

**Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction Geneva 2-5 December 2013**

**Statement by the Republic of Lithuania on agenda item 11c Consideration of the general status and operation of the Convention: Destroying stockpiled anti-personnel mines**

Mr. President,

Since this is the first time the Lithuanian delegation takes the floor, I would like to congratulate you on your election to this post and assure the full support of the Lithuanian delegation in your leadership of this Meeting.

This year marks Lithuania's tenth anniversary of being a part of this global forum – a collective solution to end the human suffering caused by indiscriminate harm by the anti-personnel mines. This year marks also Lithuania's ninth anniversary of being a mine-free country.

Mr. President,

In the context of international assistance, let me say few words on the stockpile destruction. My delegation sees the problem of non-compliance and the way we have to deal with it as two-folded. From one side, as it is stated in the Convention, individual States Parties are responsible for their stockpile destruction obligations. This obligation should be included in national programs of the respective countries, it should be reflected in national legislation, financial and technical resources should be allocated to implement this provision. Furthermore, a consistent reporting to other States Parties of the Convention on the steps taken, problems arising and assistance needed should be undergoing.

But there is another side of the coin – destruction, like the clearance, represents a considerable financial, technological, material or human resources challenge for the State, therefore the assistance by other States and Organisations in a position to do so is sometimes even of the crucial importance in order to overcome the challenge.

Lithuania remains convinced that even though the main responsibility lies with the States Parties concerned, other States Parties and stakeholders, in particular the donors, could and should assist in many ways and thus make all the difference. Both – States Parties giving and receiving assistance – should place an increased emphasis on the obligation to cooperation with a view of ensuring full and prompt implementation of agreed assistance programs.

Therefore Lithuania calls for the donors to further assist affected States with clearly demonstrated needs for external support for stockpile destruction, responding to priorities for assistance as articulated by those States in need. This includes both the financial support and the technical solutions to overcome the particular challenges associated with destroying the millions-large PFM-1 mine stockpiles in Belarus and Ukraine in an effective, sustainable and environmentally sound manner.

Thank you.