



Statement by TURMAC

19.06.2023

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Capt. Mustafa TORUN MoND TURMAC

Mr. Chairperson and distinguished participants,

I would like to express my appreciation for facilitating this important event and providing an opportunity for States Parties to take the floor.

In my remarks today, I will brief you about key indications and provide updates regarding Turkish Mine Action Center's efforts to accomplish its obligations under the Convention, Oslo Action Plan and the last Article 5 extension period humanitarian mine action activities, respectively.

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Within the scope of Eastern Borders Mine Clearance Project Phase-3, a demining contract was signed in March 2021. The project is being managed by UNDP and TURMAC and its activities are conducted by commercial contractors. As of June 2023, more than 2,3 million square meters of hazardous land have been addressed and almost 50.000 mines were found and destroyed. Clearance activities are scheduled to continue by early July in Ağrı province on the remaining 22 mined areas out of 94. The project is expected to be finalised by the end of 2023, which will prepare the ground for a multidimensional border security and surveillance system along Türkiye's eastern borders.

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Mr. Chair, another vital component of this project is to conduct Non-Technical Survey on Türkiye's all mined areas with a contracting modality. With this component, the precise perimeter of all these mined areas in Türkiye will be identified and this will enable TURMAC to prepare a robust and reasonable new work plan for the remaining challenges by 2025. In addition, the data obtained by the consultation with the affected communities during the field visits will be used to determine the mine action priorities.

So far, 3430 mined areas' field visit has been completed. Approximately 500 NTS reports' internal/external quality management and approval process are still being performed simultaneously in coordination between the contractor, UNDP and TURMAC. Until now, 3.054 NTS reports have been approved and transferred to TURMAC's database. The amount of change in gross suspected and confirmed hazardous areas will be reported in the following years' Article 7 report. NTS Project is planned to be completed by the end of 2023 summer.

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Apart from the project, almost 450.000 square meters of hazardous land were addressed and more than 9.000 mines were destroyed by military demining units in 2022, particularly along Türkiye's eastern borders where mined areas were preventing construction of the new border surveillance systems and around former military positions that were posing a threat to those living in nearby villages and are no longer in use.

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When it comes to humanitarian mine clearance activities on Türkiye's southern borders, these activities accelerate as the security situation on the Syrian side improves and the region is cleared from the YPG terrorist organisation, which is an offspring of the PKK terrorist organisation. In this context, Turkish Armed Forces C-IED teams contributed to the safety of civilians by finding/neutralizing 121 mines, 1.837 IEDs and 26.770 munitions laid by terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq in 2022.

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As stated in this year's Article 7 Report, Explosive Ordnance Risk Educations are being delivered through different assets trained and certified by TURMAC with the principle of "leaving no one behind". As a part of the Non-Technical Survey field visits, 495 mine-affected community residents participated in ad hoc risk education sessions until now. In addition to NTS Project, Gendarmerie risk education teams started their activities in 2022. Since the beginning of the year, Gendarmerie teams have delivered risk education to 1.699 residents in various provinces until now.

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In order to improve and ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the mine clearance activities, capacity development of its assets and seeking innovations are also among the principal objectives for Türkiye. In this context, Military Demining Teams will reach 50 in 2023, also adding 6 nationally manufactured mechanical demining machines and 4 mine detection dogs.

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A total of 20 mechanical demining machines, which were manufactured for the first time with domestic and national means and accredited, certificated by TURMAC in compliance with international standards (CWA 15044 – Test and Evaluation of Demining Machines), were first sent to Azerbaijan to support mine clearance activities and delivered to Turkish Armed Forces Military Demining Teams respectively.

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Following to its accomplishment under the Article 3 of the convention previously, Türkiye retains reasonable number of anti-personnel mines with the justification of developing new demining equipment, training its new established military demining teams and dogs as well as providing continuity trainings to remaining teams.

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In terms of cooperation and assistance Türkiye sent 8 military demining teams and 4 EOD teams to Azerbaijan in December 2020 to support the mine clearance activities carried out by Azerbaijan. Since then, approximately **600.000 square meters** has been addressed in Azerbaijan.

Moreover, Humanitarian Mine Clearance Training, Mine/IED Awareness Training, Mine Detector Training, Mechanical Demining Machines Training, and Basic Demolition Techniques Training were provided to Azerbaijan Armed Forces personnel.

Hereafter, in order to establish strong ties with its neighbouring organization, a Goodwill Protocol was signed between TURMAC and the Mine Action Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ANAMA) on 18 November 2022.

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Detailed Work Plan and further clarifications which were requested were submitted to Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in April 2022. To summarize Türkiye aims to address an area of approximately 17,5 million square meters of hazardous area between 2023 and 2025 by means of military demining units, whose capacity is being increased.

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In the last part of my remarks today, I also would like to take this opportunity to express Türkiye's gratitude for all national and international stakeholders particularly;

- Implementation Support Unit of convention, for their tireless and precious collaboration with TURMAC to improve our efforts towards Article 5 obligations,
- European Union and its Delegation to Türkiye for their prolonged funding through IPA funds,
- United Nations and its Development Programme in Türkiye for their implementing partnership,
- and GICHD for providing guidance to all mine affected states in various ways...

Mr. Chair, before concluding my speech, I would like to greet you and all the committees with full respect, and I would like to emphasize once again that;

Türkiye is fully committed to the Convention and keeps striving to fulfill its obligations in a dedicated manner.

Thank you for your patience and attention,



MoND Turkish Mine Action Center
APMBC Intersessional Meetings
(19-21 June 2023)



Eastern Borders Mine Clearance Project Phase-III

(Article 5 / OAP Action 22)



* Approximately **2,300.000 m²** of hazardous land was addressed and **49.040 mines** were destroyed until June 2023.

Eastern Borders Mine Clearance Project Phase-III



%83 Completed



18.550.000 € (IPA-II)

3,6 million m²

94 minefields

Jan 2021 – Jun 2023

In 4 Provinces

(Ardahan, Kars, Iğdır, Ağrı)





Non-Technical Survey Project (Article 5 / OAP Action 22)



* NTS Teams are composed of former military engineers and EOD members.



- * **NTS Project** started in June 2021 and is ongoing,
- * **3.430** mine fields' survey has been completed,
- * **3.054** NTS reports have been approved.



Military Demining Units' Activities

(Article 5 / OAP Action 22)



- Approximately **450.000 m²** of hazardous land was addressed and more than **9.068 mines** were destroyed in 2022.





Military Demining Units' Activities

(Article 5 / OAP Action 21)



- **Military C-IED/Mine** teams contributed to the safety of civilians by finding/neutralizing a total of **121** mines, **1.837** IEDs and **26.770** munitions laid by terrorist organizations.





Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (OAP Action 28/29/30/31)



Within the scope of EBMCP Phase-3, EORE was delivered to:

- **45 residents** (125 women, 291 men and 49 children) in 2021.
- **30 residents** (28 children, 1 women, 1 man) in 2022.

* Additionally Gendarmerie EORE teams provided EORE to **1699 residents** (505 children, 108 women and 1.086 men) in 2022.





Efficiency of Survey and Clearance (OAP Action 27)



- Enhance the capacity of military demining teams (**32 Teams in 2023**, Gendarmerie **18 Teams**.
(50 Demining Teams in Total))
- Augment Gendarmerie demining units with **4 additional Mine Detection Dogs**.



Efficiency of Survey and Clearance (OAP Action 27)



- **Deployment of 6 mechanical demining machines (MEMATT-II) to Turkish Military Demining Units in 2023**
- **Deployment of 20 mechanical demining machines (MEMATT-I and II) to support Azerbaijan mine action activities.**

Retained Mines (Article 3 /OAP Action 13)



5.728 Ap Mines



- In 2022, a total of **629 mines** were used for **certification** of new mechanical demining machines and mine clearance equipment, **training** of newly appointed military demining units and **continuity trainings** of other units.



International Cooperation

(OAP Action 44,45 and 46)



- Apx. **600.000 m²** contaminated land has been cleared since December 2020 to support Azerbaijan.
- **Goodwill Protocol** was signed with ANAMA in November 2022.



Article 5 Implementation Work Plan (OAP Action 23,41,42,43,47,48 and 49)



Delegation of the European Union
to Türkiye



- **Detailed Work Plan (2022-2025)** and further clarifications of TURMAC, were submitted to Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of APMBC respectively in April 2023,



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