

## **Notes for ICRC intervention on stockpile destruction**

### **Review of the status and operation of the Convention, Cartagena Summit, Wednesday 2 December 2009**

The destruction of stockpiles has been one of the great successes of the Convention. More than 44 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines have been destroyed. 13 States Parties have complied with their obligations under Article 4 in the last five years alone.

However, we are also facing an unprecedented situation in the life of the Convention, with three States Parties in non-compliance with their stockpile destruction deadlines since March 2008. A fourth State has announced that it will be in the same situation next year. Non-compliance with a key obligation of the Convention should be a serious concern for all States Parties, even if specific reasons can be provided for why this situation has occurred in each case. Compliance is essential to the credibility of the Convention and sends a signal to other States Parties that have obligations to fulfill, whether they pertain to destroying stocks, clearing mined areas or assisting victims. We therefore welcome Actions 7 to 9 of the Cartagena Action Plan that call on States Parties that have not yet complied with their Article 4 obligations to do so without further delay and to provide a plan to ensure compliance as soon as possible.

It will be crucial for this action to be followed up by regular reporting on progress made. We have been pleased to hear from Greece and Turkey today that they are making progress towards completion of their Article 4 obligations. We also note the positive developments that are underway in Belarus, and hope that it will be in a position to start destruction of its PFM mines promptly. However, we believe that reporting on a bi-annual basis as called for in the Action Plan is insufficient for States Parties that have missed their Article 4 deadlines. We urge the States Parties in question to inform other States Parties—for example through the Presidency—on the progress they are making on a quarterly basis at a minimum.

We also urge States Parties or other donors that are providing support for the

completion of stockpile destruction obligations to continuously devote a high level of political attention to this issue until the remaining administrative obstacles have been overcome and the stockpiles have been destroyed.

Finally, we would like to make a brief comment with regard to the new Action 41bis, circulated this morning, that calls for further investigation and development of technical solutions to overcome the challenges of destroying PFM mines. In 2008, the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction convened informal consultations on the challenges of destroying large quantities of PFM mines with the States Parties concerned, interested donors, destruction experts and relevant organizations. These consultations concluded that the technology for the safe and environmentally sound destruction of PFM mines exists. While we recognize that the States Parties in question face a variety of other challenges in implementing their Article 4 obligations, including financial and administrative obstacles, we are not convinced of the need for this Action and would be concerned if it becomes the basis for further delay.