

ICBL statement on Stockpile Destruction

Mine Ban Treaty Intersessional Meetings, 19-21 June 2023, Geneva

Thank you, Mr. President,

The ICBL was pleased to hear updates from Greece and Ukraine on their stockpile destruction efforts. The war in Ukraine has certainly complicated matters.

But Greece and Ukraine remain in violation of Article 4 for 15 and 13 years respectively after failing to complete the destruction of their stockpiles by their four-year deadline. Neither state has made much apparent progress destroying its stocks over the past calendar year nor has either indicated when they will fulfill this obligation.

We were encouraged to hear from Greece about some progress on destroying its remaining stockpiles. We further encourage Greece to set a firm completion deadline, to intensify its efforts and devote the necessary resources for stockpile destruction, as well as to provide monthly progress reports to States Parties.

We took note of Ukraine's update in its most recent Article 7 transparency report covering 2022:

Anti-personnel mines, the presence of which was 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 commitments made after the cessation of hostilities and the restoration of the territorial integrity of Ukraine 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 they have been subjected to air and missile strikes by the armed forces of the Russian Federation, then information about such mines can be obtained only after the territory has been liberated, cleared and carrying out relevant inspections.

In light of the credible reports of recent Ukrainian use of antipersonnel mines, it is essential that the Ukrainian government accounts for the status of its stockpile of antipersonnel mines, and assures States Parties that none of its stockpiled mines will be used in combat operations.

The Oslo Action Plan urges states that have failed to meet their stockpile destruction deadlines to "present a time-bound plan for completion and urgently proceed with implementation as soon as possible in a transparent manner."

Both situations are regrettable but should be of great concern to all States Parties, who, alongside the President and the Committee on Cooperative Compliance, should undertake urgent steps to help the two concerned States Parties fulfill their obligations and come back into compliance, as soon as possible.

Thank you.