

Statement on stockpile destruction
Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
Santiago, Chile, 28 November – 1 December 2016



Thank you Madam President.

We congratulate Poland for its important announcement made today. Collectively, States Parties have now destroyed more than 51 million antipersonnel mines. Those are mines that will never take a life or a limb, nor damage a family's livelihood or threaten a community.

Now that Poland is done with stockpile destruction, four States Parties still own a total of more than seven million mines. Oman intends to complete destruction by its 2019 deadline. The three other states missed their deadline many years ago. We know that none of them is in willful violation of Article 4, but we will keep scrutinizing their efforts until the very last mine is destroyed.

In Greece, complicated legal and contractual issues surround the destruction of stockpiles. Progress on resolving those issues is slow but Greece does report small steps at each treaty meetings. We hope Greece will be able to provide a timetable for completion in its next Article 7 report or at the 2017 Intersessionals.

Ukraine still possesses more than five million antipersonnel mines. We heard today that additional mines were destroyed in 2015-2016, but Ukraine did not announce a timeline for the destruction of the millions of PFM-type mines that remain, and it does not seem to have a plan for the destruction of its POM-2 antipersonnel mines.

We did not hear from Belarus on steps taken to meet its stockpile destruction calendar. States Parties, especially when in violation of the Treaty, should participate in annual meetings and provide detailed reporting.

Today we also expected to hear from Somalia, since in 2013 Somalia noted in its initial transparency report that it would verify if it holds antipersonnel mines in its stockpiles. No information was shared since then, and Somalia's deadline passed just last October.

Forty States Parties retain more than 1,000 mines each for permitted purposes, and three states retain more than 12,000 mines. To all of you -- please bring this message back to capital and in particular to Defense: under the Maputo Action Plan, you committed to review the number of mines retained and to destroy any number that exceeds "the minimum number absolutely necessary" for training and research. We have yet to hear any compelling explanation why so many states require so many mines, when so few states are actually using them for permitted purposes.

Thank you.