



**Hellenic Republic
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

2nd Review Conference to the Mine Ban Treaty

**Statement on Stockpile destruction
Cartagena de Indias – Colombia
30/11-4/12/2009**

**H.E. Ambassador Emmanuel Papadoyorgakis
Head of Delegation**

Greece, recognizing the need to take effective measures against the use of antipersonnel mines signed the Mine Ban Treaty on December 3rd, 1997, ratified it on September 25th, 2003 and the treaty entered into force on March 1st, 2004. Since then my country reported regularly, in its annual article 7 reports on its demining operations, in fulfillment of mine clearance obligations under article 5 of the Treaty.

In March 2008 the Deputy Minister of Defense signed the order which commissioned the destruction of anti personnel mines to the company Hellenic Defense Systems. The order was forwarded to the Court of Audit on April 3rd 2008 and was cleared and approved in June.

The agreement stipulated that the project must be completed within 12 months of its signing, in other words until March of 2009. However, the initiation of the transportation process of the APLMs was delayed due to the fact that on the one hand the Court of Audit review process lasted approximately 3 months, and on the other that the International Import Certificate required for the transportation of the APLMs was not issued until October 10, 2008. Once the International Import Certificate was issued by the Bulgarian authorities, the Hellenic Ministry of Economy and Finance issued an export license on October 30th 2008 clearing the way for the transportation of the APLMs to the destruction facilities.

On 24 November 2008 the first shipment of APLM mines was loaded and headed to Bulgaria. All APLM stockpiles had been already been gathered in specific locations on order to facilitate the quickest possible transportation of the APLMs. Since then, shipment of APLMs has been constant and as of October 30th 2009, 39.24% of the total amount of stockpiled Anti personnel Mines, which amount to **615.457** mines, have been transferred to the designated facilities for destruction.