



**STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA ON
STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION AND RETENTION**

**Fifth Meeting of States Parties (5MSP) to the Convention on
Cluster Munitions (CCM)**

San José, Costa Rica, 3 September 2014

Thank you Mr./Madam Coordinator.

Since we already had the opportunity to elaborate in detail on our efforts regarding the destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions during this year's Intersessional Meeting, allow me a brief overview of new developments in this regard.

As we have reported previously, the process of destroying stockpiled CM had to be put on hold due to the challenging clearance of the former military ammunition depot in Pađene where an un-controlled explosion took place in 2011. That said, plans were made to complete the clearance in Pađene by the end of July 2014 so that by the end of September 2014 we could start the procedure of destruction which was to be conducted with the sole capacities and resources of Croatian Armed Forces (CAF).

However, clearance in Pađene depot has not been entirely completed as planned because of the following reasons: 1. There is still a huge amount of explosive material left within the inner perimeter of the depot, which is considerably slowing down the clearance; 2. Bad weather circumstances (we had a large number of rainy days with thunderstorms this summer which resulted in the loss of 28 working days for deminers). This resulted with 28.000 m² still to be cleared.

All of this has caused a change in our approach to the stockpile destruction issue. After the assessment of the best options for destruction (depending on factors such as the safety of personnel, costs, time, environment impact etc.), we are planning to conclude the destruction process through industrial demilitarization techniques. It has been considered to be done in cooperation with a private company in Croatia, mainly because of the proximity of the location and the engagement of national know-how. On the other hand, this would allow CAF to be assigned for other priorities. Financing of cluster munitions destruction should be secured through donation from *ITF Enhancing Human Security* for the destruction of excess stockpiles of non-perspective weapons (SALW, ammunition, MANPADS etc.).

In conclusion, let me say that CAF have approx. 100 tons of CM in their possessions which are placed in 3 locations that comply with all safety regulations. At the moment, we would refrain from making any firm commitments on dates for the beginning and completion of the destruction process, apart from belief that it should be done fairly ahead of the set deadline. Thus, we will continue to report to the State Parties, to international organizations, as well as to the relevant NGOs on any new developments in this regard in a transparent and open manner.

Thank you Mr. / Madam Coordinator.