

CCM intersessional meetings June 2011  
Norwegian statement on Stockpile Destruction and Retention

Thank you Madam Chair.

Article 3 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions concerns more than the safe destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions. This article, together with the prohibition on use, is our safeguard against future use of cluster munitions. Completion of our obligations under this article is therefore key to the fulfilment of the humanitarian objectives of the Convention, and we need to focus on our obligation to destroy stocks as soon as possible in order to ensure an early start and early completion.

The destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions do of course represent significant technological, logistical and financial challenges for States Parties with large stockpiles. However, it is not impossible to complete this task within the set eight-year deadline. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that large parts of these weapons would in any case have to be destroyed at one point or another when their shelf-life expires. It is therefore mostly a matter of timing of costs, and less a matter of incurring new or additional costs.

Madam Chair,

It has been encouraging to hear today's presentations by a number of States Parties in the process of implementing Article 3. I would like to join others in congratulating Hungary for completing its stockpile destruction. I would also like to commend the UK for accelerating its process and for planning to complete destruction within a compressed timeframe. In addition I would like to thank all states that have given presentations today for sharing concrete challenges, experiences and lessons learned and sharing details on new developments and progress with us.

A key element in achieving early completion of stockpile destruction is to make use of all the opportunities for international cooperation and assistance in the Convention, and in particular explore the gains of technical cooperation both on international and on regional levels. We have heard some interesting examples this afternoon. It is essential that projects and plans are concrete and tailored to meet the specific challenges that individual states face whether they are limited in scale or of more substantial size. From Norway's side we are interested in working with partners to ensure completion of a state's Article 3 obligations, and we welcome proposals to this effect.

Madam Chair,

Article 3.6 provides for the retention of live cluster munitions and explosive submunitions for purposes of training and research. In our view, this is not necessary as the needs for training and research can be met through other means in a similar manner as for anti-personnel mines. The only situation we are aware of where live submunitions need to be used for clearance purposes concern the accreditation of mine detection dogs in the area where they are meant to work. This is regulated in International Mine Action Standards 09.42, section 6 that calls for the use of "...Representative examples of the most common target objects (mines or ERW or

parts thereof) as test items. ...Ideally, recovered from the field where the dogs are to be used.“

The submunitions needed for the accreditation of dogs in a specific operational environment are those which have been used in the area where the dogs will work – not any random type of cluster munition or explosive submunition from any stockpile. These submunitions are most easily found through clearance of cluster munition remnants in the actual area. As only a small group of the states that might choose to retain cluster munitions also have a mine detection dog capacity operating on their own territory, the argument that it is essential to retain cluster munitions seems flawed to us.

We therefore encourage all States Parties with stockpiles to destroy all their cluster munitions as part of their Article 3 implementation.

Thank you.