



Statement by Turkey

16th MEETING OF STATE PARTIES TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION Vienna, 18-21 December 2017

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

Let me first thank to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation for the efforts and the informative report that was currently presented.

Since the establishment of the Turkish Mine Action Centre-TURMAC in 2015, mine clearance operations and mine action activities have intensified in Turkey.

TURMAC has given the highest priority to its institutional capacity development since its establishment. TURMAC has improved its structure, given intensive training to its personnel and taken steps for better coordination with other state institutions. The existing military demining units have been accredited according to IMAS. In order to accelerate the demining in Turkey, we will triple the number of military demining units in 2018.

Since its establishment, TURMAC has initiated not only inter-institutional cooperation with other programmes, states and military bodies, but also international partners including UNDP and GICHD.

The first-ever National Strategic Mine Action Plan for 2018-2020 has been drafted and expected to be adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2018. The three-year plan covers national capacity development, survey and clearance of contaminated areas in Turkey, provision of mine risk education and assistance to mine victims.

National Mine Action Standards including land release policy have been drafted and they are expected to be endorsed in 2018.

The efforts to improve information management systems are also underway. The IMSMA system has been established and training has been provided to TURMAC personnel in this year.

Demining has been conducted on eastern borders. The Eastern Borders Project, funded by the European Union, Turkey and UNDP, implemented through commercial contracts, started in 2016. So far, 3.3 million m2 area has been cleared and more than 25000 mines destroyed. The project will continue in 2018.

Additionally, the military demining units have found and destroyed more than 10000 mines. Land release process is still underway and approximately 1 million m2 contaminated area will be released.

Survey and demining activities will commence in nonborder areas which account for less than 2% of all contaminated areas in Turkey.

Mr.President;

I would like to reiterate that Turkey is taking its commitment to the convention very seriously and we will continue to share information on the progress regarding implementation of all aspects of the convention.