in Geneva with the generous support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. The Co-Chairs opened the meeting by indicating their wish that the meeting focus its attention on the following: (1) progress toward meeting upcoming deadlines for State Parties to fulfill their Article 4 obligation to destroy stockpiled anti-personnel (AP) mines during 2003 and beyond; (2) bilateral and regional assistance and cooperation in the area of stockpile destruction; and, (3) technical aspects related to the implementation of stockpile destruction obligations.

II. Overview of Stockpile Destruction Efforts:

The Co-Chairs distributed a detailed update on the status of implementation of Article 4. In addition, Steve Goose of the ICBL made a presentation on the status of worldwide stockpile destruction efforts. He noted that 30 million AP mines have been destroyed so far by States Parties, 48 State Parties have completed their destruction, and 46 States Parties have declared in their Article 7 reports that they do not possess any AP mine stockpiles. This makes the total number of stockpile-free States Parties total 94. In addition, 10 States Parties are in the process of destroying their stockpiles and 8 other States Parties have yet to commence their stockpile destruction programmes. Fifteen States Parties have yet to submit an Article 7 reports in which they officially confirm the presence or the absence of stockpiled AP mines.

For one State Party with a deadline of March 2003, Guinea, there is contradictory information whether it has stockpiled AP mines. With respect to AP mines retained for training and development, 54 States Parties do not retain any mines, 11 are retaining more than 5,000, 30 between 1,000 and 5,000 and 20 less than 1,000. It was noted that one country that reported having completed its stockpile destruction in February 2003 still retains almost 70,000 mines for training and development.

III. Update on stockpile destruction efforts:

As with the agenda during the February 2003 meeting, the Co-Chairs proceeded in a chronological order of deadlines. States Parties that recently completed the destruction of their stockpiled AP mines were first given an opportunity to make presentations and statements.

A. States Parties with deadlines between January 2003 and the 5MSP

- **Croatia** showed a video of its final destruction event and also reported destroying additional AP mine fuses.
- **Japan** reported that the Prime Minister and other high-ranking officials attended its final stockpile destruction event on 8 February 2003 at the Self-Defense Force base in Shiga Prefecture. Japan also offered to do everything in its ability to help affected countries cope with mine clearance operations and victim assistance.
- **Djibouti** reported that it completed stockpiled destruction on 2 March 2003.
- **The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** reported that it finished the destruction of its stockpiles on 20 February 2003. It will retain 4,000 mines for development and training.
- **Mozambique** reported that it finished its stockpile destruction in February 2003. It noted however that there remain considerable challenges with respect to mine clearance and victim assistance.
- With respect to **Turkmenistan** the Co-Chairs noted that the Foreign Ministry of Turkmenistan reported to the United Nations in March that it completed its stockpile destruction obligations by the end of February. Turkmenistan also reported that it will retain 69,200 AP mines for research and training.
- With respect to **Guinea**, which has a destruction deadline of April 2003, the Co-Chairs noted that there is yet no official information concerning the possession or non-possession of AP mines by Guinea. The Permanent Mission of Guinea in Geneva however maintains that Guinea does not possess AP mines.
- **Slovenia** made a presentation on the completion of the destruction of stockpiled AP mines at the Slovenian Army training area on 25 March 2003. The destruction took place in presence of the President of Slovenia, Members of Parliament, distinguished foreign guests as well as national and international media. For demining technology research and training of troops Slovenia will retain 3,000 AP mines.
- **Jordan** reported that it destroyed its stockpile in April 2003. It noted that it will provide support for mine action in Afghanistan.
- **Thailand** reported that it has completed stockpile destruction on 24 April 2003, six days ahead of the deadline. The destruction of the final 2,500 AP mines at Kao Pu Lone Artillery Range took place in the presence of the Deputy Supreme Commander, the Canadian ambassador to Thailand, military attaches, international press and mine victims. A total of 4,970 AP mines will be retained for training, research and development. Thailand stated that it stands ready to share its experience in order to assist States Parties which face difficulties in the area of stockpile destruction.

- **El Salvador** reported it finished its stockpile destruction on 20 February 2003.
- **Portugal** reported it finished its stockpile destruction at the end of February 2003, six month before the deadline. It also informed that it has already started contacts with some mine affected countries namely Angola and Guinea-Bissau, in order to improve cooperation with them.
- **Uganda** provided an update on its stockpile destruction, announcing that a UNDP technical team will arrive later in May 2003 to assist in beginning the destruction programme. To meet its deadline of August 2003, Uganda appealed for financial help and assistance to destroy not only stockpiled AP mines but also small arms and light weapons that have been captured from non-state actors. With the decision to also include also mines captured from non-state actors the total number of mines to be destroyed increased to 5,592.

B. States Parties with deadlines between October and December 2003

- **Brazil** reported that it destroyed 26,829 stockpiled AP mines in April 2002. The remaining 1,023 mines belonging to the Brazilian Navy were destroyed in January 2003. Brazil noted that it will retain mines for training.
- **Venezuela**, whose deadline is October 2003, reported that it the destruction of its 46,176 stockpiled AP mines will be completed by 22 May 2003. The Venezuelan Army will retain 4,614 AP mines for training purposes, which represents 10 percent of its stock.

C. States Parties with deadlines in 2004 and beyond.

The following States Parties, which have deadlines in 2004 and beyond, gave presentations: Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Romania, Tanzania, Uruguay and Zambia. Most of them seem to be confident in achieving their goals.

- **Afghanistan** presented its stockpile destruction plan. In order to demonstrate the government's resolve to ban landmines, ceremonial destruction events were conducted in Kabul, Mazar, Heart and Kandahar on 12 May 2003. Afghanistan noted that it could finish the destruction of stockpiled AP mines if assistance is provided.
- **Argentina** gave a presentation on the Stockpile Destruction National Plan which proposes to destroy the AP mines in accordance with the national environmental laws and within the different regions where they are stored. Argentina noted its intention to complete the destruction of its stockpile at a ceremony on 4 December 2003. Argentina invited other State Parties delegates to witness its destruction ceremonies and seminars on landmine destruction.
- **Bangladesh** provided details on its three-phase national destruction plan which was annexed to the last Article 7 report. Bangladesh declared that it was hopeful of completing the destruction of 200,000 mines by the March 2005 deadline.

- **Chile** reported that it destroyed 109,058 AP mines on 8-9 May 2003 in the presence of national representatives, distinguished diplomatic representatives from neighboring countries and representatives from the civilian population. Chile aims to complete the destruction of the remaining 97,773 AP mines by August 2003. Chile also noted that it will retain 6,245 AP mines for training purposes. Chile thanked Canada, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the GICHD for their support for the stockpile destruction process.
- **Colombia** reported that 23,451 AP mines are ready to be destroyed. The stockpile destruction programme started in May 2003 and might be concluded by its deadline of March 2005. Colombia will retain 986 mines for training purposes. To complete this destruction programme in time, financial and technical assistance would be welcomed.
- **Guinea-Bissau** reported that an internal conflict delays the destruction of the 3,997 AP mines. It expressed its hope that with international assistance it might be able to complete the destruction before the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties.
- **Kenya** announced that an updated Article 7 Report would be submitted in September 2003 to the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties in Bangkok.
- **Romania** reported that it has destroyed so far 616,774 mines. According to the national plan, stockpile destruction will be completed by March 2004. Romania also reported that it stopped the industrial production line for AP mines and that it will retain 4,000 mines for development and training.
- **Tanzania** presented its four-phase destruction programme. In phase one, ending in May 2003, it destroyed 9,837 AP mines. Until the completion of the third phase in September 2004 it hopes to destroy the remaining 13,004 mines, one year ahead of its deadline.
- **Uruguay** reported that the destruction of the 1,500 stockpiled AP mines will be completed by September 2003 and that it will retain 500 AP mines for training and development.
- **Zambia** has stated that it does not have stockpiles of AP mines other than those declared and being held for training and development purposes. However, the government has decided reduce this stockpile and to destroy the surplus mines.

D. States not Parties and other entities in the process of destroying stockpiles

- **Belarus** reported that it has 4 million stockpiled AP mines, of which 3.6 million are PFM type. In 2003 it hopes to destroy 100,000 mines if international assistance is provided. Belarus stressed the need to find a solution to the technical difficulties with respect to the destruction of PFM-1/1S and other similar mines.
- A representative of **Geneva Call** and a leader of an armed group in Somalia that has begun to destroy its mine stockpiles made a presentation. The leader of the armed group reported that his organization make a commitment with the Geneva

Call to destroy its stockpiles. He thanked the European Union, the UNDP and other organizations for their efforts in supporting mine action in Somalia and stressed the need for additional assistance so that organization like his could implement their commitments.

IV. Assistance and Co-operation in the area of stockpile destruction

- **Bangladesh** reiterated its request for international assistance and financial support in order to implement and execute its Strategic Stockpile Destruction Plan.
- **Senegal** presented its financial needs to implement the Ottawa Convention and reaffirmed its commitment to fulfill its obligations. The major concern of Senegal is the possession and the stockpile of AP mines by non-state actors. Senegal requested financial assistance for educational and demining programmes.
- **Italy** reiterated its willingness to assist other countries in the destruction of AP mine stocks.

V. Destruction of PFM mines

Bulgaria and **Ukraine** made presentations on the technical challenges of destroying PFM and PMN mines, including destruction methods in great technical detail, environmental impacts and financial implications of the destruction of approximately 10 million PFM mines remaining world wide. The **European Commission** reported that it is going ahead with a technical study which will assess the safety and environmental risks posed by the transport and handling of PFM mines stored in Ukraine. The PFM destruction process will be launched with an authorization of the release of funds at the time of Ukraine's ratification of the Ottawa Convention. It is hoped that the PFM stockpile destruction will begin in 2004.

VI. Food for thought paper

The Standing Committee discussed several aspects of the "food for thought" paper distributed by the Co-Chairs in February 2003. Representatives of the GICHD, UNMAS, the UNDDA and the ICBL made interventions and suggestions. The ICBL made comments concerning new discoveries of mines after the completion of stockpile destruction, the annual updating of the number of mines retained under Article 3 and the control of mines used for research and training. The UNDDA and UNMAS suggested improvements for the reporting of such mines in Format B and D in Article 7 Reports.