

Mine Ban Convention – Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention

Norwegian statement on Article 3

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Mines retained for development of training in mine detection and mine clearance

- Article 3 provides States Parties with an opportunity to retain anti-personnel mines for purposes of training and research. The convention specifies that the amount should not exceed the minimum number absolutely necessary. We must ensure that this provision does not become a *de facto* exception to article 1.b – the obligation to destroy all stockpiled anti personnel mines.
- To avoid any uncertainty regarding the Article 3 provision, it is crucial that States Parties that have chosen to retain mines ensure to use them for their intended purposes and follow the recommendations on transparency and reporting. While the majority of States Parties with retained mines have done so, we are concerned that too many have kept mines with reference to the exception in Article 3 for a long time without reporting neither use nor a reduction in their numbers.
- The Cartagena Actions # 56, #57 and # 58 provide us with a principled and practical way to ensure that mines retained under article 3 are used for their intended purposes and does not risk to undermine the obligations of the convention. We encourage all States Parties with Article 3 mines to review the number of mines retained and report on their use in accordance with Cartagena Actions 56 and 57.
- Norway destroyed all stockpiled antipersonnel before the convention entered into force. In the following decade Norwegian military units have participated in a number of international operations, and Norwegian NGOs have conducted major mine clearance operations all over the world. Norwegian private sector is involved in research and development of mine clearance equipment. This has been possible without retaining any anti-personnel mines, and we encourage all States Parties to destroy all their remaining anti-personnel mines as soon as possible. The number of mines absolutely necessary can well be zero.