

Norwegian statement  
Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction  
20 June 2011

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Norway has long argued that the obligation of destroying all stockpiles of anti-personnel mines is key to fulfill the humanitarian objectives of the Mine Ban Convention. Only by completing destruction of all anti-personnel mines can we ensure that these mines will never be laid, and that they will never cause any harm. Actions 7-9 of the Cartagena Action Plan reflect the seriousness of the situation we have been in, with four States Parties being non-compliant with this important provision in the Convention. This is indeed a regrettable and unacceptable situation for this Convention and its States Parties. The reasons for why some States Parties have not fulfilled their obligations on time are complex and varied, but there is little doubt that in general work began too late, and resources allocated were too few.

Moving on, however, I would like to thank the Co-Chairs for their presentation of the situation in general which does actually seem much improved since only a year ago. Then, I would particularly like to thank and commend all 4 States Parties who still have not completed their stockpile destruction for their own presentations today, and for the steps they have taken in the right direction.

Belarus has informed us that the tender process has been completed and a company selected that will complete destruction by 2013, and they have provided more clarity on the total number of mines to be destroyed.

Greece has provided details on progress and plans ahead, and more clarity on figures.

Turkey has informed us that all remaining stockpiles of ADAM mines have been transferred to Germany for destruction and that destruction will be completed by 31 August this year.

Ukraine has purchased additional equipment that is being installed as we speak to upgrade existing facilities, and is in the process of securing resources for the operation of the equipment to start large-scale destruction.

The progress made has not come by itself. Continued attention to the issue and strict prioritisation by national authorities is necessary to complete the task. The Mine Ban Convention community, including both the States Parties and the civil society, must remain focused until the last stockpiled mine has been destroyed.

National ownership is key to ensure progress. This is a well-established concept with different meanings in different contexts, but the key issue is that national authorities must take charge of the process if it is to succeed. This has been the basis for Norway's cooperation with Ukraine on destruction of their stocks of anti-personnel mines. This type of bilateral cooperation on a very specific project, within a short timeline, with concrete objectives and limited but targeted funding in order to catalyse something larger, is a new endeavour for us.

We have heard Ukraine's own presentation of the project, and I would like to commend the relevant Ukrainian authorities for the transparent and open way in which they have been working with us, and for their hospitality when hosting us in Pavlograd. In January, as mentioned by the Ukrainian delegation, a Norwegian observation team supported by a technical expert from the GICHD made a first visit to the Pavlograd Chemical Factory to inspect the facilities where the destruction of the mines will take place. The equipment that has been purchased under the Norwegian grant is in the process of being installed, and next week our Ambassador as well as the expert from the GICHD will make a second visit to look at the equipment, as well as procedures that should be in place to ensure effective and efficient use of the equipment. Following the first visit in January, the GICHD prepared a report with very positive conclusions and recommendations. We are happy to share this report with all those who are interested.

With your permission, Madam Chair, I would like to invite Mr Erik Tollefsen from the GICHD to share with you his thoughts on this project, and on the specific technical solutions that Ukraine has chosen to destroy their PFM-1 mines, with an emphasis on national capacity and ownership. Erik, please.