

Third Meeting
Managua, 18-21 September 2001
Item 15 of the draft provisional agenda

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
AND ASSISTANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 6**

Report of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction
to the Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention

I. Introduction

1. The Standing Committee (SC) on Stockpile Destruction, originally established as the Standing Committee of Experts on Stockpile Destruction in accordance with the decisions and recommendations of the 3-7 May 1999 First Meeting of the States Parties (FMSP), met in Geneva on 7 December 2000 and 10 May 2001.
2. At the Second Meeting of the States Parties (SMSP), it was agreed, in accordance with paragraph 28 of the final report of the SMSP, that Malaysia and Slovakia would serve as Co-Chairs of the SC, with Australia and Croatia serving as Co-Rapporteurs.
3. Representatives of more than 80 States Parties, United Nations bodies, the ICRC, ICBL and numerous other relevant organizations were registered as participants in either or both of the two meetings.
4. The meetings of the SC received administrative support from the GICHD.

II. Matters reviewed by the Standing Committee

5. The SC conducted its work in the following thematic areas: stockpile destruction as an integral part of mine action; the need for adequate and equitable allocation of resources and of matching donors with needs; and the lessons learned from case studies, both national and regional; the necessity for the SC to continue focusing on the way ahead and to assist countries in meeting the four-year deadline.



6. The SC reiterated that stockpile destruction, as the "fifth pillar" of mine action, was an integral part of the Convention's implementation and that compliance with Article 4 obligations should receive high political priority.

7. The SC considered a number of practical issues with a view to highlighting the importance of the core objective of the SC, namely to facilitate a swift and dramatic reduction in the number of stockpiled anti-personnel mines globally, including through the following:

- ensuring political priority for stockpile destruction;
- updating and assessing overall progress with regard to stockpile destruction; (including providing progress report on global stockpiles and their destruction);
- emphasizing the obligations and rights of countries under Article 4 of the Convention;
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- discussing the merits and constraints of various methods and technologies for destruction as experienced by individual countries;
- emphasizing the role of both the military and private sectors in stockpile destruction, depending on individual countries needs;
- taking into account logistical, technical, financial and environmental considerations in planning the stockpile destruction programmes;
- considering all possible alternatives to the current methods of stockpile destruction;
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- stressing the key role of proper planning and implementation of the process leading up to the actual destruction of stockpiles;
- recognizing the need for continuous financial and technical assistance-bilateral, multilateral and regional approaches to stockpile destruction;
- including the information on stockpile destruction in the Article 7 reports;
- focusing on the issue of foreign stockpiles;
- engaging the media and the public at large in the process of stockpile destruction;
- considering mechanisms for engaging non-States parties in reducing their stockpiles.

III. Actions taken related to the development of specific tools and instruments to assist in implementing the Convention

8. A website related to stockpile destruction was established by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and Canada in September 2000 and States were encouraged to make contributions. Information contained in the website includes proposed United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) guidelines on stockpile destruction, as well as a list of companies, experts and related technologies on stockpile destruction. It is believed that a

cumulative list of companies, experts and related technologies could provide a necessary link between "donor" and "recipient" countries when designing future cooperative structures.

9. Experts' seminars on stockpile destruction proved to be a useful tool for sharing expertise and experience in coping with the problems and challenges of stockpile destruction.

10. Regional initiatives contributed to stockpile destruction efforts. For example, the Managua Challenge (see below) contributed greatly to the speed at which stockpile destruction has been achieved in the Americas. This concrete example of a regional approach to stockpile destruction could also be applied in other regions, such as Africa and Asia.

11. The important role that ICBL's *Landmine Monitor* plays in reporting on the global process of stockpile destruction and contributing to greater transparency on this issue was highly appreciated.

IV. Action taken or in process to assist in the implementation of the Convention

12. Exploring avenues for finding additional resources for stockpile destruction projects continued to be one of the areas of concern addressed during the intersessional meetings. Various bilateral, multilateral and regional approaches were considered as means for seeking funding for stockpile destruction projects. The initiative launched by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (NATO/EAPC) in Albania was cited as one of the most effective examples of assistance in stockpile destruction.

13. Many delegations offered to share their experiences with stockpile destruction, in particular with regard to the merits and constraints of various methods of destruction. Various financial, technical, social and environmental considerations were also discussed, and an emphasis was placed on the need for careful planning and implementation of the process leading up to the actual destruction of stockpiles. The need to consider engaging the media and the public at large in the process of stockpile destruction was also emphasized.

14. The roles of UNMAS and UNDP in facilitating stockpile destruction projects were also discussed. UNDP is present in 137 countries worldwide, and therefore in countries where UNMAS is not present, the UNDP acts as that country's first and often only link with outside donors. Although United Nations agencies are traditionally involved in facilitating humanitarian demining activities, the possibility of expanding their activities to facilitate stockpile destruction should not be excluded.

15. States Parties that have decided to retain zero stocks of anti-personnel mines explained the rationale for such a move. Many other countries which had originally retained high number of stockpiled APLs in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of the Convention, made encouraging and positive steps towards reducing the overall number of stockpiled APLs.

16. A Regional Seminar on Stockpile Destruction was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 6-7 November 2000, at which the Managua Challenge was launched. The aim of the Managua Challenge is to assist OAS member States to develop and execute national stockpile destruction

plans, to identify technical resources and funding necessary for stockpile destruction, to facilitate international certification, and to assist with any other requirements within the capabilities and mandate of the OAS. In concrete terms, the Managua Challenge set out three goals: (a) it urged the signatories of the Ottawa Convention in the Americas to join the 27 States Parties from the region by ratifying the Convention, and thereby to maintain political momentum in the region to implement the Convention; (b) it encouraged States Parties to complete their Article 7, with the aim of promoting greater transparency; and (c) it aimed to complete the destruction of all stockpiles in American States by the Third Meeting of States Parties in Managua in September 2001.

17. A Seminar on the Destruction of PFM1 and PFM1S mines was held in Budapest, Hungary, on 1-2 February 2001. The primary aim of the seminar was to stimulate technical dialogue on the PFM mine problem among affected countries, technical experts and donors. The conclusions of the seminar highlighted the need for more information on the chemical components of the PFM mine, and therefore the need for a technical study of the PFM mine so as to gain reliable technical data for working out the best possible technical solution. The question of funding for this project was also discussed, and it was stressed that donor support would need to be channeled through an appropriate mechanism.

18. A Seminar on the Universalization and Implementation of the Ottawa Convention in Africa was held in Bamako, Mali, on 15-16 February 2001. Although the objective of this meeting was to help facilitate universalization, ratification and full implementation of the Convention in Africa, a stockpile destruction workshop was held in the framework of the meeting. As the stockpile destruction workshop affirmed that little is known of the scale of the problem in many African countries, it also concluded that there is a need to develop a database on the scope of the APL problem in all African countries. The database would include the number of stockpiled APLs. It was noted that the lack of financial aid is the primary reason for delays in implementing stockpile destruction programmes. It was therefore suggested that a fund be set up for deserving cases. Canada has already pledged to contribute to such a fund, while Canada and the GICHD have pledged to assist in planning stockpile destruction programmes with technical/expert advice. It was also suggested that the UNDP examine the possibility of managing voluntary contributions in this regard, and that interested countries follow up on France's offer to send military personnel to assist with stockpile destruction programmes.

19. An Antipersonnel Mines Stockpile Destruction Management Training Course was held in Fribourg, Switzerland, on 11-15 June 2001. The course offered training for experts who were involved in their respective national stockpile destruction programmes. It was hoped that at the end of the Training Course, participants would be in a position to better assess their national situations and therefore also APL stockpile destruction options; to make technical evaluations of existing stocks; to elaborate standard procedures; to use existing national resources; to identify areas of international cooperation; and to use available international experience.

20. A Regional Asia-Pacific Stockpile Destruction Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 8-9 August 2001. The meeting was attended by representatives from the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) member-countries. The meeting provided a forum for government officials, experts as well as non-governmental organizations to engage in technical discussions on methods for the destruction of APLs and other munitions, and also included discussions on

safe, efficient and environmentally friendly methods of storage, transport, planning and destruction operations using international standards.

21. The Committee agreed that, at the TMSP, the urgency and importance of stockpile destruction should be reiterated.

V. Recommendations made by the Standing Committee

22. It was recommended that information regarding the existence, number and type of stockpiled APLs throughout the world should be made more readily available. This was considered to be especially important in regions of the world where there is a general lack of information on this issue.

23. It was recommended that sufficient resources need to be identified to assist States with stockpile destruction operations, along with the appropriate mechanisms to effectively deliver this assistance. Coordination must be carried out among donors to identify priorities for stockpile destruction funding.

24. It was recommended that the process of stockpile destruction be concluded in an environmentally sound manner, especially with regard to certain types of APLs the detonation of which can have toxic side effects, such as with the PFM1 type of APL. Due attention should be given to environmental policies as well as risk assessments in implementing stockpile destruction programmes.

25. It was recommended that States Parties be encouraged to utilize the APL Stockpile Destruction database website established by UNMAS and Canada (<http://www.stockpiles.org>), and for purposes of increased transparency encourages all interested parties to contribute to the website, including by providing information on issues such as new technologies for stockpile destruction, industrial information, national policies as well as case studies.

26. It was recommended that the idea of regional initiatives should be explored further so as to help accelerate the stockpile destruction process worldwide.
