

**REPORT AND PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS  
COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE COMPLIANCE  
(Algeria, Canada, Chile, Peru and Sweden)**

**2016 Intersessional Meetings**

**PART 1: Introduction**

**Activities of the Committee**

1. In order to fulfil its objective, the Committee met on a regular basis starting in January 2016. Part of the meetings consisted of internal deliberations, while another part of the meetings was aimed at engaging in a cooperative dialogue with those States Parties confronted with allegations of use of anti-personnel mines.
2. During its internal deliberations, the Committee began drafting working methods which consider the decision to take on a case, the preferred order of proceedings, the idea of identifying an indicative set of questions which could be used as openers for new cases, the structure of the reports of the Committee, what to do in case of a conflict of interest, and the Committee's relations with civil society.
3. Over the course of 17-19 of February the Committee met with representatives of South Sudan, Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen. The Committee was grateful for the engagement of representatives of these States and the information they provided to the Committee. The Committee also reached out to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and Human Rights Watch in order to receive input from civil society with regard to these issues.

**PART 2: Preliminary Observations**

4. On the basis of its deliberations and of the cooperative engagement with concerned States Parties, the Committee wishes to share the following observation and status on compliance:

**South Sudan**

5. The Committee considered allegations about South Sudan's compliance with the Convention's prohibitions contained in Article 1.1 of the Convention. These allegations concerned the deployment of anti-personnel mines by the Government of South Sudan's Forces in the area around Nassir in the Upper Nile state and stemmed from the "Summary of Latest Reports of Violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) investigated and verified by the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism in South Sudan from 1 March 2015 to 16 March 2015".
6. In May 2015 South Sudan informed the Committee in writing that its national army has not possessed anti-personnel mines since 2008. The government also indicated that due to insecurity the concerned area was difficult to access. This was confirmed by representatives of the UNMAS office in South Sudan who also indicated that the security situation made it difficult to conduct investigations into alleged mine use.

7. During a meeting on 29 September 2015 a representative of South Sudan expressed hope that the peace agreement signed on 26 August 2015 would lead to an amelioration of the security situation in the states of Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile and that this would facilitate investigation of allegations. The Committee was also informed that the Ministry of Defense also decided to set up a commission to investigate the allegations of mine use in these areas.
8. At the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties, South Sudan expressed deep concern about the alleged new use of anti-personnel mines by the Government Forces as reported by the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism in South Sudan. South Sudan informed the States Parties that the recent armed conflict had made the area inaccessible and a verification mission unfeasible.
9. South Sudan resolved to establish a committee to investigate the allegation when such mission becomes feasible. South Sudan welcomed UNMAS and civil society to form a joint verification mission with the Government to establish the facts regarding the allegations. South Sudan expressed hope that the security situation will improve and pave the way for an investigation.
10. The Committee on Cooperative Compliance met with South Sudan on 17 February 2016. South Sudan informed the Committee that a commission is being formed to carry out investigations around Nassir in the Upper Nile state. The security situation and weather conditions have so far hampered investigations in this region. South Sudan informed the Committee that the security situation has improved in Nassir and that it would allow for an investigation. The weather conditions would also permit an investigation before the beginning of the rains in April or May; however, South Sudan requires assistance to facilitate transport of the investigation team to Nassir, an area which is only accessible by air.
11. South Sudan informed the Committee that the area around Nassir had been inaccessible for the Landmine Impact Survey. If support becomes available, particularly for air transportation, this area will need to be surveyed as the presence of anti-personnel mines is suspected.
12. The Committee appreciates the willingness of South Sudan to engage in a continued dialogue, share information and clarify the situation with regard to the mentioned allegations. In view of the information received from South Sudan, the Committee is looking forward to engaging further with South Sudan over the course of the current year.

## **Sudan**

13. Claims with regard to allegations of the use of anti-personnel mines in Sudan – both by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and by the Sudan People's Liberation Army – North (SPLA-N) surfaced in 2011 and 2012. Sudan has been engaged in a dialogue with the Committee since December 2014 regarding these allegations. Sudan has repeatedly underlined that it complies fully with the Convention and has opened investigations to clarify several allegations that concern the areas of Toroji, Higleg, Jabalko, Heiban, and Belila. While Sudan was able to provide to the Committee an investigative internal report for Higleg, which came to the conclusion that no new anti-personnel mines were laid, it reported not being able to access the other areas where allegations have arisen due to the security situation in these areas.
14. In the written update sent to the Committee as a follow up to the meeting of 31 August 2015 Sudan stressed that it does not stockpile nor does it manufacture mines. With regard to the allegations of the existence of mines in some areas of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, Sudan

stated that these mines may have been planted by rebel movements in areas under the rebels' control. A fact finding committee was unable to reach Jabalko due to heavy rain, the difficulty of movement and lack of security, therefore the National Mine Action Committee is scheduled to visit the area in November 2015.

15. In the same update Sudan also reiterated that the biggest obstacle to the implementation of mine action programs in general relates to the security situation in the regions of Blue Nile and South Kordofan. The National Mine Action Committee focuses its mine action activities in post-conflict areas such as Eastern Sudan and Darfur, but there is no work in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan because of the challenging security situation.
16. Sudan also indicated that it would furthermore welcome support in all areas related to mine action, especially capacity building. Sudan also called for support from the international community to assist its National Mine Action Committee to redouble its efforts in order to achieve full compliance with the terms of the Convention and remove all mines in Sudan's conflict zones by its 1 April 2019 extended deadline to implement its mine clearance obligations under the Convention.
17. Sudan informed the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties that clearance operations recommenced in Blue Nile and South Kordofan in 2015, where the challenging security situation previously impeded clearance operations, and that the operations are being conducted by national organizations, the National Demining Units and JASMAR. Sudan informed that further clearance in these states will be undertaken if sufficient financial resources are made available.
18. On 1 February 2016, Sudan provided to the Committee two investigative reports on the alleged use of anti-personnel mines by the Sudanese Army. The investigations were conducted in the Kilemo district of Kadugli (South Kordofan) and in the Baleela region (West Kordofan) in October 2015. The report concluded in both cases that the Sudanese Army observed the obligations under the Convention and, in particular, that no new anti-personnel mines were laid. Allegations in the regions of Hayman, Jabalko and Tirougi could not be investigated as these regions are outside the control of the Sudanese Government. The report concluded that investigations must be carried out in these regions once the security situation permits.
19. The Committee met with a representative of Sudan on 17 February 2016 in which Sudan reiterated the fact that it is committed to the implementation of the Convention but that some areas remain in conflict and it is not possible to carry out investigations in these areas.
20. The Committee appreciates the willingness of Sudan to engage in a continued dialogue, share information and clarify the situation with regard to the mentioned allegations. In view of the information received from Sudan, the Committee is looking forward to engaging further with Sudan over the course of the current year.

## **Ukraine**

21. The claims of use of anti-personnel mines in Ukraine relate to the documentation of alleged presence of various types of anti-personnel mines (PFM, MON and OZM series) on Ukrainian territory since early 2014, without clear determination as to the parties responsible for such use. Ukraine engaged in a dialogue with the Committee in May 2015 regarding these allegations, and stressed that it complies fully with the Convention. Ukraine reiterated furthermore that its Armed Forces are authorized to use MON-series and OZM-72 mines only in command-detonate mode (through electrical initiation), which is not prohibited by the Ottawa Convention.

Moreover, Ukraine underlined that it would welcome further international assistance to address its large and growing contamination challenge.

22. Ukraine made a declaration on this issue during the Intersessional Meetings in June 2015 and has been standing by its declaration since, indicating that there are no new elements to add.
23. Ukraine informed the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties that there are mined areas under its jurisdiction, however, not under its control. Ukraine further informed that sabotage acts are carried out on its territory which is under the control of Ukraine, including mining territory and infrastructure.
24. The Committee on Cooperative Compliance met with Ukraine on 18 February 2016. Ukraine reiterated that it complies with the Convention and that all units of the Ukrainian Armed Forces are instructed on obligations of the Convention. Ukraine restated that its Armed Forces are authorized to use mines in command-detonate mode, which is not prohibited under the Convention. All mines planted in command-detonate mode are recorded, secured and access is restricted.
25. Ukraine informed the Committee that anti-personnel mines are being used in victim-activated mode (including MON-15 mines with tripwire), which is prohibited under the Convention, by non-State armed groups in areas in the south-east of the country which are not under the control of Ukraine.
26. Ukraine reiterated that it possesses stockpiled anti-personnel mines with the destruction of these mines resuming in December 2015 after it had previously been paused. Ukraine indicated that these stockpiles are not in the proximity of the frontline. However, some anti-personnel mines have been seized by non-State armed groups in the territory not under the control of Ukraine (Crimea). Some of these mines have in the meantime been used and found by Ukraine.
27. The Committee appreciates the willingness of Ukraine to engage in a continued dialogue, share information and clarify the situation with regard to the mentioned allegations. In view of the information received from Ukraine, the Committee is looking forward to engaging further with Ukraine over the course of the current year.

## **Yemen**

28. Through an Official Communiqué on 17 November 2013, Yemen acknowledged and confirmed allegations of use of anti-personnel mines by the Republican Guard Forces in the area of Wadi Bani Jarmoz, near Sana'a, in 2011. Since then, Yemen has provided to the States Parties an interim report (29 March 2014) and a final report (15 January 2015), in accordance with its commitment made at the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties, to inform States Parties on (a) the status and outcome of Yemen's investigation, (b) the identification of those responsible for deploying anti-personnel mines, and subsequent measures taken, (c) information on the source of the anti-personnel mines and how those mines were obtained, particularly given that Yemen had long ago reported the destruction of all stockpiles, (d) the destruction of any additional stockpiles discovered and the clearance of the mined areas in question, and (e) actions to prevent and suppress any possible future prohibited activities undertaken by persons or on territory under its jurisdiction or control. According to these reports and to information provided to the Committee, internal investigations were opened and referred to a military tribunal in order to consider and verify the evidence. However, according to Yemen, these procedures were subsequently halted due to internal security, political and technical restraints.

29. In July 2015 new allegations of use of anti-personnel mines in the provinces of Aden, Abyan, and Lahij surfaced. Media reports referred to declarations made by both mine action officials and health officials. The Committee invited Yemen to meet in a letter dated 15 September 2015. In its response Yemen replied that due to the difficult circumstances the government is facing, it is not able to conduct an investigation for the moment on these new allegations and that due to the lack of adequate information it was unable to attend the meeting.
30. At the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties, Yemen informed that it has been made aware by the media of the use of anti-personnel mines in the centre and south of the country where battles are taking place. Yemen further informed that the locations of these mines remain unclear and affirmed that one of the Government's priorities is to collect evidence to provide specific information on the allegations.
31. The Committee on Cooperative Compliance met with a representative of Yemen on 19 February 2016. Yemen informed the Committee that the situation remains unchanged and that no new investigations into the alleged use of anti-personnel mines have been conducted. The last investigation took place in 2011 but had to be halted due to the political and security situation, and has not been resumed in the meantime.
32. Yemen further informed the Committee that there is anti-personnel mine contamination in the centre of the country, the south (Aden) and possibly the east near the governorate of Taiz. Yemen indicated that due to the conflict these mined areas cannot be visited.
33. The Committee appreciates the willingness of Yemen to engage in a continued dialogue, share information and clarify the situation with regard to the mentioned allegations. In view of the information received from Yemen, the Committee is looking forward to engaging further with Yemen over the course of the current year.