



## PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES WITH STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION Colombia summary of the presentation

### **Introduction: Challenges of the Convention.**

- Despite the recent development of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the international experience allows us to identify some common aspects in the implementation tasks.
- For the effective implementation of this instrument requires the following aspects should be taken into consideration:
  - A. Gathering detailed information on the cluster munitions problem.
  - B. Access to and sustainability of international cooperation.
  - C. Development and sustainability of national capabilities.
  - D. Integral assistance and rehabilitation.
  - E. Reporting.
- After more than seven years of work within the framework of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, Colombia has learned some lessons that may be useful for the implementation of this instrument.

### **Development: Stockpile destruction.**

- During the 90's the Colombian Air Force purchased CB-250K cluster munitions (equipped with 240 sub munitions) from Chile and ARC-32 cluster munitions (equipped with 32 sub munitions) from Israel.
- By 2008 the Colombian Air Force had 72 cluster munitions in its arsenals distributed as follows:
  - 31 ARC-32 cluster munitions.
  - 41 CB-250K cluster munitions.
- These bombs were mostly used to destroy clandestine runways used by drug traffickers in remote areas of the country where the risk for civilians was very low.
- Since October 10, 2006 the Colombian Air Force decided to cease to use the cluster munitions and stored them in the different air bases of the country.
- Cluster munitions were replaced by conventional 125, 250, and 500 Lb bombs, which are more accurate and are presently being manufactured by the Colombian Military Industry for the Air Force.
- When the "Oslo Process" began in February 2007, Colombia followed very attentively the discussions held on this particular subject both in that venue and in subsequent ones.

- In November 2008 Colombia decided to sign the Convention on Cluster Munitions after a careful and detail interinstitutional study and later planned for the destruction of cluster munitions kept in the Colombian Air Force
- On May 7, 2009 the Colombian Air Force destroyed 41 CB-250K cluster munitions in the Air Shooting Range of the Eastern Air Command “GAORI”, located in Marandua - Vichada.
- The event was witnessed by the Colombian Minister of Defense with the presence of the Diplomatic Corps accredited in Colombia, some NGOs and UN officials
- The ARC-32 cluster munitions are stored in the Air Force warehouses. The Air Force is working in a timeline for their destruction.
- The dates and places for this activity have not been decided

**Conclusions:**

- The challenges involved in the fulfillment of the Convention on Cluster Munitions undertakings lead us to be creative and flexible in order to take advantage of the experiences provided by other similar processes, as well as to develop effective solutions in highly complex scenarios.
- For Colombia is of the utmost importance to:
  1. The support of the cooperation and assistance needed to destroy cluster munitions that remain in the stockpiles of the Air Force.
  2. Training for staff of the Air Force responsible for the destruction of cluster munitions and other obligations under the Convention.
  3. Facilitate opportunities to discuss other aspects of the Convention.
- Colombia remains committed to the text and spirit of this Convention to avoid the humanitarian impact caused by Cluster munitions.