



**Poland formally declares it has destroyed its anti-personnel mines stockpile, safely and in an environmentally friendly manner, Europe closer to eliminating landmines**

*Santiago, Chile* – After much anticipation, Poland has declared that it has completed the destruction of its entire stockpile of anti-personnel mines. The announcement was made by H.E. Aleksandra Piatkowska, Polish Ambassador to Chile at the Fifteenth Meeting of the States Parties (15MSP) to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention taking place in Santiago, Chile until 1 December. “Even before joining the Convention, Poland never wavered in its commitment to the Convention’s humanitarian goals. That is why, Poland began destroying its stockpile even before reaffirming our attachment to the objectives of the Convention,” said Ambassador Piatkowska. “We have destroyed a total of 1,055,971 landmines during this process.”

The process of destroying “the last 17,000 pieces and remaining components of dismantled mines” ended in April 2016, over a year before its 2017 deadline. Poland will not retain anti-personnel mines for training, opting to use instead simulators and imitators.

“The vast majority of mines were destroyed without adverse effect on the environment – through recycling of its components, wood and metal, and using extracted TNT material for military training and other specific purposes, such as breaking ice jams on rivers,” said Ambassador Piatkowska.

H.E. Marta Maurás of Chile, who is leading the work of the Convention in Santiago, welcomed the news. “The Convention is not only a humanitarian treaty but a disarmament instrument that works. Poland is demonstrating real commitment to the aims of eliminating landmines and has done so prior to its deadline.”

According to the Convention “each State Party undertakes to destroy or ensure the destruction of all stockpiled anti-personnel mines it owns or possesses, or that are under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible but not later than four years after the entry into force of this Convention for that State Party.”

Poland ratified the Convention in 2012 and the Convention entered into force for Poland on 1 June 2013. Poland has also been a strong supporter of mine action in the world.

**The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention** was adopted in Oslo in 1997, opened for signature in Ottawa the same year and entered into force in 1999.

To date 162 states have joined the Convention with 157 of these reporting that they no longer hold stocks of anti-personnel mines. Over 48 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed by the States Parties.