

## **7MSP CCM - Statement by Switzerland on storage and stockpile destruction - Geneva, 04.09.17**

Mister President,

I would like to thank you as well as the thematic coordinators Croatia and Mexico for organising today's debate on storage and stockpile destruction.

Article 3 is one of the central provisions of the Convention as it has a preventive effect by ensuring that stockpiles are responsibly disposed of within a set deadline. We welcome the fact that States Parties having obligations under this article have so far met them well within the timeframe set by the Convention. We also welcome the actions and objectives set forth in the Dubrovnik Action Plan on stockpile destruction, which contribute to consolidating the positive momentum in this area and allows to assess the progress in this field, as presented in the Progress Report (CCM/MSP/2017/9). In this context, we would like to stress that all States Parties have an obligation under article 7 to submit initial and/or annual reports including information regarding the implementation of article 3 obligations. We would also encourage all States Parties that have not yet done so to develop a resourced plan to fulfil this obligation and inform other States Parties thereof.

The provisions set forth in the Dubrovnik Action Plan underline the importance of transparency with regard to storage and stockpile destruction. In this context, Switzerland wishes to provide delegations with an update on the status of disposal of its stockpile of cluster munitions.

The process for the disposal of cluster munitions follows the regulations of the Swiss Department of Defence which apply to any type of military equipment including ammunition. Accordingly, the process of taking cluster munitions out of active service, the selection of the company for their disposal as well as transportation to the disposal site and the disposal itself are implemented in accordance with established standards and practices. The disposal plan aims at minimising the necessary resources, guaranteeing the highest safety and security standards related to the transport and disposal as well as at maximising the recovery of recyclable materials and minimising the environmental impact. In order to ensure that these standards are complied with, the Swiss authorities regularly conduct audits of the selected disposal company.

As a follow-up to our article 7 report for calendar year 2016, let me provide you with a quantitative update of the disposal of our cluster munitions. Of the original more than 200'000 155mm and 120mm artillery projectiles comprising more than 11 million sub-munitions held by the Swiss Armed Forces at the time of entry into force of the convention for Switzerland, more than 190'000 units comprising 10.5 million sub-munitions have been disposed of by 30<sup>st</sup> of June 2017. Accordingly, roughly 95% of the munitions have been disposed of.

When the Convention entered into force for Switzerland, the Swiss Armed Forces held four types of cluster munitions in their stocks. The destruction of two types has been completed and the disposal of the two remaining types is ongoing. Plans foresee the finalisation of disposal by the end of 2018, that is well within the deadline under article 3 applying to Switzerland.

With regard to the retention of cluster munitions for permitted purposes according to article 3, paragraph 6, Switzerland still retains 52 cluster munitions. These items are retained mainly for the purpose of conducting surveillance of ammunition until all items will be disposed of. With this measure, the Swiss Department of Defence ensures the stability of the cluster munitions in view of their transport to the disposal sites and their safe disposal.

Switzerland intends to continue providing transparent information on the disposal of its cluster munitions and other relevant measures both through the reporting formats and in the framework of meetings of the Convention. Switzerland would also like to seize the opportunity to once again underline the value of openness and transparency in the implementation of the Convention.

I thank you, Mister President.