



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

STATEMENT
BY
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HEAD OF THE ALBANIAN DELEGATION

PROGRESS IN MEETING THE MBT ARTICLE 5 OBLIGATIONS

Meeting of State Parties to the Mine Ban Convention

19 November 2007, Dead Sea, Jordan

Your Royal Highness, **Mr. President**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon,

I would like to begin by congratulating you in your election to the presidency of this conference and to thank you for the quality of the preparatory work that you and your team have done.

I would like to assure you of the full support of my delegation.

Mr. President,

Allow me to express my pleasure in saying a few words on behalf of the Albanian Government on the progress that Albania has made in meeting the obligations under Article 5 deriving from the Ottawa Convention.

The strategic objective of the Albanian Mine Action Programme under the Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention is the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in all known mined areas within the Albanian territory by August 2010.

Taking into consideration the progress made so far, we consider this objective fully achievable within the Treaty Deadline, assuming that the needed funding is provided.

As to date, more than 13.75 million square meters of land, which means more than 90% of the total area, has been released through clearance and surveys by the international demining organizations working in Albania, and handed over to the communities for productive use, thanks to the support of the international community to the mine action activities in the country, such are USA, Germany, the European Commission, Switzerland, Denmark, France, Turkey, Norway, Sweden, Czech Republic, United Kingdom (DfID), Canada, International Trust Fund and UNDP.

In 2007 only, an area about of 600.000 square meters is released and handed over to the communities with support of USA, the European Commission, Germany, Switzerland, International Trust Fund and UNDP, thus remaining with a residual area of 1.5 million square meters to be released in 2008-2009.

For 2008, the plan is to release through technical survey and clearance about 700,000 square meters by the National Clearance Capacity -NCC in partnership with DCA.

Mr. President,

The Albanian Government has formulated the National Mine Action Plan for Completion 2007-2010 with UNDP support, which aims the elimination of the mine and UXO threat. The Completion plan outlines in detail the implementation mechanisms and the capacities needed to meet the Article 5 obligations.

Mine Action Programme is fully integrated in the National Regional Development Strategy as well as in the Integrated Border Management Strategy of Albania.

The National Mine Action Standards, developed with assistance of the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining, are adopted and fully implemented.

With UNDP support a full Evaluation of the AMAP was made in May this year. The Evaluation was entrusted to the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining, a specialized independent institution, working in support of the international mine action community.

The Evaluation expressed appreciation for the overall setup and accomplishments of the Mine Action Programme and considered the target to finalize the clearance within the deadline set by the Mine Ban Treaty fully feasible, if adequate resources will be secured.

The Albanian Government is strongly committed in supporting the Mine Action Programme.

In this context, the Albanian Government through the Ministry of Defence continues to provide free of charge the explosive materials, logistic support and medical evacuation service in order to ensure safe clearance operations and in accordance with the International Standards.

The main challenge of our Government for this year ahead is to implement the Mine Action Completion Plan by consolidating the local and national capacities of the Mine Action Programme.

Therefore, we highly appreciate the support and the expert assistance of the donor community to facilitate this important process, to the successful completion of the programme.

Mr. President,

Lastly, I'd like to emphasize again, that with our commitment and the support of the International Community, Albania has all the potential to be listed among the states that will achieve the fulfillment of the treaty obligations within the set deadlines.

Thank you for your attention.