

**CANADIAN STATEMENT
STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION – ASSISTANCE
Eighth Meeting of the States Parties, November 2007**

Mr. President

Stockpile destruction remains a vital component of mine action. It is only through destruction of stocks and also furthering our universalization efforts, that ^{we can} ~~can we~~ ensure that no new mines are placed in the ground. Even as use continues to decrease, there still remains a risk that mines will continue to be laid until such a day when the last stockpiled mine is destroyed. To reach our goals we must continue our assistance to ensure that all stockpile mines are destroyed.

While Canada does not have a specific budget for the destruction of stockpiles, we have supported and assisted 22 States Parties to destroy millions of stockpile mines through the Canadian Landmine Fund and our regular development, peace and security funds. Since 2000, Canada's assistance has included the provision of technical expertise, the provision of material and equipment and the provision of financial support to a total of almost \$10 million. This past year Canada provided support to Belarus in the destruction of its non PFM mines, and to Serbia, who have now achieved their Article 4 obligations. Canada also notes that Afghanistan which had reported that it had not completed its destruction programme by its deadline, has now achieved its Article 4 obligation.

In Nairobi, we collectively acknowledged the difficulties of the destruction of one type of mine, the PFM mine. That type of mine is particularly relevant to Belarus and Ukraine, both holding large numbers of stocks [and there is great risk that one or both of these States parties will not complete the destruction of this type of mine by their deadline. Canada would like to urge them to put their programmes in place and begin destruction as soon as possible.]

With millions of stockpiled mines still held by 8 States Parties in the process of fulfilling their Article 4 obligations, and millions more held by States not party, our job is far from finished and we must continue to ensure these mines are never placed in the ground. Canada supports

Thank you Mr. President

the co-chairs proposal on modifying the Art. 7 reporting format on stocks discovered after destruction deadlines.

Statement of Canada
Belarus Stockpile Destruction (PFM Mines)
8th Meeting of States Parties, November 2007

With respect to the holding of large numbers of stocks by Belarus,

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The fact that Belarus may not meet ^{they} its stockpile destruction deadline of 1 March 2008 is of great concern to Canada. If this occurs Belarus will be the second State Party that did not achieve this obligation and will be non-compliant. Article 4 of the Convention is quite specific – a State has four years to meet this deadline and there is no opportunity to request and receive an extension.

That said, before and after accession, Belarus was quite open about the need to receive technical and financial aid in this area and had been of the opinion that such assistance would be received. It is for this reason that Canada and Lithuania organized a NATO Trust Fund project in Belarus that has now destroyed the non PFM mines in the inventory with about half of the cost of that project absorbed by Belarus. Other partners were working with Belarus to address the, technically challenging and expensive to destroy, 3.6 million PFM mines in stock.

In fact States Parties recognized the difficulty in destroying these mines in the Nairobi Action Plan in Action #14 calling on States Parties to *Support the investigation and further development of technical solutions to overcome the particular challenges associated with destroying PFM mines.* At the time Belarus was the only State Party holding PFM mines. While the technical challenge is believed to be overcome, it has taken some time, limiting Belarus' ability to commence destruction. That coupled with difficulties surrounding assistance has led to the situation where Belarus' may be non-compliant in the near future.

Canada would like to commend Belarus for its openness and transparency in reporting the situation regarding its stockpile destruction programme and understands the difficulties, both financial and technical, surrounding destruction of this mine in the quantities held by Belarus.

Canada encourages Belarus and interested partners to work diligently and quickly to ensure these mines are destroyed as soon as possible.

Thank you