

Rejoinder, Article 4

Mr. President, distinguished participants of the meeting!

Acceding to the Ottawa Convention, Ukraine obligates to destroying the existing stockpiles of anti-personnel mines. This means the destruction of more than 6.8 million anti-personnel mines inherited from the Soviet Union. Ukraine has successfully moved forward in its efforts to fulfill its obligations under Article 4 of the Ottawa Convention. More than 400,000 PMN-2 landmines, more than 230,000 POMZ, 8,000 PMD-6, 3,500 OZM-4, about 15,000 remotely emplaced POM-2 mines, and about 2 million PFM-1 mines were completely destroyed.

Despite the Russian aggression that began in 2014, Ukraine continued to increase its efforts to destroy stockpiles. We should express our gratitude to our partners, namely the European Union and NATO, who, in accordance with the Implementation Agreement ratified by the Verkhovna Rada on May 18, 2005 and the contract between the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the NATO NSPA Agency signed on February 1, 2013, assisted Ukraine in destroying about 2,5 million PFM-1 and PFM-1S mines, 3,363,828 PFM-1S mines left.

The contract expired at the beginning of 2020, and NSPA initiated an international tender process to determine the contractor for the destruction of the remaining anti-personnel mines. In preparation for the international tender process, a working group of representatives of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and a representative of NSPA inspected the actual condition of the munitions to determine whether they could be safely transported to the disposal site.

The full-scale, unmotivated aggression of the Russian Federation has made adjustments to the plans for the destruction of the stockpile. At present, all economic and financial resources of Ukraine and assistance from our international partners are aimed at repelling Russian aggression and preserving Ukrainian statehood and independence.

The implementation of Action 14 of the Oslo Action Plan, according to which the participating States that failed to meet their deadline for stockpile destruction and are therefore in a situation of non-compliance with Article 4 must provide a timely plan for completion of the work, is currently impossible. When an inadequate thief armed with a rocket baton breaks into a house, the owner makes every effort to throw him out the door and only then restores order in his home.

The anti-personnel mines declared by Ukraine as part of the implementation of Article 4 of the Ottawa Convention are in the warehouses of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and will be destroyed in accordance with the obligations assumed after the cessation of hostilities and the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

At the same time, if the warehouses and arsenals where anti-personnel mines are stored are located in the territories occupied by Russia or have been subjected to air and missile strikes by the armed forces of the Russian Federation, information about such mines can be obtained only after the territory is liberated, cleared and the relevant inspections are carried out.

Accordingly, the issue of continuing the destruction of stockpiles will be actualized after the repulsion of Russian aggression and the restoration of sovereignty throughout Ukraine.

Thank you for your attention