

Stockpile destruction (Art. 4)

Statement of the Republic of Bulgaria

The Republic of Bulgaria would like to brief its partners on recent developments on the anti-personnel land mines (APLMs) transferred from the Hellenic Republic to the Republic of Bulgaria for the purpose of destruction.

As we have previously informed, on October 1, 2014 there was an explosion that occurred at the installations of the demilitarization factory "Midzhur" owned by the Bulgarian private company "Videx". The Utilization section of the factory was totally destroyed and no further destruction of the Hellenic Armed Forces APLMs was possible.

Since the Republic of Bulgaria has no capacity to destroy/demilitarize the Greek APLMs on its territory, a regular communication with the Greek side has been established in order to find a solution. This issue has been addressed several times at different levels, including Ministers of Defence.

On December 1, 2017 acting under the provisions of the Convention, the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterated our country's official appeal to the Hellenic Republic to undertake all necessary measures to transfer the remaining APLMs back to their territory since the Republic of Bulgaria does not have any justification to hold Greek APLMs. The exact total number of the Greek APLMs planned for transfer from the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Hellenic Republic is 190 574.

The Republic of Bulgaria was amongst the first States Parties to implement Article 4 obligations. We continue to improve the implementation measures including by further strengthening the relevant national legislation through amendment of the 2015 National Law on the Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Ottawa Convention.

In conclusion, let me reiterate my country's strong commitment to the Ottawa Convention. The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria approved a voluntary contribution to be provided to the Implementation Support Unit by the end of this year.