

## **Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of AP Mines and on their Destruction**

### *Meetings of the Standing Committees*

1. DATE, TIME & DURATION: 20 – 24 June, 2011

2. ORGANISATIONS & ATTENDEES:

- Member States
- International Organizations
- NGOs

3. REPORT WRITTEN BY:

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4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE EVENT:

On 3 December 1997, representatives of over 100 states signed the Convention in Ottawa, thereby expressing their determination to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction is the cornerstone of the international effort to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel (AP) mines. The Convention was adopted on 18 September 1997 and it entered into force on 1 March 1999. As of 1 September 2008, 156 states had joined the Convention. The Convention emphasizes that the States Parties are "determined to work strenuously towards the promotion of its universalization in all relevant fora."

In accepting the Convention, "each State Party undertakes never under any circumstances:

- To use anti-personnel mines;
- To develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer to anyone, directly or indirectly, anti-personnel mines;
- To assist, encourage or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Convention."
- It should be noted that " the Articles of this Convention shall not be subject to reservations."

Progress made

- 156 states have ratified or have acceded to the Convention.
- Every state in the Americas but Cuba and the USA has joined the Convention, as have most European states and every state in Africa except Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Somalia.
- The use of anti-personnel mines has decreased dramatically through adherence to the Convention by 156 States and the widespread acceptance of its provisions by other States.

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- The production of AP mines has decreased significantly: Of the 50 States that at one time produced AP mines, 34 are now parties to the Convention.

#### Challenges

- 39 States have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention.
- Combined, six of these States – China, India, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Russia and the United States – may hold tens of millions of stockpiled antipersonnel mines.
- Some States not parties to the Convention have made new use of AP mines since the Convention entered into force.
- Some armed non-State actors continue to use, stockpile, and produce anti-personnel mines.

#### 5. OBJECTIVES:

##### a. General Objective of the Meeting:

These meetings provided the second opportunity following the Second Review Conference to discuss the application of the Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014. As such, they were intended to further build upon the momentum of Cartagena where the States Parties agreed to undertake 67 concrete actions “in support of enhanced implementation and promotion of the Convention” and pledged “to translate this action plan into sustainable progress.”

In addition to the regular work of the four Standing Committees, the week of 20-24 June also featured the following enhancements to the Intersessional Work Programme pursuant to decisions that were taken at the 2010 Tenth Meeting of the States Parties:

\* The new Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance met for the first time, with a half-day meeting on the 24 June.

\* Time has been set aside on 23 June to experiment with new ways of carrying out the work of the Standing Committees. This featured three concurrent informal small group meetings that saw the Convention’s traditional spirit of partnership and cooperation channelled to focus on particular national contexts or on otherwise advancing the aims of the Cartagena Action Plan.

In keeping with past practice, the Co-Chairs emphasised the importance of participation by States Parties that are in the process of clearing mined areas, destroying stockpiled mines, assisting survivors or implementing other aspects of the Convention. As in the past, these States Parties are encouraged to provide brief updates on the basis of questions posed by Co-Chairs.

Also in keeping with past practice, the programme does not incorporate a general exchange of views. With a new fifth Standing Committee, it is more important than ever before that we get down to work the morning of 20 June, focusing on key aspects of implementation at that time and throughout the week.

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#### GENERAL DISCUSSIONS/ THEMES:

Full Programme available at: <http://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/pdf/mbc/IWP/SC-june11/SC-June2011-Programme-12May2011.pdf>

#### 6. OUTCOMES/RESULTS

**New landmine use:** The Convention's President, H.E. Gazmend Turdiu of Albania, expressed "deep concern" about reports of new mine use in Libya and reminded the world that, at the landmark 2009 Cartagena Summit, States had "accepted that they would condemn and continue to discourage in every possible way any production, transfer and use of anti - personnel mines by any actors."

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and several States also expressed concern on the recent use of landmines. Norway called on States Parties to "follow up, investigate and condemn when confirmed," the use of landmines.

**Mine clearance:** Nigeria became the 17th State Party, out of the 54 that had declared having mined areas, to complete its mine clearance obligations under the Convention. In total, 820 anti-personnel landmines, 325 anti-vehicle landmines and 17,516 other explosive remnants of war were destroyed. Nigeria will present a formal declaration of completion at the 11MSP.

Algeria, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Eritrea presented requests for extensions on their ten-year deadlines for mine clearance. These requests will be considered at the 11MSP in Cambodia. Algeria has requested five more years to complete implementation and Chile has requested eight years. The DRC has requested two years to obtain the required information concerning the extent of the work remaining to implement the Convention after which it will return to the States Parties to request additional time to implement its plans. Eritrea has requested three years to undertake similar actions.

**Victim assistance:** States Parties highlighted the link between their efforts and those of all others concerned about removing barriers to persons with disabilities. The World Health Organization presented its landmark World Report on Disability, noting: "More than one billion people in the world live with some form of disability. That means there are more than one billion people, including landmine survivors around the world, who want access, better attitudes and inclusion".

**Stockpile destruction:** To date, approximately 44 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines have been destroyed by the States Parties. Four States Parties still in the process of completing their stockpile destruction programmes (Belarus, Greece, Turkey and Ukraine) provided updates on their efforts.

Turkey reported that it has now destroyed approximately 3 million stockpiled mines and that its destruction programme is 99.23 percent complete.

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Universalization: Several States that are not yet party to the Convention provided updates on steps they are taking toward ratification or accession of it. Finland announced that a “bill will be submitted to Parliament promptly after the summer break in order for the Convention to be ratified in 2012.” Poland indicated that it “is expected to ratify the Convention in 2012”.

Morocco said that while it has not joined the Convention it “voluntarily applies its dispositions and fulfils without prejudice its humanitarian objectives including demining and victim assistance.” The Lao PDR talked about its “intention to accede to the Convention” and highlighted its willingness to provide a voluntary transparency report. The island nation of Tuvalu, participating in the work of the Convention for the first time, stated that it “is here to listen and hopefully become a member in the near future”.