

11th MSP of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

1 December 2011

Statement by the delegation of Belarus

Distinguished Co-Chair,

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset on behalf of the delegation of Belarus I would like to congratulate you for your election and extend our support to your activity at the post of the President of the MSP. Let me also express to the Cambodian side our sincere gratitude for its hospitality and wish good luck in successful completion of the 11th MSP

As of 15 November 2011 Belarus had 3 million 356 thousand 636 anti-personnel mines that remained to be destroyed, all of them PFM-1 type.

As Belarus' delegation informed the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction in June this year, that as a result of the inventory of all existing stockpiles of PFM-1 mines, the Ministry of Defence revealed that one batch of boxes had been improperly marked, leading to an altered number of stockpiled PFM-1 mines, which decreased the total number of these mines stockpiled in Belarus by 2016 pieces, hence, reducing the total number of Belarusian stockpiled APMs to be destroyed.

In 2011 Belarusian authorities continued their persistent efforts to ensure the destruction of stockpiles of anti-personnel mines in accordance with the obligation of Article 4 of the Convention. In fulfilling this goal Belarus continues cooperation with the European Commission in the framework of the project entitled "Destruction of PFM-1 series ammunition in Belarus". The contract's budget of 3 million 900 thousand € is entirely financed by the European Union.

As Belarus' delegation reported at the meeting of Standing Committees an appropriate company called Explosives Alaveses SA (EXPAL) of Spain has been selected as a contractor for the implementation of the project after successful completion of the international tender in October last year.

EXPAL is defense division of the MAXAM group, the company with international experience, specializing in manufacturing and integrating systems and services for the defense and security sectors. Its activities include the disposal and recovering of obsolete, excess or banned ammunition and explosives, including those with

hazardous chemical components. In the framework of this project EXPAL Systems will be responsible for:

- Installation and commissioning of a destruction facility at an ammunition base near Rechitsa in southeast Belarus, the site approved by the European Commission back in 2009. These works are due to be finalized by the end of the year.
- The provision of monitoring equipment enabling the project team to supervise and report on the destruction process in real time;
- The complete destruction of the stockpiled PFM-1 series munitions (by so called "cold detonation" technology in armored camera);
- The environmentally friendly treatment of hazardous liquid and gaseous waste developing during the destruction.

EXPAL has been registered as a legal entity of Belarus since January 2011.

In April this year all necessary licenses required by the national legislation to deal with weapons and ammunitions were granted to EXPAL.

In July EXPAL chose the subcontractor – Russian company "Anfacion" – to construct the facilities on the site of the stockpile destruction. The construction works began on 31 October 2011 and are about to be finalized in the coming days. In the meantime EXPAL has obtained necessary license to import to Belarus the destruction facility. EXPAL has reported that the destruction facility is assembled and is ready to be delivered and installed at the destruction site.

The Ministry of Defense of Belarus exerts all its best efforts to make the rendering of the EXPAL technical assistance possible and to extend to the said company the fullest cooperation.

In particular Belarus' MoD has been responsible for the maintenance, repair and upgrading of water-, electricity-, roads- and communication capacity at the destruction site, to capacities required for the project. Road-, water-, electricity- and communication connections are available now at the destruction facility. MoD also bears responsibility for timely transfer of all the PFM-1 series ammunition to the destruction site so that the pre-processing and feeding of the destruction devices is ensured.

Given the vast number of the mines to be destroyed and the complexity of destruction procedure, the implementation of the project has been set under personal control of the high ranking military officials of the Armed Forces of Belarus. Ministry of Defense is also responsible for promotion of safety and security of the destruction site.

To summarize, all necessary administrative procedures have been finalized by EXPAL and Belarusian authorities and the PFM-1 destruction is about to start. The estimated

completion date of the destruction of all the stockpiles according to Article 4 is May 2013 and Belarusian authorities will endeavor to ensure this term is met.

Thank you, Co-Chair.