



Albania

National Mine Action Plan for Completion Fulfilling the obligations under Article 5 of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Treaty 2007-2010

By August 2010, all mines and unexploded ordnances in the remaining Suspected Hazard Areas (SHA) within the Albanian territory will be destroyed, by removing so the obstacles to community and national economic development; its landmine victim levels will be reduced to the minimum possible, and a capacity is established to address any residual mine problem that may surface well beyond treaty deadlines, as well as deal with the remaining ERW threat, to assist landmine survivors and ensure ERW risk education is provided

The total cost over a 4-year period will be approximately \$ 7,177,174.40 out of which \$ 2,676,525 are already pledged by the Government of Albania (\$ 1,190,000) and international donors (\$ 1,486,527). The current shortfall is thus of \$ 4,500,647.24.

December 2006

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Foreword

Distinguished friends,

I am pleased to share with you the Albanian National Mine Action Plan for Completion 2007-2010.

Albania's main objective is the integration in the EU community and to this aim, several standards need to be accomplished, including a safe border management. One of the most serious obstacles to this expectation is the mines and unexploded ordnance contamination in North-eastern Albania, inherited from the Kosovo conflict in 1999.

Since 1999, 34 people have died and 238 have been injured in mine and unexploded ordnance accidents in Albania and the contaminated areas have been a major obstacle to the socio-economic development of the region.

An Albanian Mine Action Programme was timely established to resolve this problem and the National Plan we are submitting today aims to completely eliminate the threat to the lives and livelihood of the citizens and secure the full availability of the land as a condition for local development.

In addition, as a State Party to the Ottawa Convention, Albania has undertaken the commitment, under the Article 5, to ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in the known or suspected mined areas under its jurisdiction or control, by 2010.

I take this occasion to reiterate the determination of the Albanian Government to meet this obligation within the deadline set by the treaty and the National Plan, which herewith, outlines in detail the implementation mechanisms and the capacities needed to reach this strategic goal.

A particular appreciation goes to UNDP Mine Action Team for its assistance during the preparation of this plan and for its inclusion under the UNDP Completion Initiative.

Last but not least, I'd like to express our sincere gratitude to the international community for the invaluable support given to the Albanian Mine Action Programme during these years.

*Thanks to this support, a great deal has been achieved and we are confident that with a final effort we can accomplish our main mission to **"Return a mine free land to the people"***

Petrit Karabina

Deputy Minister of Defence/ Chairman of the Albanian Mine Action Committee



ALBANIA NATIONAL PLAN

Completion Milestones

- **Coordination and Monitoring:**

December 2006	AMAE Capacity Building completed and reduced International expertise.
June 2007 2007 / 2009	National Mine Action Legislation is adopted AMAE coordinates and monitors of all mine Action activities under AMAC.
March 2010	Capacity is possibly included within the EOD Response capacity within the Ministry of Defense structure as a Humanitarian Mine Action Section

- **Survey and Clearance:**

December 2006	All components of National Clearance Capacity selected, trained and equipped 1.4 km ² released to the community by DCA; 1.75 km ² remaining
December 2007	National Clearance Capacity (NCC) legally established 0.6 km ² released to the community; 1.15 km ² remaining National Clearance Capacity (NCC) fully established by DCA.
December 2008	0.6 km ² released to the community by NCC; 0.55 km ² remaining
December 2009	0.55 km ² released to the community by NCC; 0.00 km ² remaining; mine clearance operations in Northeast Albania close Technical skills to be possibly further utilized for EOD response and UXO and ammunitions destructions in other areas of the country;
August 2010	All anti-personnel mines in the mined areas under the Albanian jurisdiction or control have been destroyed, within the deadline, set forth under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty. .

- **Mine Risk Education:**

December 2006	MRE curriculum pilot project implemented in Kukës Prefecture
December 2009	MRE curriculum implemented in all school districts

- **Survivor Assistance:**

December 2006	Improved access to and quality of emergency and ongoing healthcare for mine/UXO survivors in Northeast Albania;
March 2008	40 physical therapists and 5 P&O technicians trained; Level II prosthetics curriculum developed; Rehabilitation Unit at Kukës hospital renovated
2008 / 2009	NOPC fully functional with new premises and equipment

1 Situation Analysis

1.1 Background

The landmine problem in Albania originates from the 1999 Kosovo conflict when the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) military forces laid mines on both sides of the border of Albania and Kosovo and fired cluster munitions (KB1) inside the Albanian territory; also NATO cluster strikes left unexploded ordnance (UXO) scattered along the same area.

A post-conflict general survey by the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) identified 15.25 km² of mine contaminated area in 39 villages affecting approximately 25,000 people along the 120 kilometer long Albanian/Kosovo border in the districts of Kukes, Has and Tropoje.

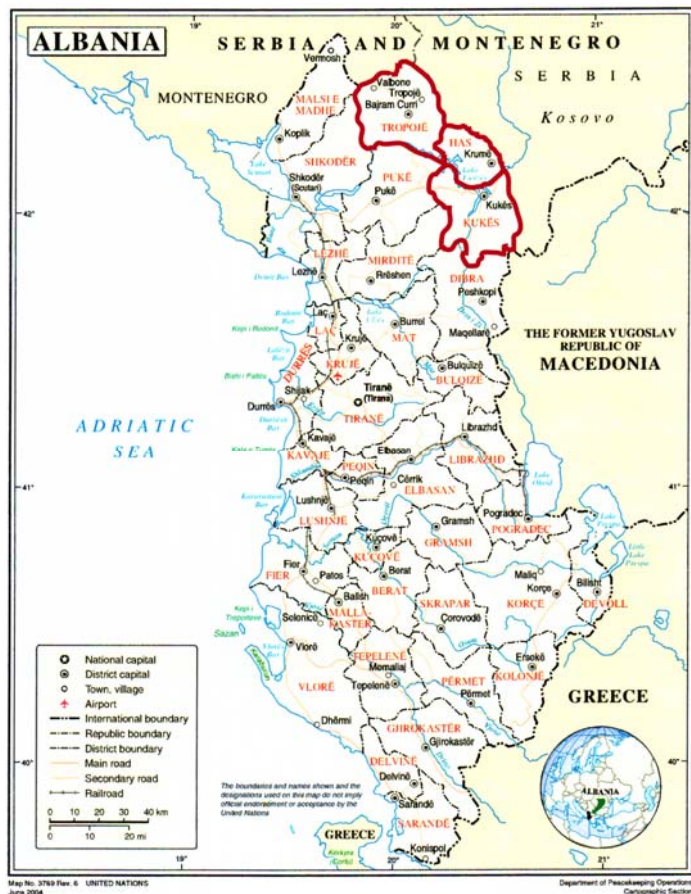
1.2 Extent of Contamination

The landmine and UXO contamination spans approximately 120 km in length from Montenegro in the north and extending to the FYROM in the south. The furthest minefield from the border is approximately twenty kilometers inland, but the majority is within 300-500 meters of the border. The map indicates in the red border around the three mine affected districts in northeast Albania.

By 31 December 2005, through community assessment surveys, technical surveys and clearance activities of the contaminated area, 12.08 km of land had been released to the community, leaving 3.17 km² to be released. Fifty percent of this land is contaminated by cluster ammunitions and is considered as BAC tasks. The other 50 percent is constituted by minefields.

AMAE has developed a comprehensive list of areas contaminated by cluster bombs and by landmines. Clearance priorities are determined by AMAE in consultation with the local communities and taking into consideration the regional development initiatives through a Local Community Officer For better efficiency and cost effectiveness clearance priorities may be done by geographical sectors.

In addition to the above mentioned mine/ UXO contaminated areas, Albania has also been suffering from the threat caused by abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO). During the internal turmoil of 1997 in Albania, at least 15 Government ammunition depots were destroyed and looted countrywide, leaving tons of dangerous munitions scattered around, threatening the lives of civilians. The AAF cleared up to 15 so-called "Hot Spots", but still today accidents happen throughout the country due to the presence of AXO.



1.3 Humanitarian & Development Impact

1.3.1 - Humanitarian threat

Since 1999, there have been 210 mine/UXO accidents resulting in 272 casualties, of which 238 persons were injured, and 34 killed. Approximately one third of these victims are between the ages of 15 and 30; half of the victims were farming, grazing cattle, or on their way to school at the time of their accidents. Approximately 100 of the survivors are amputees. Thirteen police officers have been wounded or killed by mines/UXO while patrolling the border. The mine/UXO problem has made it extremely difficult to patrol the border where cross-border criminal activity occurs at high rates as it takes the police one to two hours to respond because of landmines and cluster ammunition contamination. Since 2005, there were only two mine accidents, of which one was a deminer.

Since 2005, there were only two mine accidents, of which one was a deminer. Indeed, the presence of AXO constitutes today a larger risk than the one of landmines.

In 2005 alone, there were 21 casualties from AXO throughout Albania. Since 2000, there have been 94 casualties as a result of AXO and, what is most relevant is that the trend is increasing. In this perspective, it can be considered that the capacities and methods already developed and currently used in the Kukes Province for the mine problem can be used for other areas of the country to deal with the remaining ERW threat.

1.3.2 - Development and poverty reduction

The Kukes region of northeast Albania, where the landmines are located, is one of the poorest areas in Europe. The Kukes region suffers from the effects of 50 years of world isolation and from a massive population exodus in the early 1990s when Albania was struggling with the transition to democracy.

Most of the population in northeast Albania lives in poverty, a condition that is exacerbated by the mountainous terrain, long cold winters and poor roads. Of the 120,000 people living in the region, 75 percent live from subsistence agriculture through animal husbandry, farming and gathering and selling firewood. Approximately 30 percent of the working age population is not gainfully employed.

In 1999 the Kosovo conflict brought here landmine and UXO contamination as an added problem to the population. These remnants of war have serious consequences for infrastructure development and the environment, and they impede access to water resources in the northeastern part of the country.

In this frame, it is to be considered that Mine action has provided jobs to over 180 people in the three mine affected districts in Kukes region. The jobs in mine action are highly sought and are sensitively negotiated and regionally balanced through local employment councils.

At present, the Kukes region is being put in the focus by the government of Albania of a strategic development as a border Region between Albania and Kosovo. In this framework, the Kukes area is expected to benefit in the mid term by important infrastructure projects. The most important will be the construction of a high-speed road, co-funded by the World Bank and other donors, from Tirana to Kukes, which is expected to cut the 200-km driving time from the current six hours to about two hours. The road will be part of a regional network connecting the harbor of Durres to in-land Balkans, turning the Kukes Region from a remote area of the country in a central area in the region.

As a contribution to better connection of Kukes area inside and outside the country, also the construction of the Kukes Airport has recently been terminated and the terminal is expected to be activated in the next future.

It is also to be considered that Albania recently signed the Pre-Accession Agreement with the EU, which is going to further increase the integration of the country in cross-border movement of people and goods.

All these developments will certainly promote an increased access to the Kukes area, which has an attractive territory with important potential for eco-tourism; this would probably bring new visitors to the region who are not familiar with the locations of hazard areas. The full clearance from mine and UXO is therefore an important contribution as well as an essential pre-condition to these developments.

1.4 National and international response

After the Kosovo crisis in 1999, the Government of Albania responded swiftly by conducting rapid surface clearance, which drastically reduced civilian casualties. However, this work was not done to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and the areas had to be re-cleared. Shortly thereafter, the Albanian Armed Forces conducted a general survey, which revealed 120 kilometers along the Kosovo border to be contaminated by landmines.

The government of Albania's contributions to mine action can be valued at more than US\$1,833,000 in 1999-2005. In addition to this amount, the Government has provided approximately \$100,000 per year in in-kind contributions for helicopter support and explosive materials since 2005, as well as \$200,000 per year for victim assistance (support to improving and providing emergency and ongoing healthcare through the Ministry of Health structures).

Since the very beginning, essential contributions were provided by the international community in clearance, MRE and mine victim assistance activities.

The UNDP Completion Initiative

The *Completion Initiative* is a response supported by UNDP that seeks to accelerate mine action activities in countries where a concerted effort and relatively modest investment of approximately \$10 million would aim to solve the landmine problem in a short timeframe (i.e. 3-5 years).

Although concentrating on the AP problem in attempts to meet treaty obligations, the *Completion Initiative* would strive to ensure the development and ownership of national clearance and survey capacities to undertake ERW work in general and address any residual mine-problem that may surface well beyond treaty deadlines.

First, it would provide significant humanitarian and development benefit to target countries, and, second, the international community would subsequently be in a position to focus efforts on a smaller number of countries where mine action is likely to be required over the longer term.

This approach may secure additional resources for mine action, thereby improving efficiency by creating economies of scale. In addition, it will draw attention to and maintain the international momentum that has been generated to rid the world of mines. Furthermore, this approach will serve the MBT by enabling more countries to develop a plan that aims at reaching completion of Article 5. The present Albanian Plan as been developed in the frame of the Completion Initiative with UNDP support.

1.4.1 – Legal and institutional

Following the emergency phase in 1999, the Government of Albania established the institutional structures necessary for implementing humanitarian mine action in a coordinated manner and in compliance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The inter-ministerial Albanian Mine Action Committee (AMAC) was created in October 1999 as the policy-making and supervisory body for mine action; and the Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE) was established to carry out, coordinate, and monitor the mine action program under direction of the AMAC, which reports to the Minister of Defense.

Starting from 2002, UNDP supported the AMAC and AMAE through a Capacity Building Project with the aim to establish an autonomous capacity to coordinate and monitor the MA activities in accordance with international standards.

Albania ratified the Ottawa Mine Ban Convention on 29 February 2000 and on 15 January 2001, began its stockpile destruction project. With financial support from the international community, particularly from Canada, the stockpile of 1,683,860 anti-personnel mines (APM) were destroyed on 4 April 2002, two years earlier than the deadline for Albania under the terms of the Convention.

In April 2006 a new Law on the implementation of the Ottawa Convention was passed, which imposes administrative and penal sanctions on any activity prohibited for a State Party to the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention undertaken by persons or on Albanian territory, and confirms the Minister of Defense as the authority in charge for all MA activities in the country.

A draft Mine Action Legislation was prepared through a workshop in cooperation with GICHD and ICRC in March 2006, with the aim to regulate MA activities in accordance to relevant humanitarian standards and regulations as well as institutionalize the AMAE structure.

All of the basic capacity required to assist the government to effectively coordinate and monitor the Plan described in this document is currently in place.

1.4.2 - Clearance operations

During the period 2000-2004, demining organizations including RONCO, HELP, Swiss Foundation for Demining and Danish Church Aid (DCA) conducted demining activities in North-east Albania with funding from EC, US, German, DfID-UK, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Czech Republic and Danish private funding. Since 2004, there is only DCA conducting clearance activities in the country. Some “Village demining” is also taking place: in 2005, 370 APM were collected by the local population that way and remitted to DCA, which represents 1/3 of the number of mines cleared by DCA in 2005.

The Government of Albania has provided from 1999 to 2003, to its mine action and explosive ordnance disposal programs some US\$1,583,600. This Government funding has supported surface clearance and humanitarian demining, the general survey, stockpile destruction, the development of AMAE, clearance of UXO from highly impacted areas and assistance to mine/UXO survivors. Starting from year 2004 - through a specific Memorandum of Understanding between UNDP and the Albanian Ministry of Defence - the Albanian Armed Forces contributes to the Albanian Mine Action Programme (AMAP) in the form of MEDEVAC support and explosive materials to destroy mines and UXO.

As of December 2005, 12 km² have been cleared and about 3 km² remain to be released. In the 2006 clearance season, the capacity of DCA consists of 12 manual mine-clearance teams, two

MDD teams, three Battle Area Clearance teams and one Impact Survey team, for a total of 18 teams.

Based on results in 2005, the projected clearance production during the 2006 clearance season is of 1.4 km². It is thus anticipated that by the end of the 2006 clearance season there will be less than 2 km² remaining in Albania, covering approximately 75 suspected hazard areas.

The government analyzes the data and revises the clearance priorities as required. A process of consultation for setting clearance priorities is conducted on regular basis with other development actors taking in consideration emerging initiatives for new social and physical infrastructure.

1.4.3 - Mine risk education

Since 1999, mine risk education has been provided to the most vulnerable groups in the 39-mine affected communities. The goal of mine risk education (MRE) is to discourage life-threatening behavior and activities among at risk vulnerable groups.

During the period 2007 / 2009, the national NGO "Victims of Mines and Weapons Association" (VMA) and the Albanian Red Cross (ARC) will continue to conduct MRE in the mine-affected communities. Activities in the communities will focus on schools and local communities. Information will be disseminated through community-based Anti-Mine Committees. Interactive activities such as concerts, competitions, plays, and expositions will inform the locals of the dangers of landmines and ERW. Liaison activities with demining organizations will be undertaken to bolster MRE efforts. Monitoring, coordinating, and prioritizing them will be the responsibility of AMAE.

The long-term objective is to integrate a new curriculum for mine/ERW and small arms risk education into the Albanian education system and mainstream MRE. The Institute of Curricula and Standards will introduce the "Mine/Weapons Awareness Education" curriculum in schools in the prefecture of Kukes as a pilot project with the plan that it will be adopted in other areas of the country where an ERW, especially AXO threat exists. An AMAE Mine Risk Education Officer will monitor the pilot phase of this initiative while UNICEF and AMAE refine the curriculum, so that it can be permanently integrated into the education system. UNICEF and AMAE are working with the Ministry of Education and Sciences to ensure that these objectives will be achieved.

1.4.4 - Victim assistance

Since 1999-2000, when the casualty rates were extraordinarily high prior to a mine action program, the number of landmine victims has declined to less than ten per year down to only 2 since 2005.

The Ministry of Health is actively engaged in victim assistance in Albania. A Community-Based Rehabilitation network comprised of 30 nurses provides emergency and on-going medical assistance to mine/UXO victims. The National Trauma Centre in Tirana and the Regional Hospital in Kukes have surgeons on staff for trauma and orthopaedic surgery. The National Prosthetic Orthotic Centre (NPOC) in Tirana provides prostheses to lower limb amputees and the Kukes Hospital Prostheses Repair Centre provides repairs for damaged prostheses. Upper limb and above knee amputees are sent to the Slovenia Institute for Rehabilitation for the provision of more technically difficult prostheses. Starting in mid-2006 Handicap International will be providing training and support for technicians, physical therapists and doctors.

The "Victims of Mines and Weapons Association" (VMA) operates a revolving loan fund to help mine victims establish home-based economies and facilitate the socio-economic reintegration of

Albania's mine survivors. The pilot project will have assisted 75 mine survivors by the end of 2006 providing them with training and support in developing small enterprises.

Since 1999, 10 sight impaired mine survivors have received specialized medical assistance for their eye injuries, 8 child mine survivors have returned to their studies, 100 mine amputees have received physical rehabilitation and prostheses abroad, and 238 mine/UXO survivors have been incorporated in the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) network in Northeast Albania.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) produced the first National Strategy on Disability for Albania in January 2005. AMAE and other national actors contributed to have the new Strategy ensuring that mine victims, depending on their grade of disability, are included in the National Strategy on Disability, which entitles them to benefits (i.e. disability pension and long-term medical assistance, including physical rehabilitation and support for prostheses).

In the frame of its support to local development, UNDP is also implementing the "Kukes Regional Development Initiative" (KRDI) funded by the EC, which is providing small-scale infrastructure development projects identified and prioritized by the communities in the Kukes region, with a specific focus on mine-affected villages. To date, small-scale infrastructure projects (such as irrigation canals, drinking water supplies and sewage systems) have been implemented in 20 of the mine-affected villages.

2 VISION

Albania free from mines by August 2010 in compliance with the anti-personnel mine ban treaty and free from the threat of ERW.

(a) where people can live and work in a safe environment free from the threat of these insidious weapons; (b) where mine and ERW survivors have been successfully reintegrated into their communities; and (d) where the borders are securely managed without the threat of landmines and ERW.

Albania hopes that the achievement of these results will help promote its ultimate goal of membership in the European Union.

3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2007-2010

The strategic goal will be achieved through the following strategic objectives:

Strategic Goal

Reduce new landmine victims to virtually zero and provide assistance to all landmines/ERW victims.

This strategic goal will be met when the number of landmine/ERW victims associated with known SHA in the Kukes region of Albania has been cut to virtually zero. It will prove impossible to totally eliminate ERW accidents that occur outside of SHA. Mine Risk Education will be provided to minimize current and residual ERW casualties and assistance will be provided to mine/ERW victims

Strategic Objective One:

Clear all known SHA by 2010.

This strategic objective will be met when all remaining known SHAs within the Kukes Prefecture in northeast Albania have been cleared.

Strategic Objective Two:

All landmine/ERW survivors receive medical care and have access to assistance that leads to full integration into community life.

This strategic objective will be met when all known survivors have good access to quality medical care and physical rehabilitation and are provided with the assistance they need according to the Government of Albania's National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities. A strong component of this assistance requested under the National Strategy includes vocational trainings and access to education and socio-economic opportunities.

4 IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

4.1 Management and Coordination

The Albanian Mine Action Committee (AMAC) is the Government of Albania's national mine action authority. AMAC determines the overall direction of mine action, sets priorities and endorses the strategic direction of the program. The Deputy Minister of Defense chairs the AMAC. AMAC membership consists of government ministries with responsibilities for mine action. Donors participate as observers to AMAC.

The Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE) serves as the principal operating body for mine action. AMAE receives guidance from AMAC. AMAE coordinates all mine action activities, mobilizes resources, establishes the operational clearance plan and tasks, accredits operators and conducts quality management of mine action activities.

In the frame of the UNDP Capacity Building Project in support of National MA Structures, AMAE is currently supported by three international experts and its proper functioning was supported with due training, equipment and coverage of running costs. The legal and financial basis for AMAE is currently based on the UNDP DEX modality as for Government decision in March 2003.

AMAE is a member of the South Eastern Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC) and regularly participates in regional coordination meetings as well as international mine action meetings.

4.2 Programme Delivery

In addition to monitoring and coordination, AMAE is responsible for program delivery. Its activities include:

- Producing and maintaining national mine action procedures based on International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).
- Identifying, surveying, and marking areas contaminated by landmines and UXO through the demining organization.

- Tasking mine action activities according to plans and priorities approved by local and central government authorities.
- Collecting, collating, maintaining, and disseminating data on mines and UXO.
- Investigating all mine-related incidents and ensuring that appropriate follow-up activities occur.
- Serving as a liaison with national and international bodies undertaking mine action in Albania.
- Monitoring mine action activities and ensuring a high level of quality is maintained.

The current Albanian mine action program implementing partners include:

- Clearance: ITF, Dan Church Aid (DCA) and the NCC.
- Mine Risk Education: Ministry of Education, the local NGO Mine and Weapon Victim Association (VMA) and the Albanian Red Cross (ARC), ICRC and UNICEF, ITF
- Victim Assistance: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, VMA, Kukes Hospital, Institute of Primary Healthcare Kukes, the National Prosthetic Orthotic Center (NPOC) in Tirana, Handicap International, the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) Special Fund for Disabled (SFD), the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF), and the Slovenian Institute for Rehabilitation, ITF and UNDP.

4.3 Monitoring and Quality Assurance

AMAE is responsible for monitoring mine action operations and ensuring, with UNDP support, that these activities comply with International Mine Action Standards. AMAE meets these responsibilities through a number of activities, including the following:

- Ensures the work of mine action actors is in compliance with policies and standards set by AMAE, and approved by AMAC.
- Conducts accreditation and validation of mine action organizations and activities to assure residents and stakeholders that activities have been properly carried out.
- Prepares quarterly and annual reports on the progress of mine action efforts for donors, AMAC, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Undertakes periodic reviews of the Albanian National Mine Action Plan and makes recommendations to AMAC when changes are deemed necessary for final approval

Periodically, AMAC reviews the overall progress of the national mine action program and makes policy and strategic adjustments when necessary.

4.4 Resource Mobilization

Albania utilizes six principal mechanisms to mobilize resources for mine action efforts. AMAC is principally responsible for these activities, although AMAE undertakes much of the routine work.

- In collaboration with major stakeholders as UNDP, ITF, UNICEF, ICRC including donors, Albania participates in the *Portfolio of Mine Action Projects* compiled and published by UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF. This annual publication serves as a powerful resource mobilization tool.
- On a regular basis, the Albanian mine action authorities and their partners provide tours of mine-affected areas to donors and other interested parties. These tours ensure oversight of activities and give donors a sense that their support is making a difference to affected communities.

- Resource mobilization visits to local embassies are undertaken periodically to brief embassy officials on the progress of the Albanian mine action program and to request ongoing support.
- The Night of a Thousand Dinners (N1KD), which is a world-wide charity event to raise awareness about Mine Action. To date, Albania has held 3 N1KD events, which have raised more than \$30,000 from the Albanian private sector and used to assist mine/UXO survivors.
- The Albanian Mine Action Brochure, which provides an overview of the mine-action program and overview of achievements and goals, is updated regularly and distributed to donors and the broader mine action community.
- Albania Government Delegations regularly participates in international MA meetings and events and facilitates fundraising efforts from international donors.

5 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: 2007 – 2010

5.1 Coordination and Monitoring

Through the UNDP Capacity Building Project, the structure and working capacity of AMAE has been developed to a level where it is substantially able to coordinate and monitor all the MA activities in the country in accordance with international standards and is able to fulfill the MBT reporting obligations.

Its structure is planned to be progressively reduced from the current size of 15 national and three internationals to 10 nationals only and the relevant cost is going to be downscaled accordingly.

A final revision is still needed for the main MA Regulations and other relevant documents as National Mine Action Standards and SOP-s. Humanitarian Mine Action Legislation is planned to be accomplished within the first half of 2007.

UNDP is going to progressively scale down its support to the programme according to the identified remaining needs and their progressive fulfillment, with the perspective of maintaining its support to the programme at a reduced level in the mid term (through the CO and the MAT in the NY based BCPR).

A transition process is being developed to handover the current mine action coordination structure from UNDP to a national government structure. In order for AMAE and AMAC to fulfill these roles, there is a need for continued support in the form of financial assistance and technical assistance on ad hoc base.

Resource mobilization is still an open point to progressively increase the Government contributions both direct financial and in-kind and secure complementary resources from international donors. Indeed, the government is considering additional budget items that could be contributed in-kind by the government, such as premises, housing in camping areas, supporting services, etc

At the end of the Albania Completion Plan in 2010 the mine action program will essentially be completed and all mine action institutions supporting mine clearance operations would in principle be closed. However, this capacity will have been well equipped and could be integrated into existing civil protection/defense structures to address any residual mine problem that may surface well beyond treaty deadlines. Indeed, it is expected that the current mine action capacity can be integrated into the existing EOD Response capacity, currently under the Albanian Armed Forces in order to further support the programme for destruction of ERW, especially AXO (dispersed weapons and ammunitions) throughout Albania and could as well follow-up on MRE and victim assistance needs and support.

5.2 Clearance operations

The Completion Plan for Albania aims to reduce the threat to the lives and livelihood of citizens at the community level and provide for timely and effective mine action in support of national development. This will be accomplished by August 2010.

5.2.1 – 2006 Clearance season and expected outcomes

As of 31 December 2005, 3.17 km² of Albanian territory remained to be cleared.

DCA is working during the 2006 working season with 12 mine clearance teams, two MDD teams, three BAC teams and one survey team and is expected to release about 1,4 km². The current clearance activities are co-funded by Germany, DfID-UK and the EC through UNDP and the International Trust Fund of Slovenia, which is managing the mechanism of US Government matching funds.

DCA conducts community assessments and technical surveys and develops its clearance operations based on these surveys that include community input. Area reduction is achieved through these surveys. The national mine action database, which operates on the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), based at the AMAE Regional Office in Kukes is well developed and updated on a regular basis. Reports for monitoring purposes are generated on a monthly basis and as needed. Clearance records from DCA are received regularly and the information entered into the database.

The Work Plan to clear the remaining suspected hazard areas of landmines has been revised to clear all areas within a geographical sector before moving to the next sector. This approach is most efficient and cost effective if the goal is to clear all of the SHAs in the three mine affected Districts.

Six out of the eighteenth teams (18) currently working have been trained and equipped by the EC funded Project, implemented through UNDP and ITF, and are planned to constitute a National Clearance Capacity (NCC) to dealing with the remaining threat in the last three years of operations.

The NCC is planned to be established in the form of a National NGO. The Deminers and the Administrative and Logistic personnel have already been trained and the Managerial component is planned to be established by the end of 2007 by DCA with USA support through ITF.

5.2.2 – Clearance in the years 2007/2009

By the end of the 2006 clearance season, it is expected that there will be less than 2 km² of mine contaminated area remaining in Albania, covering approximately 75 suspected hazard areas.

In 2007, DCA is planning to continue working in the country with a reduced number of expatriate experts to manage and monitor the six teams established in the previous years and supporting the full establishment and strengthening of the NCC as a local NGO, including the process to establish the NCC as a legal entity according to the Albanian law.

The NCC will thus be able to work with minimum and decreasing support from international expertise and at a reduced cost compared to previous years (see Resource Requirements in Section 7.2)

AMAЕ Quality Assurance monitors will oversee all clearance and survey activities. Information will be systematically collected and recorded using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) supported by GICHD.

The financial contributions already provided for the 2006 clearance season through ITF have allowed to make available matching funding from the US Government in a measure sufficient to

cover operations 2007. Further funding for the 2008/2009 season is still to be secured, but in a limited amount.

Taking in consideration the importance of having the country free from landmines, the Albanian Government is confident that the international community will continue its support to the final effort, allowing Albania to meeting the MBT obligations, within the deadlines.

By the end of 2009 all of the known remaining contaminated land is thus expected to be released to the community.

5.3 Survivor Assistance

The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation and various social service organizations and local NGOs play major roles in survivor assistance and disability issues. The US Department of State/ITF, ICRC and the Slovenian Institute of Rehabilitation have been major international donors and supporters of survivor assistance in Albania. Additionally the Albanian private sector (including big businesses) has contributed with providing funds to assist mine and UXO survivors. There are 238 known landmine/ERW survivors in Albania, but since January 2005 there have been only two more casualties.

The major activities in this pillar are as follows

5.3.1 - Prosthetic services, training, and capacity building in Ministry of Health

The ICRC provides supplies and training to the NPOC in Tirana. All below-knee amputees can receive prosthesis at no-charge from the NPOC. In order to do so, the Albanian Government is supporting the NPOC with sufficient staff and operating expenses. This center is assisting mine /ERW survivors from all over Albania. In 2007, the Albanian Government plans to start supporting the NPOC with the provision of raw materials. More difficult cases such as arm and above knee amputees are sent to Slovenia with funding from ITF. The Albanian Government has already developed a plan to build a new NPOC and is ready to contribute with \$ 250 000 for its reconstruction as well as to provide more staff for the new organigram of the NPOC.

Also ICRC is sponsoring the training of a Level II technician in Bangalore, India who will return to the NPOC in Albania in June 2007. A second technician will be sent if funding is identified in time.

Through two-year funding from the U.S. Department of State/ITF beginning in mid-2006 Handicap International in coordination with the Ministry of Health will support the Albanian public authorities and Kukes Regional Hospital to develop a quality physical and medical rehabilitation (PMR) system on the national level leading to the development of a sustainable response to the PMR needs of landmine victims in the Kukes region.

A Community-Based Rehabilitation network comprised of 30 nurses in affected areas has been created to improve mine survivors' access to, and quality of, medical and social services with funding from UNDP, DFID, the Government of France and ITF/DoS. Continued support in the form of training and supplies is needed to make the network fully viable.

5.3.2 - Socio-economic reintegration

VMA will continue its revolving loan fund that facilitates the socio-economic reintegration of Albania's mine survivors through home-based enterprises such as animal husbandry and beekeeping. The two-year project will be evaluated at the end of 2006. Additionally, the EC

through UNDP is supporting 30 mine/UXO survivors in receiving vocational trainings in 2006-7. By the end of 2006, 75 mine/UXO survivors will have been supported in developing home-based economies and a revolving loan fund will have been established to enable future support to mine/UXO survivors through the provision of interest-free loans.

In the long term, survivors recognized as persons with disabilities will continue to receive support through programs provided by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and by social service organizations in accordance with the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities. In the coming years, the overall governmental contribution for this component is estimated being approximately 100,000 USD per year.

5.4 Surveillance and Mine Risk education

VMA and ARC will continue mine risk education initiatives in the 39 affected villages to discourage life-threatening activities, especially among women and children. Communities, schools, and organizations will be included in the implementation of mine awareness programs. Relevant news will be disseminated through 39 community-based Anti-Mine Committees. Interactive activities such as concerts, competitions, plays, and expositions will inform citizens of the dangers of landmines and UXO. Liaison activities with AMAE will be undertaken to bolster MRE efforts. AMAE will monitor, coordinate, and prioritize the MRE activities.

In 2006 the Institute of Curricula and Standards will introduce the "Mine / Weapons Awareness Education" curricula in schools in the prefecture of Kukes as a pilot project. If it is successful it will be introduced in other areas of the country. An AMAE Mine Risk Education Officer will monitor the pilot phase of this initiative while UNICEF and AMAE refine the curricula, so that they can be integrated and mainstreamed into the education system. UNICEF is already working with the Ministry of Education and Sciences to ensure that these objectives will be achieved.

The DCA Impact Survey team, in coordination with other national actors contributing to the surveillance system will monitor victims, new incidents and post clearance land use in the Kukes Region. Albania Red Cross also is planning to implement surveillance activities of AXO victims.

The monitoring and surveying will meet three requirements:

First, mine risk education will be provided directly to affected communities. With the level of threat confined to very specific regions in Albania, MRE efforts can be carefully targeted at the affected communities.

Second, with the base line established from the AMAE database in Kukes, the monitoring teams post clearance reports will provide transparent evidence of progress toward threat elimination. With the data providing a baseline, regular surveillance will provide a vivid indication of how mine action assistance, e.g. mine marking, clearance or mine risk education, reduces the threat in assisted communities. Thus, a new measure of success – quantifiably reduced threat – will be available to measure progress in mine action, including conducting post-clearance land-use assessments and documenting a country's progress towards meeting its obligations under the Ottawa Treaty.

Third, building on the original socio-economic data collected during the community assessments conducted by DCA, the monitoring/impact survey teams will collect data on post clearance land use and prepare land usage reports for each clearance activity. Although post clearance usage may not occur immediately after the completion of clearance, survey teams will visit cleared communities on a frequent and regular basis. Such visits will, over time, establish the effectiveness of clearance at cleared area, community, regional and national levels.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

AMAC and AMAE are implementing a Mine Action Program and should be able to achieve the Treaty deadline under article 5 by 2010, if sufficient funding to maintain current survey and clearance capacity is available. However, it is still appropriate to consider the possible risks that might obstruct the successful completion of activity as described in this plan. The following have therefore been identified as potential risks:

6.1 Insufficient funding

It is estimated that it will take up to four years to achieve the strategic objectives. This is dependent on the necessary funds being available as planned on an annual basis. A reduction in funding in any year would push the target date beyond August 2010, calling for a request for extension of clearance deadlines as foreseen by Article 5 of the MBT. See the projected funding needs on an annual basis at the end of this document.

6.2 Clearance progress rates are slower than expected

The remaining tasks after 2006 are located in very remote areas so that special logistic arrangements (camping) are requested; also, as a significant number of minefields are located high up in the mountain range, where weather conditions and heavy snow in the winters usually allow for operations in these areas for a reduced number of months each summer. In addition, roads leading to some of those minefields are in bad conditions, adding to the logistical constraints of accessing those areas. Therefore, a reduction in the clearance rates could occur if weather conditions don't allow implementation of the clearance activities as planned thereby slowing their pace.

It is also to be taken in consideration that new areas can be reported as being contaminated, specially taking in consideration the considerable impact of past village demining activity,

On the other side, two other factors could concur to mitigate this risk:

- a Risk Management approach has been developed during the recent years of field experience in the country, allowing to improve the rate of area reduction against area cleared; these methods are expected to be further refined during the next years operation and could concur to maintain the overall size of land released to the planned level
- due to low level of risk verified (current zero victims level) following survey operations, some of the BAC tasks could be downgraded for EOD response and cancelled from the NCC work plan.

6.3 Difficulties in transferring program components to sustainable organizations

Through the UNDP Capacity Building Project, AMAE has acquired an almost complete capacity to manage and coordinate the mine action program; final methodological and technical required refinements have been identified and are planned to be fulfilled as detailed in section 5.4. Nevertheless as mentioned above AMAE, as a UNDP project under DEX, is not yet a legal entity. The Completion Plan is thus based on the commitment of the Government to take full institutional responsibility of the Programme to implement the present Completion Plan with the support of the international community.

As far as the operator for clearance is concerned, the perspective of consolidation of NCC with the assistance of DCA during the 2007 season appears a credible process. Nevertheless there is a risk that the newly established NCC can be still relatively weak from the technical point of

view. A continued support in terms of in-kind Technical Assistance to the field activities could mitigate this risk.

Also there is the need to have donor confidence confirmed and this is to be secured with close collaboration and support from AMAE and the Government.

In the events of any of the above mentioned assumptions verified, or any unforeseen event happened, which, as a result, will have an impact on Albania's ability to complete its obligations under Article 5, the Government of Albania will have, to submit a request for an extension of its deadline to States Parties during a meeting of States Parties or a Review Conference prior August 2010. As per Article 5 of the Treaty, Albania will have to explain the reasons for the proposed extension and the duration requested the humanitarian, social, economic and environmental implications of the extension and any other information relevant to the request.

PLAN OF ACTION: MATRIX

<u>Component</u>	<u>Implementing Body</u>	<u>Contracting Body</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Short-term Objectives (2007)</u>	<u>Long-term Objectives (2008-2010)</u>
Planning and Coordination	AMAE AMAC UNDP ITF	UNDP Direct Executing ITF Direct Executing	International donor countries and Government of Albania	Completed capacity building and fulfill transition plan	Coordinating and monitoring all Mine action Activities in the country
Mine Clearance / Survey and Marking	AMAC ITF Fund raising, procurement, financial management, and technical assistance	DCA / NCC	International donor countries and Government of Albania	Fully establish NCC as legal entity and have 600.000 m2 released	Clear remaining SHA
Mine Risk Education	AMAC UNICEF ITF Fund raising, procurement, financial management, and technical assistance	VMA, Albania Red Cross, Institute of Curricula and Standards	International donor countries and Government of Albania	Campaigns to maintain adequate levels of awareness to ensure "Zero Victims" and integration of MRE curriculum in Kukes	Adoption of school curriculum that contains mine/UXO awareness
Survivor Assistance	AMAC UNDP ITF ICRC Fund raising, procurement, financial management, and technical assistance	VMA, Kukes Regional Hospital, Handicap International, NPOC, Slovenia Institute of Rehabilitation, ICRC SFD, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs, ADRF, Institute of Primary Healthcare Kukes	International donor countries, Government of Albania and Albanian private donors	Support emergency and ongoing medical assistance, physical rehabilitation, and socio-economic reintegration of landmine/ ERW survivors	Mainstream assistance to government and social structures

PLAN OF ACTION: RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

**Albania - Completion Plan
Budget by Sector**

Components	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total Amount
Planning & Coordination	\$398,045.60	\$355,234.40	\$355,234.40	\$100,000.00	\$1,208,514.40
Pledged funds	\$246,567.16	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$426,567.16
Shortfall	\$151,478.44	\$295,234.40	\$295,234.40	\$40,000.00	\$781,947.24
Mine Risk Education	\$192,000.00	\$232,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$499,000.00
Pledged funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Shortfall	\$192,000.00	\$232,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$499,000.00
Mine Clearance	\$1,399,960.00	\$1,060,700.00	\$1,046,900.00	\$0.00	\$3,507,560.00
Pledged funds	\$1,399,960.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,599,960.00
Shortfall	\$0.00	\$960,700.00	\$946,900.00	\$0.00	\$1,907,600.00
Survivor Assistance	\$1,157,100.00	\$371,000.00	\$224,000.00	\$210,000.00	\$1,962,100.00
Pledged funds	\$350,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$650,000.00
Shortfall	\$807,100.00	\$271,000.00	\$124,000.00	\$110,000.00	\$1,312,100.00
TOTAL	\$3,147,105.60	\$2,018,934.40	\$1,676,134.40	\$335,000.00	\$7,177,174.40
Total Shortfall	\$1,150,578.44	\$1,758,934.40	\$1,416,134.40	\$175,000.00	\$4,500,647.24

9

Annex 1 – Development and Poverty Reduction

Most national development strategies, including Albania's, now focus on poverty reduction through a mix of (i) efforts to promote economic growth in general, and (ii) targeted efforts to address the needs of those poor who are unlikely to benefit from economic growth alone (e.g. individuals and households who are infirm, disabled, or discriminated against, plus communities and regions stuck in 'poverty traps').

The effect of contamination on economic growth

Explosives contamination can constrain development even when the contamination otherwise poses no immediate risk to lives and limbs. The suspected presence of contamination will affect decision-makers involved in a development project, who naturally will want to avoid:¹

- the extra costs imposed on their projects to deal with the contamination;
- any perceived risk to the safety of their personnel; and
- any potential legal liability relating to residual contamination that may remain after clearance (deeply buried devices or explosives outside the area cleared).

In cost-benefit terms, the first two issues raise costs, while the third reduces expected net benefits. In each case, this reduces the benefit-cost ratio and, hence, the net economic benefits that are expected from a project.

In addition, if project planners are unaware that the technical means exist to deal with explosives contamination to high standards; they may view the project as technically infeasible simply due to the presence of contamination. Collectively, these issues will tend to divert development investments away from communities and areas suffering from suspected explosives contamination.

¹ The same would hold for private investors

Annex 2

Treaty Dimension

The *Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines* was negotiated to advance multiple objectives. Obviously, humanitarian concerns – particularly for innocent civilians – are primary. In addition however, the *Convention* promotes the overall disarmament agenda and, even more broadly, the effort by many countries to construct an international system in which the rule of law constrains the unbridled pursuit of national interests. Thus, proponents of the *Convention* advocate strict adherence to its obligations even where such actions do not serve any immediate humanitarian or developmental purpose.

Article 5 of the *Convention* obliges mine-affected states to:²

- Make every effort to identify all areas in its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced (i.e. mined areas) and
- Ensure as soon as possible that all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control are perimeter-marked, monitored and protected by fencing or other means to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians... (paragraph 2)
- Destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible but not later than ten years after the entry into force of this Convention for that State Party.³ (paragraph 1)

The *Convention* does not require a State Party to certify that it is mine free – only that it has made “every effort” to identify, mark, and clear mined areas.

The *Convention* also enjoins States Parties which are in a position to do so to provide financial and technical aid to mine-affected States Parties, assisting the latter in meeting their obligations. As these obligations extend beyond demining for the promotion of immediate humanitarian, reconstruction, and development aims, Albania has a right to request further assistance and wealthier States Parties have a duty to at least consider such a request.

² These are re-ordered to reflect the logical operational sequence

³ For Albania, the deadline is 1 March 2010.

Annex 3 - LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAF	Albanian Armed Forces
AMAE	Albanian Mine Action Executive
AMAC	Albanian Mine Action Committee
APM	Anti-Personnel Mines
AXO	Abandoned Explosive Ordnances
ARC	Albanian Red Cross
AT	Anti Tank Mine
BAC	Battle Area Clearance
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CBR	Community Based Network
CCWC	Certain Conventional Weapons Convention
DCA	Danish Aid Church
DFID	Department for International Development
DO	Demining Organizations
FYR	Former Yugoslavian Republic
GICHD	Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining
ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
IS	Impact Survey
ITF	International Trust Fund
KRDI	Kukes Regional Initiative for Development
MA	Mine Action
MAC	Mine Action Center
MDDT	Mine Detection Dogs Team
MRE	Mine Risk Education
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDC	National Demilitarization Centre
N1KD	Night of a Thousand Dinners
NMAP	National Mine Action Plan
NPOC	National prosthetic Orthotic Centre
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
QM	Quality Management
SEEMACC	South East Europe Mine Action Centers Committee
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TS	Technical Survey
TSS	Technical Safety Standards
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VMA	Victims of Mines and Weapons Association