

Comments for the discussion on the practical implementation of Article 3

Co-chairs,

Switzerland is of the view that there are two main areas of concern on the figures presented regarding retention of antipersonnel mines permitted under Article 3 :

1. The reasons behind the *number* of mines being retained and ;
2. The *limited information* on how they are being used.

1. While we commend those States that have reported significant reductions, it appears that among the 156 States Parties, some have reported retention of particularly large amount of mines, between 5,000 and 10,000 mines. The majority of States Parties (that retain mines) store between 1,000 and 5,000 mines.

Considering these numbers, some States Parties seem to be retaining more than "*the minimum number absolutely necessary*", as defined in the treaty.

After ten years of Mine Ban Treaty implementation, the retention of antipersonnel mines for training or development purposes should draw our attention. Indeed, the surplus of stock labelled as such is becoming a problem with respect to the scope of Article 3 of the treaty.

Ten years on, more than **80 States Parties have chosen not to retain** any antipersonnel mines by destroying all their mines previously retained for training. Time has come for States Parties to develop recommendations in order to ensure that only a minimum number of mines is retained for the reasons permitted under Article 3.

2. States parties have to report the use of mines previously retained on a transparent and regular basis in line with action #54 of the Nairobi Action Plan (using the amended form D).

When no use is reported, States Parties should specify the reasons for that retention and reconsider their stock left. All retained mines could be destroyed if no use is foreseen for the purposes of Article 3.

In the period leading up of the Second Review Conference, Switzerland invites States Parties to take all appropriate measures in order to re-evaluate the number of mines kept and destroying a portion of them. The Second Review Conference should be an opportunity to take action and to set new targets on this issue.

Switzerland would like to encourage States Parties to :

- a) Review progress made, impact and scope of Article 3 ;
- b) Ensure that States Parties are retaining only a minimum number of mines permitted under Article 3 ;
- c) Start a reflection in order to define the amount *absolutely necessary* of AP mines needed to conduct training and research ;
- d) Report in a transparent way use and reasons of the retention (Article 7 report form D);
- e) Re-evaluate on a regular basis the minimum number of mines retained and destroy all those exceeding that number ;
- f) Explore available alternatives to using live mines for training and research activities.

Switzerland is of the opinion that sharing information on retained mines and the development of and training in mine detection, clearance and destruction may be very useful. If States Parties share their experiences, given the fact that specific tests have to be done only once, this could help reducing the need for globally retained mines furthermore.