

13th Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
Statement on Stockpile Destruction
5 December 2013



Thank you Mr President.

Since the entry into force of the Mine Ban Treaty, 87 States Parties have officially declared completing destruction of their stockpiles. Another 63 States Parties have declared never possessing antipersonnel mines, except in some cases for training purposes. Collectively, States Parties have destroyed more than 47 million stockpiled antipersonnel mines, including more than 250,000 antipersonnel mines destroyed in 2012.

For 13 States Parties, actions are still needed for them to fulfill their obligation. Six are known to possess nearly 11 million antipersonnel mines: Belarus, Finland, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Poland and Ukraine. Seven need to determine or confirm their stockpile status and make a formal declaration: Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tuvalu and Yemen.

Most importantly, three States Parties must come into compliance after having failed to complete the destruction of their stockpiles by their four-year deadline. The failure of Belarus, Greece, and Ukraine to meet their deadlines presents a challenge to the overall well-being of the Mine Ban Treaty. We recognize that the three States Parties are not in willful violation of the treaty, and none desire to maintain an operational stockpile of antipersonnel mines. They have been making an effort to destroy their mines, though with varying degrees of success and determination. We sincerely hope that by the Maputo Review Conference destruction will be well underway in all three states and that each will be able to announce a final destruction date.

States Parties recognized the urgent need to resolve the three cases of stockpile destruction non-compliance in Actions 7 to 9 of the Cartagena Action Plan, which call on the three states to comply without delay and to communicate their plans to do so, to request any assistance needed, and to provide an expected completion date. Four years later none have started large-scale destruction and none have an expected completion date.

The newest States Parties are making good progress toward fulfilling their obligations under Article 4. Finland has begun to destroy its holdings. Poland, while beginning to physical destruction of its stockpiles many years ago, has only a small amount to destroy. Both appear to be well on track to finishing the job well before their deadlines.

Seven other States Parties need to make clear statements about their status. Somalia, while initially declaring not to possess any antipersonnel mines, is in the process of assessing and confirming whether any are currently possessed.

Equatorial Guinea and Tuvalu, two States Parties that have not submitted initial transparency reports, have not made an official declaration, but are not thought to possess stockpiles.

Both Côte d'Ivoire and South Sudan need to formally confirm to States Parties that they no longer possess stockpiles of antipersonnel mines.

The ICBL also has deep concerns about the possibility of there still being stockpiles in Yemen and Sudan and possibly South Sudan. Evidence of recent use of antipersonnel mines in those countries raises these concerns, although it is unclear who might exercise control over any remaining stocks.

Finally, the ICBL continues to be concerned about stockpiles in states not yet party, since these mines present an even larger risk of being planted in the ground by a state military or non-state armed group. Landmine Monitor estimates that up to 33 of the 36 states not party to the Mine Ban Treaty stockpile more than 160 million antipersonnel mines, with the vast majority belonging to just two states: China and Russia. This shows the importance of continuing our efforts to universalize the treaty and to stigmatize the weapon thoroughly.