

CYPRUS

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AM

President,

wish to congratulate you on your election as President of our meeting and pledge our full support in your work. I also take this opportunity to thank the outgoing <sup>Cambodian</sup> President H.E. Minister Prak Sokhonn (Sokon) for his leadership of our work during the past year.

~~It is late in the day and~~ I will be <sup>as</sup> brief as possible

The Republic of Cyprus (RoC) is applying for a 3-year extension due to objective difficulties it faces in reporting the whole of its territory clear of anti-personnel mines.

Since July and August 1974 there is a part of its territory that is under the control of a foreign army and in this area the government of the RoC does not exercise effective control and has no free access.

Cyprus signed the Convention in 1997. The Convention entered into force in 2003.

Immediately, a National Plan for clearance was drawn up. I will not bore you with numbers. We have submitted tables and figures with our application for extension which show the exact number of mine-fields that were cleared and mines that were removed in the 9 years since the Convention entered into force for Cyprus and which constitute a very large percentage of the mine fields identified in the National Plan. In brief, by July 2013, namely at the end of the 10-year period provided for clearance, Cyprus will be able to report that all the areas under its control will have been cleared of anti-personnel mines.

~~role~~ of the Buffer Zone, as well, is clear of anti-personnel mines. This is an area of approximately 3% of Cypriot territory in which a United Nations Peace Keeping Force is operating under a mandate from the General Assembly of the UN.

*This statement refers to minefields situated in the BZ. There might, however, be minefields north of the BZ which may extend partially in the BZ*

In order to better understand the situation on the ground, it is useful to schematically divide the territory of the RoC into three areas. All three areas are part of the territory internationally recognized as under the jurisdiction of the RoC, as defined in International law at the time of independence in 1960. So, Cyprus feels obliged in the context of the convention to report all three areas.

There is one area, consisting about two thirds (63%) of the territory which is under the effective control of the government of the RoC. By July 2013 this area will be completely free of anti-personnel mines. The second area, consisting about 3% of the territory, as I have already indicated, comprises the Buffer Zone. This area has also been cleared in cooperation with the United Nations Peace Keeping Force and international partners. Financing for this part has been provided by international donors and primarily by the EU.

However, Cyprus is unable to report on the remainder one third of its territory, which is under the control of a foreign troops. The government of the RoC does not have access to this area and does not have reliable information on the state of mine-fields in this area.

We are asking for a 3-year extension. When political developments will allow, the clearance of this area will not take that long, given the

at the remaining anti-personnel mine-fields are not spread out throughout the territory, but are concentrated in the strip of land adjacent the Buffer Zone. We are working hard for these political developments become a reality and we hope that soon this will be the case and that we will be able to report full implementation of the Convention in the whole territory.

D. Thank you very much for your attention.