

ICBL Statement on Stockpile Destruction
Mine Ban Treaty Intersessional Standing Committee Meetings
Geneva, Switzerland
27 May 2013



Thank you Madame/Mr. Chairman.

Fourteen years after the entry into force of the Mine Ban Treaty, stockpile destruction continues to be a key implementation issue. In part, this is a good news story of new States Parties with stockpiles recently coming on board: Finland, Poland, and possibly Somalia.

But in the case of three States Parties, it's a long and frustrating story about bureaucratic delays, technical difficulties, and the challenges of getting required international support. We are now in a situation where Belarus and Greece have been in violation of their Article 4 obligations for five long years, and Ukraine for almost three. With their collective stocks, this means that around 9 million antipersonnel mines that should have been destroyed years ago are still sitting in stockpiles.

On a smaller scale, but still important to highlight, South Sudan and Guinea-Bissau have been reporting newly discovered stocks for over a year, but still haven't managed to destroy these small numbers of mines.

The ICBL urges States Parties that continue to possess stockpiles, big or small, to ramp up their efforts to finish destruction. We appreciate there have been numerous difficulties in each case, and that some real progress is now occurring in each of the non-compliant states after years where no destruction was taking place. But the time has come for these states to work harder and faster to demonstrate their commitment to getting the job done. We also call on other States Parties to give their full attention to states' progress, and provide whatever technical, financial, or political support may be necessary to move quickly towards completion.

Taking a look at the particular cases, we are pleased to hear that **Greece** has signed a revised contract with EAS so that destruction can begin again after a three-year hiatus. We had welcomed the decision to reinstate work with EAS despite the difficulties Greece encountered with them, as a pragmatic way to avoid even more delays in getting destruction underway. Given the problems that led to the rupture of the contract in the first place, we welcome hearing about steps Greece has and will be taking to ensure the process of transport and destruction runs smoothly and according to schedule. At the same time, we would like to see destruction beginning as rapidly as possible, and for Greece to communicate the deadline given to the contractor for final completion.

Belarus has been quite transparent throughout its long struggle to get destruction of its PFM mines underway, but it is another case where years have passed without any destruction taking place. Though there has certainly been some movement forward on building the destruction facility, it is still disappointing that despite the naming of a contractor in late 2010, destruction has still yet to begin and no end date is known. We urge all parties to ensure any remaining obstacles dealt with without any further delay.

We welcome the news that **Ukraine** has finally begun larger scale destruction of part of its PFM mines thanks to a contribution from Germany that should begin the large-scale destruction of the first half of its 6 million mines. And it is also positive that it appears to have a plan through the acquisition of a second kiln to be able to destroy the other 3 million PFM mines, though it is not clear if funding is in place for this destruction. We would also like to know about its plans to destroy its stockpile of 149,096 POM-2 mines. But it is frustrating and disappointing that the EU funds that will allow one million PFM mines a year to be destroyed has still not been transferred. We urge the EU to do everything in its power to end the administrative blockages and enable Ukraine to fulfill its

treaty obligations. In the meanwhile, we urge other state, including Ukraine itself, to fill in the funding gaps so that destruction can continue.

We look forward to the day when these three non-compliance cases are behind us, and we know the states in question certainly do as well.

We understand from **Somalia** that it does not have a government stockpile of AP mines, but that it is likely to find stocks held by other actors. Such mines also need to be collected and destroyed as part of Somalia's Article 4 obligations, so we look forward to hearing about its efforts to locate, assemble and destroy them. Technical expertise is certainly available from the international community should Somalia need support in this endeavor.

We welcome the news from **Finland** that it plans to destroy its stockpile before its deadline and that destruction is underway. We also congratulate **Poland** on its early efforts to destroy its stocks, even before becoming a State Party, and look forward to news of their final destruction.

We look forward to hearing updates by **Guinea-Bissau** and **South Sudan** on the status of the stockpiled antipersonnel mines they discovered in 2011 or earlier. We understand that a lack of resources in the former and difficult weather conditions in the latter have presented obstacles for destruction. But enough time has passed to enable the states to overcome these problems. We would also welcome confirmation from Cote d'Ivoire that it has destroyed its recently discovered stocks. Given that newly discovered mines are not part of a state's documented stockpiles, they may be located in non-secured sites and therefore pose a certain risk for diversion. We therefore encourage all states finding such mines to destroy the mines as a matter of urgency and to report back to states immediately on their destruction, as committed to in the Cartagena Action Plan.

Thank you.