



Statement
Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction
Other Matters of a Thematic Nature Related to Stockpile Destruction
Monday, 2 June 2008

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all state parties that have destroyed their stockpiles in accordance with their respective deadlines.

Non-State Actor signatories to the Geneva Call Deed of Commitment have also made progress in this respect. On the 21st of May, the Polisario Front destroyed 2,000 AP mines in Tifariti, Western Sahara, mainly VS50 mines. This was the 3rd such stockpile destruction. In total 8,642 AP mines have now been destroyed. Geneva Call, the Saharawi Campaign to Ban Landmines and Landmine Action UK which provided technical assistance, observed the destruction site before and after the operation. Government representatives and the international media also witnessed the event. We anticipate that the Polisario Front will soon finalise this process, thus fulfilling its obligations under the Deed of Commitment.

Another signatory group, also started to destroy its stockpiles. The Lahu Democratic Front in Burma/Myanmar has reported having destroyed a little over 10% of its stocks.

We would like to also bring to your attention that two former signatories to the Deed of Commitment have recently destroyed their stocks. Burundi, as a former armed group has mixed its own small stock with those of the government's armed forces and destroyed them all together in accordance with the obligations under Article 4 of the MBT. And in Sudan, the Sudan People Liberation Movement now part of the government, has destroyed all its stockpiles.

Even if the numbers of mines destroyed is generally not very high-because NSA often don't possess huge quantities of mines, these efforts have to be considered as successful and be positively encouraged as stated in Article 46 of the Nairobi Action Plan.

As stated by the delegate of Canada this afternoon, stockpile destruction is a very important pillar, because as long as mines are available, they can be used and be a threat for the population. And Geneva Call will continue to press signatory groups which have stocks to destroy them as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention

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