



## **ANTI-PERSONEL MINE BAN CONVENTION**

**16<sup>th</sup> MSP**  
**(Vienna 18-21 December 2017)**

### **STATEMENT BY GREECE ON STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION**

Mr President,

Allow me to congratulate you personally, as well as the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), for the impeccable organization of this very important meeting in the field of Multilateral Disarmament and to assure you of our delegation's full support in your endeavors. I am confident that given your extended experience in multilateral negotiations you will guide this conference towards a positive outcome.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues,

Since the intersessional meetings in Geneva, last June, I am pleased to inform you that the competent department of the Hellenic Army General Staff has concluded the necessary procedures and a revised contract with the Hellenic Defense Systems (HDS) has been signed for the destruction of the Anti Personnel Land Mines (APLMs).

The amendments in the said contract foresee that the destruction of the remaining stockpile of APLMs will take place at the HDS installations in Lavrio, Greece. Moreover with the estimated pace of destruction of the APLMs, reaching up to 2.000 mines per day, the HDS anticipates that the remaining stockpile will be destroyed by the end of September 2019, notwithstanding of course any unforeseen circumstances beyond our control.

The established timeline is based on the recent demilitarization of 2.508 mines by the HDS, reducing thus the current stockpile of APLMs to 640.761<sup>1</sup>. In this regard, it should be noted that the destruction process of the APLMs will be in full swing by mid-January 2018.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues

With reference to the APLMs stored at the Videx facilities in Bulgaria, the HDS will undertake all necessary initiatives in order to settle the issue as soon as possible. The Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be informed accordingly of the way forward through the direct channel of communication which has been established with the competent department of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this purpose.

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<sup>1</sup> According to note verbale issued by the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 1, 2017, 190.574 APLMs are stored at VIDEX facilities.

Allow me at this point to stress that cooperation with the competent Bulgarian authorities has been excellent and we are very grateful for their very forthcoming attitude.

I would like to reiterate that despite the challenges that we have encountered in fulfilling our obligation to destroy all the stockpiled APLMs, challenges which are associated with financial constraints, unforeseen circumstances, contractual and legal issues, we have never wavered from our commitment to implement the Convention's obligations, and we have handled the issue with the utmost transparency and sincerity and, of course, we will continue to do so.

Last but not least, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Sri Lanka as the newest member state of the Ottawa Convention, bringing us closer to a world free of APLMs by 2025 and to the universalisation of the Convention, especially now that we celebrate its 20th anniversary.

Thank you