

CCM Intersessional Meeting 2012

Session on Stockpile Destruction & Retention (Wednesday 18 April 2012)

First segment: stockpile destruction

Opening Remarks by the Coordinator (Germany)

Article 3 of the Convention obliges each State Party to destroy or ensure the destruction of all cluster munitions as soon as possible, but not later than eight years after entry into force of the Convention to that State Party.

At the 1MSP, it was acknowledged, through the Vientiane Action Plan, that an early and comprehensive planning is indispensable to meet this deadline. You will recall that in Action #8, States Parties with cluster munition stockpiles committed to “endeavor to, within one year of entry into force, have a plan in place for the destruction of stocks that includes a timeline and a budget and begin physical destruction as soon as possible.” In Action #9, States Parties committed to “ensure that problems that may cause obstacles to planned destruction are disclosed in a timely manner to States Parties and relevant organizations in situations where assistance is required to meet stockpile destruction obligations”.

At the 2MSP in Beirut in September 2011, seven out of eleven States Parties to the Convention with reported stockpiles of cluster munitions had started the process of either planning for or physically destroying their stockpiles. In addition, a number of States Parties had destroyed all their stockpiles prior to entry into force of the convention. Including those programs, more than 60% of the cluster munitions and almost 50% of the explosive submunitions declared through reporting have been destroyed to date.

The Beirut Progress Report recognized the encouraging precedent set by States Parties with stockpiles in starting the destruction process as soon as possible. According to their own reporting, it seems likely that all will complete destruction within the initial eight year deadline. Slovenia’s declaration of completion of stockpile destruction at the 2MSP provided yet another building block for the dynamic trend we have witnessed in the overall implementation of Article 3 obligations.

Today’s session provides an opportunity for updates on destruction programmes. Our exchange this morning also aims at gaining a better understanding of both technical and financial challenges which may exist and of the activities which are under way, or which might be undertaken, in order to address them. As we have stated in our letter to all participants in advance of this meeting, clarification of needs for assistance and cooperation can be essential in addressing such challenges.

Finally, this session is an opportunity for signatory States to demonstrate their continued commitment to join the Convention as soon as possible. A number of signatory States have provided information about their destruction of cluster munitions or planning for such programmes in previous meetings under the Convention, and we would certainly welcome if this high level of engagement and transparency could be maintained throughout this meeting as well.