

Canadian Statement
Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction
2 June, 2008

Thank you Madame Co-Chair

Canada would like to thank the Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs of the Standing Committee of Stockpile Destruction for their hard work since 8 MSP. Stockpile destruction remains a vital component of mine action. It is only through destruction of stocks and through universalization, that we can ensure no new mines are placed in the ground. Even as use continues to decrease, there still remains risk that mines will continue to be laid until such a day when the last stockpiled mine is destroyed.

We would like to express our concern that three States Parties have missed their stockpile destruction deadlines. We thank Belarus, Greece and Turkey for their updates today on their progress to date; however it is important that we, as States Parties recognize the seriousness of this situation. The Convention does not allow for extensions of stockpile destruction deadlines and thus three States Parties are now non-compliant with their treaty obligations. We note that some mines have been destroyed in Belarus but few, if any others have been destroyed by the three States parties, more than four years after the treaty entered into force for them.

One of the hallmarks of this convention is its transparency and openness. We note that over the past few years Belarus has updated the States Parties with respect to the tendering process and technical difficulties they are experiencing. Canada encourages all three States Parties to provide updates of progress, provide details on any obstacles and outline clearly defined timelines to the mine action community.

Co-Chair, Canada along with the Stockpile Destruction Standing Committee and many others, takes this situation very seriously and we thus urge all States Parties involved, and those involved in the provision of assistance, where appropriate, to ensure these treaty obligations are met as soon as possible.

Thank you.