

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
19th Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
Hague, 15-19 November 2021
Statement on Stockpile Destruction

Mr. President,

As it is the first time we take the floor, allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of your duties and to assure you of our delegation's full support in your endeavors.

Moreover, we would like to congratulate you and your team for your hospitality and the meticulous preparations for the 19th Meeting of States Parties despite the difficult circumstances due to the COVID 19 pandemic and all its implications.

We are confident that given your extensive experience you will lead our deliberations to a tangible outcome for the fulfillment of our common goal for a world free of anti-personnel landmines.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues,

The Hellenic Defence Systems (HDS) have recently concluded the international tender for the appointment of a new subcontractor for the demilitarization of the remaining APLMs stockpile and are in the process of submitting their proposal for the destruction of the remaining quantity of APLMs to the competent department of the Hellenic Ministry of National Defence

It goes without saying that the relevant department of the MoD will handle the proposal of the HDS with high priority in order to conclude the necessary internal procedures for its evaluation as soon as possible.

Furthermore, we would like to underline that once the process is completed you will be duly informed through the Permanent Mission of Greece in Geneva.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues

Greece has made every effort to complete its contractual obligations under the Mine Ban Treaty and has ensured the destruction of its Stockpile by having a contract in force with the Hellenic Defence Systems for this purpose.

To date, Greece has destroyed more than 1,2 million APLMs, completed mine clearance obligations 4 ½ years ahead of the deadline set by Article 5 of the convention, reduces its training stockpile each year and fulfills its financial obligations in a timely manner to ensure the sustainability of the meetings of the Convention.

However, Greece has not yet entirely fulfilled its obligation under Article 4 due to unforeseen circumstances beyond its control such as the deadly explosion at the Videx facilities (Bulgaria) and a legal dispute with the HDS, which led to a pause in the destruction process for almost 2 years.

Last but not least, we would like to reiterate that the Hellenic Republic fully recognizes its obligations emanating from the Ottawa Convention and despite the challenges which we have encountered over the years, we have never wavered from our commitment to implement the Convention's obligations.

Thank you.