

## **APLC Standing Committee meetings 2011**

### **General status and operation of the Convention**

#### **Statement by Ireland on retention of AP mines for permitted purposes (Article 3)**

**Friday, 24 June 2011**

Co-Chairs,

As you are well aware, Article 3 of the Convention permits the retention or transfer of anti-personnel mines for the development of and training in mine detection, mine clearance, or mine destruction techniques.

Ireland possesses a small number of anti-personnel mines for these purposes, and I am happy to provide the Committee with an update in this regard.

In line with action #56 of the *Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014: Ending the Suffering Caused by Antipersonnel Mines*, Ireland has “regularly review(ed) the number of anti-personnel mines retained to ensure that they constitute the minimum number absolutely necessary for the purposes permitted by the Convention...” Ireland has provided information in its Article 7 report on the use of mines retained for permitted purposes. This report is available on the relevant page on the website of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

Furthermore, Ireland has also “...destroy(ed) all those (mines) exceeding that number and where appropriate explore(d) available alternatives to using live anti-personnel mines for training and research activities.”

The Irish Defence Forces retains anti-personnel mines in order to develop and maintain effective countermeasures to the continuing threat from antipersonnel mines. Anti-personnel mines remain in the active inventories of many states and non-state actors. Defence Forces personnel have faced an antipersonnel mine threat in many theatres in recent years including Lebanon, Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

The Irish Defence Forces use live anti-personnel mines in the development and validation of mine render safe procedures and in training personnel in these procedures. Render safe procedures normally involve the destruction of the mine.

Live mines are also used as part of the testing and validation of mechanical mine clearance equipments and in the training of personnel in the use of such equipments. Minimum metal content mines are used, as required, in the calibration and testing of mine detection equipments.

I would like to take the opportunity to state that as the number of anti-personnel mines currently possessed by Ireland for permitted purposes has fallen to a very low level (with only 64 remaining as at 31 December 2010) the acquisition of replacement anti-personnel mines for the same purposes, as permitted by the Article 3 of the Convention, is likely to become necessary at some stage in the future.

Thank you for your attention.