



S L O V A K I A

Statement

by

Mr. Miroslav Gutten

Second Secretary

Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the UN Office
and other International Organizations in Geneva

**at Intersessional Meeting
of the Convention on Cluster Munitions**

Agenda 3. (b)

*Storage and Stockpile Destruction – updates & presentation of extension
requests under Article 3*

Geneva

16 May 2022

- check against delivery -

Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your presidency. You can count on full support of the Slovak delegation.

Let me also thank the Coordinators, Bulgaria and Australia, for their work and remarks, including the words of caution they raised. We duly take note of them.

Mr. President,

Even though I am taking the floor within the agenda item 3 (b), my delegation cannot stay silent about ongoing war in the vicinity of the Slovak borders on the territory of our neighbour, Ukraine.

Slovakia strongly condemns the ongoing unjustified and unprovoked aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which is a blatant violation of international law and seriously undermines European and global security. Slovakia fully supports and recognizes independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Slovakia is deeply concerned by the extensive use of explosive weapons in urban areas by Russian forces, including reported use of cluster munitions. Such military actions in Ukraine are causing civilians casualties, destroy civilian objects and infrastructure and lead to gross violations of human rights, international humanitarian law and humanitarian tragedy. We call on the Russian Federation to immediately cease its military actions, withdraw its forces and return to dialogue and diplomacy.

Mr. President,

Allow me now to provide you with an update on the progress that Slovakia has been making regarding its obligation under Article 3. The stipulated deadline for Slovakia is the 1st January 2024.

The Slovak Republic has actively been approaching the destruction of all of its cluster munitions since 2013. At this stage, we have remaining eight (8) types of cluster munitions in our stockpiles.

Out of these eight (8) types, we destroy seven (7) types through our national capacities. We have continuously been destroying these 7 types also despite serious situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The precise numbers of munitions and submunitions destroyed last year can be found in our latest transparency report, which was submitted in April. We are confident, we will dispose of these 7 types in accordance with our stipulated destruction deadline,

and we are making every effort to finish their destruction even in advance, probably by the end of this year.

Let me now turn to the remaining type of the cluster munition, which is M-26. We are undertaking all necessary steps to destroy the M-26 cluster munition through international cooperation. We informed you at the Review Conference last year that we have agreed with the NATO Support and Procurement Agency to manage the M-26 disposal.

The Agency, in cooperation with the representatives of the Slovak Republic, developed the specific “Statement of Work” on demilitarisation and disposal of cluster munitions on behalf of the Slovak Republic, with precisely defined conditions and requirements for the disposal and destroying of the M-26 munitions. The project solution process was launched in accordance with the applicable guidelines of the Agency in accordance with the rules of the International Bidding Competition. Call for bids was published in February this year and ended on the 14th of April. As a result, several companies applied for the project to destroy our M-26 munitions. Timeline for transportation and the location of disposal will be determined during the evaluation of the bids. The contract between the Agency and the winning company should be signed no later than in October this year in accordance with the set conditions. The transportation and destruction of the M-26 should begin afterwards in accordance with the terms of the contract and the “Statement of Work”. All demilitarisation and disposal activities shall be completed and certified before 31 December 2023, in line with the deadline for the Slovak Republic.

Mr. President,

Slovakia has an ongoing plan and is doing its best to fulfil its Article 3 obligation. We will continue to inform the States Parties on regular basis about our stockpile destruction, including through the annual transparency report.

Thank you for your attention.