

As the Co-Chairman of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction I would like to make a brief, concluding statement as a wrap-up to this years work.

When I took over the Co-Chair I wanted to visit the countries whose deadlines for implementing their Article 4 obligations will fall between the Seventh and Eighth Meetings of States Parties. Unfortunately, due to physical constraints I was unable to make these visits.

But as the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee this year, I endeavored to bring about fruitful discussions and we believe this has led to certain results. It was encouraging that some countries reported on the fulfillment of their Article 4 obligations. Furthermore, we urge the two States Parties for which it is assumed do have stockpiled anti-personnel mines, but have not yet reported as required under Article 7, to report at the earliest possible date.

We would like to reiterate that the number one priority for the States Parties is to comply with their deadlines for the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel landmines, and we call on them to expend their utmost effort to this end. For the purpose of achieving this goal, the international community should lend their support to these efforts.

During Tanzania and Japan's co-chairmanship one country came forward requesting an extension for their stockpile destruction obligation. Unlike Article 5, Article 4 of the Ottawa Convention does not contain any provision for the extension of obligation fulfillment. In the future there may be more countries, despite their best efforts, that face similar challenges to the fulfillment of their Article 4 obligations. Hence, it might be necessary to carefully examine this issue hereafter in order to find a reasonable solution.

Japan appreciates the efforts of both the mine affected countries and donor countries, which has led to meaningful discussions throughout this year's sessions.

Thank you