

STATEMENT BY NIGERIA

ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES AGENDA ITEM 10.B – CLEARING MINED AREAS

Mr President

At the 10MSP, we declared that, while it was believed that there were no longer areas under the jurisdiction or control of Nigeria that contained anti-personnel mines, verification efforts would continue.

2. At the June 2011 meeting of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance Nigeria reported that all work has been completed and that at this Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties we would submit a formal declaration of completion.

3. Nigeria is pleased to table this document today and is proud to declare that, in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, we have ensured the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in areas under our jurisdiction or control in which these mines were known or suspected to be emplaced.

4. In keeping with the language used in the voluntary declaration of completion, adopted at the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties, we wish to state that, in the event that previously unknown mined areas are discovered, Nigeria will do the following:

a. report such mined areas in accordance with its obligations under Article 7 and share such information through the Intersessional Work Programme, including the Standing Committee meetings;

b. ensure the effective exclusion of civilians in accordance with Article 5; and,

c. destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in these mined areas as a matter of urgent priority, making its need for assistance known to other States Parties, as appropriate.

d. the Government of Nigeria is considering the destruction of all anti-personnel mines reserved for training.

Mr President

5. Nigeria's efforts to comply with Article 5 of the Convention involved surveying over 150,000 square kilometres in 11 of Nigeria's States. In the course of complying with Article 5, a total of 820 anti-personnel mines, 325 anti-vehicle mines and 17,519 other explosive hazards were destroyed.

6. The fact that the main challenge faced by Nigeria concerned unexploded ordnance, points to how valuable this Convention is in ensuring that not only landmines are dealt with by affected countries, but all other explosive remnants of war.

7. Nigeria knows that its Article 5 challenge was not as severe as that faced by other affected countries. However, compliance still required a considerable effort.

8. We were particularly pleased with the mission of the Director of the ISU to Abuja in April where he had fruitful meetings with the Minister of Defence and with members of Nigeria's inter-ministerial committee on the implementation of the Convention.

9. We are pleased to state that we have benefited greatly from the ISU, through its mandate of providing advice and technical support to States Parties on the implementation of the Convention. We encourage all States Parties to fund this core activity of the ISU.

10. Nigeria has presently 196 mine victims and 320 victims of ERWs needing various degrees of assistance which are lacking in the Country. The assistance are in the form of mobility ie, prosthesis for upper and lower limbs. This is in line with the Cartagena Plan of 2009. We thank Members for their assistance.

11. We also wish to make it known that a great deal of expertise exists within Nigeria on mine clearance and that this capacity is available for use by others.

12. Finally, Mr. President, Nigeria is proud to be the 17th State Party to have completed implementation of Article 5 of the Convention.

13. I thank you for your attention.