

Previously unknown stockpiled mines

Nigeria

Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction

21 May 2012

Thank you Co-Chairs.

As delegations may recall, Nigeria had some time ago reported compliance with Article 4 and at the 11MSP reported that it had cleared all known mined areas, thus fulfilling its Article 5 obligations.

However, Nigeria is a country that has experienced civil war and thus had munitions stored in numerous locations throughout the vastness of our country.

In this context, I am taking the floor to inform delegations that, following a Ministerial directive, the Nigerian military is taking steps to reassess the munitions in its inventory to determine whether previously unknown stockpiles exist.

Should such stocks be found, Nigeria will comply with its obligations and its Cartagena Action Plan commitments.

In particular, Nigeria will report such discoveries in accordance with its obligations under Article 7, take advantage of other informal means to share such information, and destroy these anti-personnel mines as a matter of urgent priority.

Nigeria has a right to retain mines for reasons permitted under Article 3, having most recently reported 3,364 retained mines.

I can assure you that, again in keeping with our Cartagena Action Plan commitments, Nigeria will review the number of anti-personnel mines retained to ensure that they constitute the minimum number absolutely necessary for the purposes permitted by the Convention and destroy all those exceeding that number.

Nigeria has repeatedly stated that the continued existence and retention of weapons of mass destruction and mass disability constitutes a threat to both those who have and retain these weapons and to those who do not. This is a statement of fact.

Therefore, a mine-free world, to which Nigeria strongly ascribes, is a necessity. As a result, Nigeria will do its part to ensure that this happens in our territory.