



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Stockpile Destruction

Statement held by Switzerland

Geneva, 27 June 2011

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Madame Chairman,

Switzerland would like to thank Germany and the assisting Friends of the Chair for their substantive and ongoing work in this matter.

Switzerland would also like to thank the Delegations of the UK, Germany and Croatia and the other speakers we heard today for their valuable presentations and appreciated sharing of expertise.

As regards destruction, from 1997 to 2000, Switzerland destroyed its complete stock of the Swiss Air Force's conventional 300kg cluster bombs, dating from the late 1970s and early 1980s. Up to 4000 units of BL-755 were destroyed, each of them containing 147 submunitions.

In the course of this process important lessons were learned regarding the destruction of ammunition stockpiles in general and the destruction of cluster munitions in particular:

1. The key factors of destruction go far beyond technical aspects, and should therefore - from the very beginning - be fully integrated in the destruction concepts in order to allow a smooth process and avoid unexpected incidents as far as possible.
2. We are well aware that there are no pre-cooked solutions as every type of munitions may well require an individual planning. However, a concrete roadmap on the separation of cluster munitions from the operational stocks, on safety and security measures, destruction methods, organisational aspects, capacities, know-how transfer, material and financial assistance, time and time reserves, etc. should build the preparation and starting point to every successful destruction process. Implementation of the treaty goes beyond mere destruction and requires adaptation to doctrines, trainings programs and further measures.
3. Despite all efforts, the destruction of cluster munitions will probably remain cost-intensive, require a long-term schedule and have environmental impacts. Therefore, the effective coordination of national efforts and international cooperation and assistance will be of utmost importance for the implementation of article 3 of the Convention. Having negotiated on a global scale an instrument that addresses the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions, the implementation of these standards will likewise call for a global cooperation in order to allow future generation to live in a world free of cluster munitions.

Thank you, Madame Chairman.