

Eight Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Geneva, 3-5 September 2018

Statement by the Republic of Bulgaria under Article 3 - Storage and stockpile destruction

Delivered by H.E. Ambassador Deyana Kostadinova, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva.

Mr. President,

First I would like to thank you for the excellent work done during your presidency and in preparation of this meeting. I also thank the coordinators on this topic, Croatia and Mozambique, for their dedicated efforts and the ISU for their valuable support.

I would like to provide an update on the implementation by the Republic of Bulgaria of Article 3 obligations.

For the Republic of Bulgaria, the Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force on 1st October 2011. All cluster munitions possessed by the Bulgarian Armed Forces have been decommissioned and separated from other types of munitions retained for operational use. The entire stock of cluster munitions is marked for destruction. The Republic of Bulgaria has no intention to retain cluster munitions or explosive submunitions for training purposes, permitted under Article 3 of the Convention.

After entering into force in December 2015 of a Law on the Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, in June 2016, all relevant articles of the Penal Code were amended in order to establish penal sanctions for violating related prohibitions, contained in the abovementioned Law.

The Republic of Bulgaria continues to make its utmost efforts to fulfill its Article 3 obligations to destruct all cluster munitions under its jurisdiction and control.

There are objective circumstances, however, like bilateral agreements with states non-parties to the CCM, causing a delay of the fulfillment of our national obligations.

It has to be born in mind also, that among the stockpiles of the Bulgarian Armed Forces, there are cluster munitions of a complex design and technical specifications demanding to look for the appropriate methods for their destruction.

A new Project for the destruction of the Cluster Munitions possessed by the Bulgarian Armed Forces is on its way implemented in a close cooperation with the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA).

The characteristics of the new project will be applied for the completion of the National Plan for the Destruction of Cluster Munitions.

In case of no sufficient preparedness for the implementation of the National Plan for the Destruction of Cluster Munitions by the time of 1 October 2019, a request for the extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of cluster munitions will be submitted, in accordance with the provisions of Article 3, part 3 of the CCM. Should this case occur, the Republic of Bulgaria will duly notify the CCM's Implementation Support Unit, as well as the distinguished States Parties to the Convention.

In compliance with Article 7, the Republic of Bulgaria submits regularly its Annual Transparency Reports and we encourage all States Parties to do so.

As we have declared in the last two Annual Transparency Reports, a certain amount sub-munitions, owned by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Slovenia, were stockpiled in warehouses of the private Bulgarian company "EXPAL BULGARIA" JSC.

As of today, we are glad to report that all Slovenian sub-munitions have been successfully and irreversibly destroyed. We would like to use this opportunity to thank our Slovenian colleagues for their very good partnership exercised in a spirit of an excellent cooperation.

Thank you for your attention!