

**PRESENTATION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE AP  
MINE BAN CONVENTION, GENEVA, 21-25 JUNE, 2010**

**ON THE STATUS OF NIGERIA ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION,  
GENERAL STATUS AND VICTIM ASSISTANCE,**

Thank you Mr. Co-Chairman

The Nigerian delegation, like other delegations before me, would like to congratulate the co-chairs of this Standing Committee, the corapportuers and the Presidency for the excellent work of organizing this Standing Committee Meetings. I wish to particularly extend my country's appreciation of the Implementation Support Unit for its untiring supportive role in the work of the Standing Committees. Nigeria reiterates its commitment to the ideals of the Convention.

Mr Co-Chair

Nigeria is taking the floor to present the progress she has made on the general status, stockpile destruction and victim assistance in compliance with the provisions of the AP Mine Ban Convention. Nigeria rendered her transparency report in 2009. The last report was captured in the UN 'Landmine Monitor Report' of 2009.

**Background to Nigeria's Mine History:**

It would be recalled that Nigeria fought a civil war within the present South-Eastern part of Nigeria (then Biafran territory) 40 years ago. It was during the period of civil war that landmines were emplaced within the civil war affected region of Nigeria. This unfortunate civil war caused the deaths of more than one million citizens and left on the lands a significant amount of Explosive Remnant of War (ERW) The then military governments made efforts to use the services of the Police and the Army de-miners to clear the mines but this action was not total. Nigeria as a member state of the Mine Ban Convention, and in compliance to its Article 5 which requires all member states to ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel landmines under its jurisdiction is obligated to conduct humanitarian demining.

Mr Co-Chair

Early in 2009 therefore, the Ministry of Defence, in compliance with the Presidential directive to remove landmines from mined areas of the former Eastern region of Nigeria, formed an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Humanitarian De-Mining. A Private Company, Messers RSB Holding Limited was commissioned to undertake the humanitarian De-mining activities. The exercise included the enumeration of landmine affected victims, clearance and destruction of recovered mines, Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) and other explosive remnants of War (ERW).

Twelve States out of the thirty-six states in the country were cleared of these Explosive Remnants of War. Blast-off ceremonies of these recovered Stockpiles were conducted in Enugu in June 2009, and in Owerri, Port Harcourt and Markurdi, in March 2010. The destruction of Stockpiles conducted in Enugu in June 2009 was witnessed by a representative from the AP Ban Mine Treaty ISU in Geneva. The quantities of the recovered UXOs and Landmines were 101 AP landmines and 1776 UXOs. Nigeria is still retaining 5000 mines for the purpose of training as allowed in the convention. This has not diminished as expected because De-miners are not being trained. The Humanitarian De-mining exercise is still in progress and ten (10) years after its accession to the Convention more than 70% of the suspected affected areas of the Eastern Part of Nigeria has so far been cleared and the land made safe for productive civil use. Nigeria has made remarkable progress in this area and is poised to being way ahead of the 2012 deadline given for the destruction of all Stockpiles.

Mr Co-Chair

The total number of enumerated landmine victims stands at 367 persons affected by the accidental explosion of either UXOs or landmines. Out of this figure, 64 persons were really incapacitated by landmines. There is a plan to also provide medical care and other physical needs to mine victims. The State Governments of the affected twelve States where these mine victims are located have pledged to provide assistance in form of artificial limbs and wheel chairs. It should be noted that mine victims also enjoy the legislative measures put in place to enhance the welfare of disabled and handicapped persons in Nigeria.

In the area of Mines Awareness and Mines Risk Education, the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Humanitarian de-mining printed over one million posters in indigenous Nigerian languages to educate the local communities on the dangers of mines. The State Governments of the affected States used the State Radio and Television Stations to educate the public through jingles and documentaries. The Traditional Rulers of these communities were also involved in the mines risks awareness efforts. Four Mine Action Centres have been established in Owerri, Enugu, Awka, and Uyo. Telephone hotlines have also been provided by the Federal Government for the purpose of alerting the Inter- Ministerial Committee wherever mine is found in the affected twelve states.

Mr Co- Chair,

For the future, Nigeria intends to continue with the exercise and also ensure that the advocacy and sensitization of the civil populace go side by side with the demining efforts.

I thank you for listening.