

**Presentation by Bangladesh to the Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Destruction**

Compiled and collated by the Bangladesh Permanent Mission to UN Offices and International Organizations in Geneva on the occasion of the Meeting of the Standing Committees established by the State Parties to the APM Convention  
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**Background**

- Bangladesh became a signatory to the APM Convention on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1998 and as the first South Asian Country she ratified the Convention on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2000.
- In line with her commitments under the APM Convention Bangladesh has taken action in the following areas (a) national legislation (b) stockpile destruction (c) transparency on retention levels (d) participation at relevant meetings
- Under article 7.1 Bangladesh for the period 25<sup>th</sup> March 2004 till 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2005 reported that an amount of 1,89,227 stockpiled APM has been destroyed.
- Bangladesh also achieved the distinction to report during this period that “no mine areas existed in Bangladesh” and “no areas are suspected to contain mines in Bangladesh”

### Destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines

- Since Bangladesh became a signatory to the APM, it has undertaken Stockpile destruction process of the APM. Under article 3 a state is obligated to destroy all anti-personnel mines stockpiles it owns or possess or that are under its jurisdiction and control “ as soon as possible but not later than four years “.
- Bangladesh has retained a minimum number of APMs as provided under article 3 that says that state parties may retain and transfer some anti-personnel mines – ‘*the minimum number absolutely necessary*’ for the specific purpose of ‘ *the development of and training in mine detection , mine clearance ,or mine destruction techniques* “

### Reporting in accordance with Article 7 on the exception Clause ( Article 3 ) of the APM

We are aware of Action 54 of the Nairobi Action plan wherein it has been stated that “ All state parties – in situations where state parties have retained mines in accordance with the exceptions in article 3 , provide information on the plans requiring the retention of mines for the development and training in mine detection , mine clearance or mine destruction techniques and report on the actual use of retaining mines and the results of such use”

- The number of mine retained in Bangladesh as per official statistics is 14,999 . These mines have basically been retained for training purposes especially for officers /soldiers detailed for the UN Peacekeeping missions .

## Rationale for retention of the Mines

- Bangladesh has completed stockpile destruction of the Mines. Only some APM s have been retained for defense training purposes.
- The conventional method/ techniques for training of mines is being followed for the purpose of mine awareness . For this physical existence of the mines are required
- The retained mines have /are being used for mine awareness ,detection , clearance and destruction training. In addition the retained Anti personnel Mines are being used to organize training for the officers /soldiers detailed for the UN peace Keeping operations.

- Every individual soldier of Corps of Engineers and selected personnel from Ordnance are trained on the conventional method of mines . However soldiers of the rank of Sergeants are trained in respect of all types of Anti Personnel Mines up to an acceptable level of standard. Soldiers of the unit are also given an elementary knowledge on handling of mines .
- Conventional training on mine will remain in vogue for the purpose of mine detection , clearance and destruction techniques . Emphasis is given on clearing of mines manually because mechanical mine breaching /clearing may not always be suitable in local earth condition round the year.
- The amount of mines already retained would be enough to organize /conduct training on mine detection , clearance or destruction and mine awareness in coming years.

## The quantity and type of mine retained

1. Mine AP NDP2( Pakistan )	-400
2. Mine AP (NM)M14(USA/INDIA)-	380
3. Mine APM16(T6)USA	- 300
4. Mine AP Electric M18A1(Iran )-	2,499
5. Mine AP PMA-3 (Yugoslavia )-	5,600
6. <u>Mine AP T-69 (China )</u>	<u>- 5,820</u>
Grand Total	- 14,999

- Bangladesh has fulfilled her obligations under the APM Convention to destroy the stockpiles . However the retention of some mines is in conformity with the sprit to promote the humanitarian objectives of the convention . This has been done keeping in view the need for achieving the greater objective of promoting mine awareness and mine detection .
- It is in this spirit, Bangladesh has retained the APM to train its soldiers to defuse or destroy any potential application of mines and not for mine deployment purposes .

- The APM retained by Bangladesh would be enough for her to sustain its mine awareness training , clearance if required and destruction training programs in the future. The testing of mine clearance equipment for example may also require the use of anti-personnel mines.
- The APMs have been retained to impart general training to Bangladesh Army Personnel and specifically to assist engineering contingents to prepare for UN peace keeping Missions. The different training institutions of Bangladesh Army in the case of Mine retention are as follows : School of Infantry and tactics (a) Engineer Center and School of Military Engineering ( b) Ordnance Center and School (c) Central Ordnance Depot (for research and analysis )

- Some countries are still using Anti-personnel mines . Therefore while doing Peacekeeping Operations the Peacekeepers frequently handle anti-personnel mines for detection and demolition . Therefore training on anti personnel mine handling including breaching detection and destruction is a necessity
- This issue should also be understood in the context of our substantial commitments to UN de-mining Operations .Bangladesh Army has several battalion with mine clearing capabilities. In Kuwait , in Ethiopia and in Eritrea in UNPKO it showed its competence in mine clearing actions.
- In accordance with the APM Convention , Bangladesh has never produced or exported APM s nor has acquired any new stock . Its intention to retain some APM s are mainly for training purposes.

### Special note on stockpile destruction

- According to the International Mine Action Standards the term 'stockpile' refers to a large accumulated stock of explosive ordnance . Stockpile destruction is defined as the '*physical destructive procedure towards a continual reduction of the national stockpile*'.
- The selection of the most suitable techniques or technology by a national authority will depend primarily on the resources available , the physical condition and quantity of the stockpile , the national capacity and the applicable environmental and explosives legislation (according to IMAS )
- We are very much aware of the importance of transparency of the destruction program and its impact on security and confidence building. In this context we have reported the exact number of APMs that has been destroyed under the annual transparency report

### Quantity of the APMs destroyed

Mine AP NDP-2 ( Pakistan ) -	22, 145
Mine AP (NM) M-14 (USA/India) -	3 , 100
Mine AP M-16 (T6) Fuze M605(USA)	5, 046
Mine AP Elec M-18 (A-1) Iran	348
Mine AP PMA-3 (former Yugoslavia )	1,06,221
<u>Mine AP T-69 (China )</u>	<u>52,367</u>
Total	1,89,227

Source : Bangladesh reporting for time period from 25 March2004 till 28<sup>th</sup> February,2005

### The process of destruction

- The destruction has been carried out in safe designated areas at the Central Ammunition Depot . Both electric and non-electric methods of destruction have been used .
- Destruction process have been carried out usually in three phases that is as follows:

In phase I the APM s were collected , centralized and prepared for destruction .In phase II the destruction sites were prepared and the mines were transported .In phase III the destruction process was carried out.