

Mines Retained for Training: Examples of States Practice and Questions

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Mark Hiznay
Senior Researcher
Human Rights Watch

Article 3, Paragraph 1

- Permits “retention or transfer of a number of antipersonnel mines for the development of and training in mine detection, mine clearance, or mine destruction techniques.”
- “The amount of such mines shall not exceed to minimum number absolutely necessary for the above mentioned purposes.”

Status

- 69 SP retain antipersonnel mines under article 3
- 66 SP do not retain any mines
 - 16 of these possessed stockpiles
- 11 have not declared intent
- 5 have expressed intent but not types or quantities
- 6 SP have thus far used new modified Form D to include information on intended purposes and actual uses of retained mines
- SP have not made a distinction between mines retained for military countermine or humanitarian clearance purposes; modified Form D is an opportunity to distinguish

Non-Use of Retained Mines

- 36 SP did not report consuming any retained mines in 2004; not enough data available for 2005 due to late Article 7 reports and their public availability
 - Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Burundi, Rep. of Congo, Cyprus, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Honduras, Hungary, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Macedonia FYR, Mali, Moldova, Mozambique, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Suriname, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Zimbabwe
 - Hungary and Nigeria have subsequently destroyed entire retained stockpile; Macedonia FYR has declared its intent to.
- Of these SP, the following retain over 1,000 mines and have not reported any consumption of these mines in two or more consecutive years
 - Algeria, Djibouti, Jordan, Peru, Portugal, Thailand, Tunisia, Yemen
- 26 SP did not report consuming any retained mines in 2003; 29 did not report using any in 2002.

What is Reported?

- Required to report complete antipersonnel mines, i.e. body (main charge) & fuze assembly (initiator and detonator), regardless of whether components are packaged or stored separately
- Fuze-less explosive charges, inert shapes, practice mines, mine simulators, or substitute pyrotechnic devices should not be counted as retained mines
 - Desirable practice to inform other SP of alternatives for live mines.
- Such distinctions have resulted in decreases in numbers retained (Argentina & Italy)

What are they Being Used For?

- Personnel training
 - Most common application by far
 - “Live mine” confidence and effects demonstration for troops
 - e.g. Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Slovenia
- Destructive testing on equipment
 - Personal protective gear, mine-proof vehicles, vegetation cutting & earth moving machines, mechanical clearance machines, etc
 - e.g., Canada, Croatia, Czech Rep., France, Germany, Japan, Slovakia, South Africa, Sweden
- Detection equipment testing
 - e.g., Canada, Germany
- Dog training
 - e.g., Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Yemen

Lingering Questions

- Are “live mines” necessary for training in manual clearance or with metal detectors?
 - Fuze buried on top of mine body for signal response but not inserted to make a “live mine”
 - Safety and risk issue
 - Mines destroyed in place to practice in-situ destruction techniques
- Are “live mines” required for training of mine detecting dogs?
 - Fuze assembly not required
 - Mines stay in ground longer and are not destroyed

Training to Support Clearance Operations -- Doing the Math

- Hypothetical Case
 - It is our understanding that 20-30 mines are necessary for a manual clearance course
 - 4 courses per year equates to 80-120 mines used
 - 1,000 retained mines would sustain program for 8-10 years
- 3,000 retained mines case
 - Very busy program with greater than 400 students per year

**We welcome comments or corrections from those
SP with different experiences or requirements**

Other Concerns

- Are the mines retained representative of the mine threat in the country or clearance activities in other countries?
- Is it necessary to know how to lay a doctrinal minefield to do training?
- Necessary for peacekeeping operations?
 - Only 3 UN managed programs have IMAS-compliant mine clearance capacity and require training (Lebanon, Eritrea, Sudan)
 - Many national contingents do not retain mines and operate in contaminated areas (Austria, New Zealand, Norway)
- Are mines, especially fuze components, that are past their “use-by” date or beyond their expected shelf life safe to retain?