

ICRC intervention

Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention 25 June 2010

Statement on Article 3

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair.

We would like to take this opportunity to briefly comment on the presentations made today under the item "**Article 3**: plans for and use of mines retained".

The ICRC would like to thank all delegations that have provided updates on their plans for and use of mines retained under Article 3, in fulfilment of the commitment they made in **Actions #56 and 57** of the Cartagena Action Plan. We welcome the announcement made by Thailand, Cyprus and Argentina that they will either this year or in the near future noticeably decrease the number of mines retained under Article 3.

We are pleased to note that there seems to be a noticeable trend towards the reduction of retained mines by the majority of States that had filed their article 7 reports. We reviewed reports filed for the years 2008 and 2009 and believe that it is important to note in this regard, that 6 States (Algeria, Chile, Czech Republic, Peru, Serbia and Sudan) have substantially reduced their numbers of retained mines either in 2008 or 2009. We welcome these decisions. However, around 20 States reported stable numbers years after years. We would like to echo and endorse the 3 main concerns that have just been expressed by the ICBL in this respect.

Since the intersessional meetings of 2007, the ICRC has taken the view that retaining, year after year, a stable number of mines that are not used for any permitted purpose may constitute stockpiling the weapon prohibited by this convention. We also stressed that the need to retain live mines for some of the declared purposes is still unclear to us. Several States have indeed concluded that the training and research purposes can be fulfilled without live anti-personnel mines, such as mentioned by Belgium earlier this week.

As agreed in Actions points 56 and 57 of the Cartagena Action plan, we urge those 20 states or so that have maintained the same number of mines for years, without having reported on the use of such mines for permitted purposes, to assess whether the number retained constitute the minimum number absolutely necessary and to destroy mines in excess of this number. We hope to hear from these States later this week either this week and during the meeting of States Parties this year.