

German National Stockpile Destruction Programme

Thomas Frisch (Germany)

Political and Parliamentary Aspects

The day before the adoption of the text of the Convention on Cluster Muniton (CCM), the Federal Minister of Defence, Dr. Jung, and the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Steinmeier, jointly stated: “Germany was a pioneer in the efforts to effectively ban cluster munitions and began destroying its own stockpile back in 2001. We have decided today that Germany will ... destroy its remaining stocks as fast as it can. ... This step is designed to send an unequivocal message: We want other states to follow our example ...”.

The Bundestag (Federal German Parliament) welcomed the joint statement and signing of the CCM in Oslo and one day later agreed a Motion under the title „Requiring swift ratification and translation into international law of a convention banning cluster munitions of any kind”. With regard to destruction, “the German Bundestag calls on the Federal Government to press ahead and to give priority to destruction and disposal of all decommissioned cluster munitions stockpiled by the Bundeswehr (Federal Armed Forces), to complete this within four years if possible, and to make available the funds required for this from the Federal budget.”

The Federal German Cabinet decided in January 2009: “Depending on industrial and budgetary aspects, the destruction of cluster munitions will be finalized preferably within eight years.” A “detailed working plan, schedule and budgetary plan” for the destruction of the stocks of the Bundeswehr was approved by the Committees for Defence and Budgets in June 2009. Against this background, Germany will finalize its destruction obligation according article 3 of the CCM – depending on industrial and budgetary aspects – in 2015, that means without extension and before the end of the initial 8 year period.

Stocks of the Bundeswehr and National Destruction Programme

The stocks of the Air Force included the Multipurpose Weapon MW-1 and the BL-755. Those of the Army, the Deutsches Modell DM 602, 612, 632, 642 and 652 as part of the 155mm Artillery as well as M26 Rockets. All together the totals are 440,000 containers including 50,000,000 explosive submunitions.

The destruction of BL-755 started in 2001 and was completed in 2008. The 155mm Artillery destruction began in 2007 with the DM 612, followed by the DMs 602, 632, 642 und 652 in 2009 and will be finalized preferably in 2012. The destruction of the MW-1 began in 2009 and will last until 2011. In parallel, M 26 destruction began and will last preferably not longer than 2015 depending on budgetary and industrial aspects.

Relationship: Government and Destruction Industry

The above mentioned stocks of the Bundeswehr are taken out of the operational ones and are handed over to the respective destruction industries. The Government retains ownership of the munitions until they are licensed as demilitarised, that means that there is no remaining military capability. The Government’s quality assurance representatives monitor every step of the movement of ammunition from its receipt to disposal/utilization of its components. The Government certifies the end of the destruction process.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), of which Germany is a member state, published “NATO Quality Assurance Requirements for Inspection and Tests” (AQAP-130) in February 1995. It is the minimum basis for the relationship between destruction industry and

governments. Therefore industry must maintain systems for the management of quality, which include: planning, controlling, inspection and assurance.

In addition, the German Government's continuous supervision and validation of demilitarisation and destruction by industry is ensured by national law. This includes, for example: the war weapons log (War Weapons Control Act), the explosives register (Explosives Act) and the operating license (Emission Control Act).