

**ICBL Summary of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Party to the Mine Ban Treaty  
Geneva, Switzerland, 3-7 December 2012**

**UNIVERSALIZATION**

**6 December**

While 10 States Parties and organizations spoke on the need to achieve universal adherence to the Mine Ban Treaty, only four states not parties took the floor to report on developments on their landmine policy. Signatory state **Poland** reported in another session that its long-awaited ratification would be finalized very shortly.

**Lao PDR** reiterated its support to the humanitarian objectives of the MBT, said it is still reviewing its AP mine policy, and is working hard toward the goal of accession. It noted it is voluntarily implementing much of the MBT. **Myanmar** announced it is currently reviewing its domestic laws that are not in line with international laws, including the MBT. It also said it was in the process of setting up a national mine action authority. **Palestine** attended the annual meeting for the first time and declared its strong desire to accede to the MBT as soon as possible. The **USA** declared that it would announce its decision on whether to join the treaty “soon,” following a policy review that began in 2009.

**Australia** urged States Parties to reaffirm and reenergize their commitment to the universalization of the treaty. **Austria** welcomed new States Parties and called for the investigation of all allegations of AP mine use. **Belgium** noted with satisfaction the encouraging news this year regarding universalization with 3 new States Parties: namely Finland, Somalia and Poland.

**Croatia** reported that it had organized a regional seminar on victim assistance in October. **France** remarked on the positive attitude towards the treaty shown by some States not parties, such as Palestine, USA and Lao PDR. **ICRC** congratulated Poland on its ratification and expressed the hope that all NATO nations would soon join the MBT.

**Mexico** stated the MBT was becoming stronger with the recent accessions of Finland and Somalia and the upcoming ratification of Poland. It also welcomed the accessions of Somalia and South Sudan. **Palau** reported on a regional meeting held in October 2012 on contamination by ERW in the Pacific and expressed the hope that Tonga would soon accede to the MBT.

Song Kosal from **ICBL** noted with regret the use of landmines last year by Syria and non-state armed groups in 6 countries and urged states to condemn these acts. She underlined that every case of new mine use confirms the urgency to universalize the treaty. She also welcomed the encouraging statements on progress towards joining the treaty from several states not party. **UNMAS** welcomed the Palestinian statement.

### **Mentions of ICBL or civil society**

**Australia** recognized the “enduring and vital role of civil society” in advancing universalization. **Belgium** thanked in particular the ICBL and its member organizations for calling for universal acceptance of the MBT. **UNMAS** also thanked civil society for its work on universalization.

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## **COMPLIANCE**

### **7 December**

The Co-Chairs of the General Exchange of Views Standing Committee began the compliance session with an expression of concern about recent allegations of use of antipersonnel mines, noting that how States Parties handled such allegations will be important for the integrity and strength of the treaty.

Despite recent allegations of use in five States Parties, only **Turkey** took the floor. It announced the next hearing of the legal case related to one of the two 2009 mine use allegations was scheduled for the end of the month. It also said that the investigation on the other mine use incident was “ongoing”, and reiterated that preliminary results show the incident occurred in an area yet to be cleared. **Sudan** and **Yemen** made brief denials earlier in the week but did not mention any investigation of the claims.

Steve Goose spoke of the **ICBL’s** deep concern about very serious allegations of use in Sudan and Yemen, as well as reports of use in three other States Parties, again asking these states to conduct proper investigations. He called on other States Parties to give “urgent and forceful” attention to these cases, noting the treaty was strong enough for serious compliance issues to be tackled directly.

The **ICRC** reported on the low compliance rate with Article 9 of the treaty, which requires all states to adopt national implementation measures. **Afghanistan** reported on its progress in developing such measures, along with its efforts to enact mine action legislation.

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## **STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION AND MINES RETAINED UNDER ART. 3**

### **6 and 7 December**

During the session on stockpile destruction, states reported on little destruction since the 11MSP but some potentially positive developments for 2013. **Belarus** reported that there had been delays in the construction of its destruction facility, but that destruction should begin in the first half of 2013. **Greece** announced that in order to get destruction back on track, it had ended a lawsuit with EAS, the company originally tasked with destroying its stocks. It said negotiations would begin in the next few weeks on a revised contract with EAS. **Ukraine** stated that it was still awaiting funds from the EU that were to finance a NATO Partnership for Peace project to destroy three million PFM mines. Ukraine hopes the funding will come through in early 2013, but meanwhile, with funding from Germany, it plans to begin large-scale destruction in January 2013.

**Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, and South Sudan** reported on stocks of antipersonnel mines discovered after stockpile destruction was declared completed. Afghanistan stated that since it declared completion in 2007, it had found and destroyed an additional 70,000 AP mines. **Cote d'Ivoire** reported that it had found over 800 mines and had already destroyed some of them with the help of the UN. **Guinea-Bissau** said that due to a lack of support, it was unable to destroy the two boxes of POMZ mines and 12 PMN mines the UN helped it discover in 2009, but hoped to do so by the next MSP. **South Sudan** reported that it had found four mines in former camps of the Sudanese Armed Forces and planned to destroy them in the 2012-13 dry season. It noted that other stocks may be found in the future and will be destroyed as a matter of "urgent priority."

**Poland**, which will soon become a State Party, reported that it had already destroyed 97% of its stockpiles.

On the subject of mines retained for training under Article 3 of the Mine Ban Treaty, **Poland** announced that it did not plan to retain any mines. **Australia** stated that in 2012, it reviewed the number of retained mines, leading it to eliminate 50% of its retained mines and to destroy the detonators of the remaining mines. **Cote d'Ivoire** reported retaining 290 mines for training its military forces. **Germany** insisted on the need to retain live antipersonnel mines for training purposes but announced that further to a review of the "minimal number" needed for permitted purposes, it would destroy approximately 500 retained mines by the end of 2013. It also reported that it had destroyed 876 of the mines it had retained for training since 1999 and described the various ways it has been using the mines. **Turkey** said that it had destroyed 47 mines since it had submitted its Article 7 report, leaving 15,053 mines, and that it plans to use at least 700 mines to train personnel who will clear the Syrian border. It noted that it was considering reassessing the number of mines retained.

Outgoing co-chairs **Germany** and **Romania**, along with incoming co-chair **Nigeria** all commented on the significant remaining challenges on stockpile destruction. **Canada** agreed with ICBL that South Sudan and Guinea-Bissau should be able to destroy discovered stocks quickly and with their own funds. The **ICRC** encouraged the three non-compliant States Parties to move more quickly towards destruction and remain transparent on progress. **Lithuania** called for increased support for stockpile destruction. **Norway** stressed the need for three States Parties not in compliance with Article 4 to resolve the situation as soon as possible. **UNMAS** noted the support it was giving to several states to identify and destroy stockpiles. The **USA** called for additional support for Ukraine's stockpile destruction.

Steve Goose spoke on behalf of **ICBL**, noting that the continuing non-compliance by three States Parties was casting a "heavy shadow" over the treaty's previously great record on stockpile destruction. He encouraged states to be more efficient and to provide expected completion dates at the 2013 intersessional meetings. He also expressed continuing concern over the number of states keeping mines under Article 3 without reporting on how they were used.

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## **TRANSPARENCY**

**7 December**

**Belgium** as Coordinator of the Contact Group on Transparency noted with concern that the submission rate of transparency reports stood at the lowest in history, with a rate of 57.6% as of December 2012. In order to address this problem as well as continuing poor quality of reporting by many states, **Belgium** presented the 12MSP with a set of recommendations to take by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Review Conference to enhance the quantity and quality of reporting.

**Palau** stated its availability to support transparency reporting by Pacific states that would require help. **Slovenia** supported Belgium's proposal to amend reporting formats for next year, noted its disappointment with the low level of article 7 reports, and said that it was keen to reverse the trend including through technical assistance.

The **UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action** offered its assistance to States Parties that need help with reporting, and also noted the recent voluntary report submitted by the Palestinian mine action centre.

Speaking on behalf of the **ICBL**, Firoz Alizada encouraged States Parties with outstanding reports to make submissions, including those "repeat offenders" that fail to report year after year. The ICBL and **ICRC** lent their support to Belgium's suggestion for states with no changes to report to submit a simple note verbale, as well as other measures regarding the enhancement of the quantity and quality of reporting.