

CANADIAN STATEMENT
STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION – COMPLIANCE
May 2009 Intersessional Standing Committee Meetings

Mr. Co-Chair

It is only through destruction of stocks and completing our universalization efforts, that we can ensure that no new mines are placed in the ground. While there has been almost no recent use, at least by States, there still remains a risk that mines will continue to be laid until such a day when the last stockpiled mine is destroyed.

Collectively, States Parties to date have destroyed more than 42 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines. Last year four States Parties completed their stockpile destruction obligations. Unfortunately three States Parties did not, and are in fact, non-compliant.

Belarus, Greece and Turkey have not yet fulfilled their obligations under Article 4 of the treaty, that is to destroy all stockpiled mines *as soon as possible* but not later than four years after the Convention enters into force. This was the first, and hopefully the last time, that States Parties failed to meet their destruction obligations. We of course know the reasons for Belarus and indeed recognized the difficulty of destroying PFM mines in the Nairobi Action plan.

While the underlying cause for Greece and Turkey is less clear, we do note that both programmes are progressing and urge them to finish the job, in the words of the Convention, *as soon as possible*. Canada remains hopeful that Belarus will soon be in a position to commence the destruction of their PFM mines, and finish it as a matter of some urgency; it has already gone on too long.

Canada would like to again remind States Parties, in a position to provide support, that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Cooperation Directorate has confirmed that stockpile destruction is recognized as Official Development Assistance in ODA eligible countries and thus donors could support such projects through dedicated or regular development assistance funding.

With approximately 14 million stockpiled mines still held by States Parties in different stages of compliance with their Article 4 obligations, and millions more held by States not party, our job is far from finished and we must continue to take steps to ensure these mines are never placed in the ground.

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair