

**MEETING OF 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 ON THEIR DESTRUCTION**

GENEVA, 21 MAY 2012

**STATEMENT OF THE GERMAN DELEGATION
ON ARTICLE 3: UPDATE ON MINES RETAINED FOR PERMITTED PURPOSES**

Despite the great achievements in implementing the Convention and the Cartagena Action Plan, mined areas unfortunately continue to constitute a horrible threat to the civilian population as well as to soldiers deployed in military operations.

Hence for the German Armed Forces, the need for the development of mine detection and destruction techniques as well as for training in these techniques will remain unchanged for the foreseeable future. Whenever possible, the German Armed Forces act as follows for training purposes: mine dummies or surrogate mines, permitted alternative ammunition or technical descriptions are used as an alternative to live anti-personnel mines. But in Germany's view, there are still a number of specific training and testing requirements for which there is no alternative to the utilization of unfused or even live anti-personnel mines.

Germany retains a limited number of anti-personnel mines and their fuses for permitted purposes in a so-called "APM pool", namely for the development of and training in mine detection, mine clearance and mine destruction techniques. The necessary amounts, types and estimated future requirements are reviewed on an annual basis.

Since 1999, the number of retained APMs has been substantially reduced by 876 in total. Those 876 APMs have been used in Germany for non-operational purposes permitted by the Convention. The numbers used each year varied in the past, ranging from a minimum of 4 APMs in 2005 to a maximum of 270 APMs in 2000. The average number used for training, testing and research purposes is approximately 67 APMs. Additionally, a considerable number of mines are used on a permanent basis for the training of mine detection dogs in accordance with NATO standards. Since those mines are not consumed during training, their numbers remain unchanged.

To be more specific, retained APMs are needed in particular for the following purposes:

- the development of safeguards for wheeled vehicles against the effects of mine explosions.
- the testing and evaluation of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) against the effect of mine explosions.
- the testing and evaluation of metal detectors and multi sensor systems.
- the testing and evaluation of mechanical demining equipment.
- the documentation of the ageing process of explosives contained in APMs for the development of specific disposal / clearing methods.
- the training of dogs at the Federal Armed Forces School of Dog Handling.

These programmes will have to be continued, based on a regular review of realistic current and future needs. The retention of a limited number of APMs of various types therefore remains indispensable to Germany. It goes without saying that a controlled, effective and responsible application of the German APM pool is ensured at all times.