

**Cluster Munitions Convention**  
**Second Review Conference**  
**25-27.9.2020**  
**Agenda Item 8 (b) Storage and Stockpile Destruction**

**Report by the Art 3 Coordinators**  
**Austria and Australia**

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Article 3 thematic Coordinators Austria and Australia it is my pleasure to present the review of the status and operation of the Article on Storage and stockpile destruction. During the past 12 months our ambition was to seek direct, regular engagement with countries concerned already at an early stage despite the challenges of the pandemic. We engaged with delegations in Geneva as well as with capital representatives virtually and as far as possible during other relevant meetings, such as the Mine Ban Convention Review Conference. We thank the Presidency and the ISU for their engagement, commitment and guidance in this regard.

The implementation of Article 3 is an outstanding success story of our Convention. Over 95 per cent of the weapons detained by States Parties have already been destroyed. This is a total of nearly 1.5 million cluster munitions containing 178 million submunitions. This demonstrates the strength of commitment of States Parties to fully implement Article 3. Today, there are 100 States Parties which do not hold stockpiles of cluster munitions because they have completed their destruction programmes or because they never held stockpiles of cluster munitions. Since the last Review Conference 8 States Parties declared completion of destruction of cluster munitions stockpiles. We commend and congratulate Botswana, Croatia, Cuba, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland on their declared compliance with their Article 3 obligations.

That means that 36 States Parties that reported to have stockpiles of cluster munitions when the Convention entered into force for them have completed their destruction obligations. **Only five States Parties** are still implementing obligations under Article 3, **namely Bulgaria, Guinea-Bissau, Peru, Slovakia and South Africa**. We thank these states for their engagement with the coordinators in this regard.

The Convention community can indeed be proud of the prevention of the humanitarian harm that is made by ensuring that these cluster munitions have been destroyed and can thus never be used.

As coordinator we wish to identify three trends or observations since the last RevCon

- First, **early destruction trend:**

Many States Parties finished well ahead of their deadline. Out of the Nine States Parties that declared compliance with their Article 3 obligations since the last RevCon, five States completed their obligations at least three years ahead of deadline. Let me here also recall that the 8MSP agreed on a template for the declaration of compliance in line with Action 2.4 of the Dubrovnik Action Plan.

- Second, **limited amount of extension requests and agreed methods of work for the analysis group**

So far only two countries had to request an extension of their initial deadline, as permitted by the Convention. We commend both concerned states for their commitment throughout the process. This was also demonstrated by both states not requesting the maximum allowed extension request time of four years, but ambitious and swift destruction plans. Since the first Review Conference the Analysis Group mechanism was put in place and methods of work agreed by the 9MSP.

- Third, the **key importance of transparency** and Article 7 reports

The information provided in initial and Article 7 reports - and transparency in general - is essential when it comes to assessing the status of implementation and progress on destruction and retained stockpile. We encourage all State Parties to comply with the reporting requirements under the Convention. The fact that 10 States Parties including three new States Parties have yet to submit initial reports is a matter of serious concern. Outstanding reports might lead to a situation of concerns of non-compliance, which can easily be prevented by compliance with reporting obligations. The coordinators encourages State Parties to do their utmost to hold up transparency as one of the key elements of the cooperative nature of the Convention.

While the two Art.3 extension requests have already been dealt with comprehensively earlier today, let me briefly thank **Slovakia and South Africa** for their engagement with the coordinators on their stockpile destruction implementation. We look forward to receiving further information on progress achieved during the Review Conference, but also in particular through Article 7 reports.

The coordinators believe it is of utmost importance for countries with obligations under Article 3, which **encounter difficulties in completion to seek early contact with the Presidency and the thematic coordinators**. In this regard, we encourage Guinea Bissau to submit an initial report as requested under Article 7 to clarify its status of Article 3 implementation in order to prevent compliance concerns.

Mr. President,

Before I conclude, allow me to focus on the **issue of storage** of retained cluster munition for permitted purposes under the Convention.

Some States Parties that have retained a limited number of cluster munition for permitted purposes under the Convention, but have not reported any decrease in their level of stored cluster munition over the past years. This means that none of the munitions had been used for permitted purposes such as training. In light of the general prohibition of storage, as coordinators we encourage states to closely monitor that the chosen amount of retained cluster munition for permitted purposes does not exceed the minimum number necessary for these purposes. In some cases this might include considerations if even further reductions could be pursued.

Before I give back the floor let me also express Austria's appreciation for the excellent cooperation with our fellow coordinator Australia.

I thank you Mr. President.