HIGH CONTRACTING PARTY: BELGIUM

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This information can be available to other interested parties and relevant organizations

☒ YES
☐ NO
☐ Partially, only the following forms:

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐ I ☒
FORM A: Steps taken to implement Article 3 of the Protocol: Clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war

High Contracting Party: BELGIUM

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 3:
Combat engineers and EOD personnel involved in mine action are educated and trained in all matters in accordance with STANAG 2143 (Minimum standards of proficiency for explosive ordnance disposal personnel). During clearance operations, the IMAS standards are applied. For major operations, EOD teams are systematically provided. All members of the Belgian Service for removal and destruction of explosive devices are NATO certified and qualified (EOD/IEDD - Explosive Ordnance/Improvised Explosive Device Disposal).

Any other relevant information:
FORM B: Steps taken to implement Article 4 of the Protocol: Recording, retaining and transmission of information

High Contracting Party: BELGIUM

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 4 and the Technical Annex:

Already before the entry into force of Protocol V, the Belgian Armed Forces had procedures in place for the recording and retaining of information as foreseen in Article 4. A two-fold approach is applied to the recording and retaining of information:

- Operational: each unit engaged in operations has to record all use of explosive munitions in its reports and, if applicable, all abandoned munitions. If possible, the information reported will be in conformity with the criteria of the technical annex to the Protocol. These reports are in conformity with the international standards on mine action.
- Logistical: all use of munitions during operations is recorded and reported.

Both records are integrated at the Operations Center of the Armed Forces. The crosscutting of the two records gives a clear picture of the use of munitions, the location of their use and the areas where explosive remnants of war could be present.

Similar procedures exist for multinational operations. The recording and retaining of information is submitted via the foreseen operational and logistic chains to the Operational Headquarters responsible for the operations.

In 2012, the Defense Staff issued specific directives to the military commanders in operations to ensure the full implementation of Article 4:

- ACOT-SPS-OPSJOIN-PSR-001 / PLJE from 11 October 2012 which regulates the implementation of Prot. V by the Operations Division. This document gives clear directives for the recording, retaining and transmission of information about the use of ammunition during operations at Staff level.
- ACOT-SPS-SOPOPS-PSRC-001 / PLJE from 11 October 2012 are the Standing Operating Procedures for commanders in the field with directives for the recording of information and the transmission to the higher Staff level. It also contains a template for the recording of the information as described in Art 4.
- All necessary directives are also recalled in the CHOD OPORDER (Chief of Defence operation order) for the operations in which Belgian military are involved.

Any other relevant information:
CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

FORM C: Steps taken to implement Article 5 of the Protocol: Other precautions for the protection of the civilian population, individual civilians and civilian objects from the risks and effects of explosive remnants of war

High Contracting Party: BELGIUM

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 5 and the Technical Annex:

The impact on the civilian population is taken into account at every step of the planning and execution process of the operation. Keeping in mind that the primary responsibility to inform the civilian population and to prevent it from running at risk lies with the civilian authorities, Belgian Defense will transmit as much information as possible to the local authorities on known contaminated areas. Most often, the Belgian detachment will transmit the information to the local “Mine Action Center”, if applicable.

On some occasions, an “Explosive Risk Education Program” for the local population, in particular children, is set up and educational flyers are distributed by the Belgian detachment. This was the case in Lebanon in the framework of the UNIFIL-deployment.

In extreme situations, when feasible, and at the request of local authorities, Belgian Defense will support local efforts to restore basic services for the civilian population, e.g. reopening of major access routes.

Practical directives include the following:

- Ammunition will be stored according to the procedures;
- No unused ammunition will be left behind on the field;
- Unexploded ordnance will be reported, where feasible;
- When the situation requires it, an EOD detachment will take part in the operation. One of their tasks is to destroy unexploded ordnance, when possible.

Any other relevant information:
FORM D: Steps taken to implement Article 6 of the Protocol: Provisions for the protection of humanitarian missions and organizations from the effects of explosive remnants of war

High Contracting Party: BELGIUM

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 6:
Belgian Defense will inform, when possible, humanitarian organizations of the risks related to hazardous areas and of the necessity to coordinate their movements with the local “Mine Action Center”, if in place. The Belgian detachment will keep an updated map of the identified contaminated areas in its area of responsibility.

Practical directives: see Form C

Any other relevant information:
### FORM E: Steps taken to implement Article 7 and Article 8 of the Protocol:
Assistance with respect to existing explosive remnants of war and cooperation and assistance

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Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 7 and Article 8:

- In May 2004, Belgium became a member of the European Research Grouping Arrangement n°2, with France, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and Germany, in relation to the European Co-operation for Ammunition Destruction.
- A complete handbook on EOD technical information was produced, translated into KHMER and handed over to the Cambodian mine action centre (CMAC). Belgium provides technical information support upon request.
- On a regular basis, 1 or 2 Belgian representatives, skilled in demining, participate in meetings related to humanitarian mine action and organized under the umbrella of the NATO working group EOD, GICHD Review Board for IMAS, and EDA working group. Belgium assumes a liaison role between those organizations.
- Since 2005, Belgium participates in the Swedish owned EOD Information System as active member. The data of this information system is also accessible for other States under condition of a bilateral agreement.
- Belgium has organised EOD courses in French and English to train team leaders of other countries. Currently, these courses are organised on an ad hoc basis.

Projects for mine action/ERW removal:

Total amount disbursed in 2019: 3,845,161 EUR

- ICRC disability and mine action call: 1,000,000 €
- Mine Action Group: Reducing the threat posed by SALW, ammunition, mines and ERW in Chad: 399,000 €
- Halo Trust: Humanitarian IED clearance in Southern Fallujah: increasing safety and enhancing livelihoods for returning families: 416,161 €
- UNMAS: contributions to the Iraq and Syria mine action programs: 2,000,000 €

Belgium also contributed in 2019 to global programs of Handicap International and to the non-earmarked budget of the ICRC.

Belgium contributes to the equipment of the Group of Five Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) in C-IED material with 1,000,000 € (period 2018-2022).

Any other relevant information:

Research and development activities are conducted both at the national and international level. A national example is the PARADIS project (a Prototype for Assisting Rational Activities in Humanitarian De-mining Using Images from Satellites) led by the Royal Military Academy (RMA) with the participation of the Department of Geography (IGEAT) of the Free University of Brussels (ULB). Its results are still used by different actors.

The NGO APOPO (http://www.apopo.org/), in collaboration with the University of Antwerp and funded inter alia by the Belgian Government, started a research project in 1997 on the use of rats for scent detection of mines. The African giant pouch rat (cricetomys gambianus) was selected for this task and successfully trained. In 2004, the first group of mine detection rats passed the licensing tests according to the international mine action standards (IMAS). APOPO became an international NGO active in humanitarian demining and is still employing rats for survey of contaminated...
From 2012 to 2015, the Royal Military Academy coordinated TIRAMISU, an international project to develop a comprehensive modular toolbox for the main humanitarian mine action activities, from survey up to the disposal of explosive hazards. TIRAMISU offers a comprehensive, integrated and modular solution for tackling large contaminated areas. The main financial contribution to the project was provided by the European Framework Program 7 - Security. The results of the project continue to be exploited by the International CBRNE Institute established in Les Bons Villers, Belgium.

FORM E(a): Steps taken by States which have ERW victims to implement the relevant provisions of Article 8(2): Victim Assistance

High Contracting Party: BELGIUM

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019

Steps taken to implement the relevant provisions of Article 8(2):

NOT APPLICABLE

Other relevant information, guided by the Plan of Action on Victim Assistance:

NOT APPLICABLE
FORM F: Steps taken to implement Article 9 of the Protocol: Generic preventive measures

High Contracting Party: BELGIUM

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 9 and the Technical Annex:

1. Munition Manufacturing Management:
   a. Belgian Defense no longer manufactures munition. However, during the procurement process the administration requests (by means of indispensible specifications in the request for tender) that the munition manufacturers comply with production principles mentioned in article 9.
   b. The National (Defense) QAR (or NATO homologues) personnel controls the production process and the quality plan of the manufacturer.
   c. Safety & suitability for service is checked during evaluation or proof is requested and included as a requirement in the offer. Once the contract is awarded, supplementary acceptance testing of pilot and serial lots are conducted following the specifications of the ammunition. Depending on the case those tests are conducted in the company and/or in Belgian Defense test facilities.
   d. Ammunition is acquired only when not in conflict with international law & treaties signed/ratified by Belgium. The Belgian Commission for the Legal Review of New Weapons, Means and Methods of Warfare assesses the legality of new ammunition with regard to international law, in accordance with article 36 of the first Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions.
   e. Transfer of ammunition to another State is only possible if sufficient evidence (through In Service Surveillance testing) is available concerning the safety and reliability of the ammunition.

2. Munition Management during the whole "Life Cycle":
   a. "In Service Surveillance" is conducted in a pragmatic way.

   Modular Structure:
   ISM - In Service Monitoring: Tech visual Inspections, user findings, findings during renovation/maintenance
   ISP - In Service Proof: Life Firing/functional testing
   CM - Condition Monitoring: Chemical Analyses of energetic material, Radiographic/radioscopic investigation, dimensional control,…
   PT - Predictive testing: pre-stress a test item before examination, in order to provide a prediction of residual life
   EDL - Environmental Data Logging: collecting data of endured Vibrations, Humidity, Temperature & Shocks.

   b. Operational deployment:

   - Ammunition is suffering severe stress (temperature, humidity, vibrations) when deployed in operational theater. When degradation is detected by the user or by ammunition technical personnel, a Technical Degrading Report (TDR) is sent to the Material Manager who will decide what to do. In order to be able to detect degradation, the ammunition deployed in operational theater is accompanied with Environmental Data Loggers (EDL). The Data received is cross-checked with manufacturers data.

   There are several options:
   * Urgent demilitarization by EOD services when storage and/or transport safety is no longer guaranteed.
   * Use in priority for training in theater.
   * Evacuation to Belgium where this part of the lot is isolated and considered as a "fleet leader" for further In Service
surveillance.
* possible demolition in theater by belgian eod personnel or personnel from nato partners when transport to belgium is not economically justifiable.

c. phasing out:
- ammunition that is no longer used, because of unacceptable technical degradation or because the weapon system is no longer used, stays in inventory until demilitarized.
- there are three options for demilitarization:
  * urgent demilitarization by eod services when storage safety is no longer guaranteed.
  * demilitarization in belgian demilitarization installations
  * outsourcing of demilitarization contracts through nspa (nato support agency)

  - the storage safety is guaranteed for as long the ammunition stays in inventory.

d. best practices and operating procedures in the domain of storage, transport, field storage and safe handling.

belgian defense has ratified and implemented the following nato agreements and complies with the european legislation in the domain of safe storage and transportation of ammunition and explosives:

storage:
- aastp-1 (allied ammunition storage and transport publication 1) (manual of nato safety principles for the storage of military ammunition and explosives)
- aastp-5 (manual of nato safety principles for the operational storage of military ammunition and explosives)

transport:
- aastp-2 manual of nato safety principles for the transport of military ammunition and explosives
- adr, imdg, iata &rid for the transportation of dangerous goods

any other relevant information:
FORM G: Steps taken to implement Article 11 of the Protocol: Compliance

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 11:
Officers assigned as “Advisers in the Law of Armed Conflict” are available in each unit (up to battalion or independent company level) to advise military commanders on the application of the Law of Armed Conflict. The education programme of these advisers includes general information about Protocol V obligations. Legal advisors with in-depth knowledge of Protocol V are available to advise Units and Commanders on any legal issue regarding explosive remnants of war.

Any other relevant information:
Information to the civilian population:

On a regular basis, representatives of the Defense Department give lectures as part of the IHL courses organised by the Belgian Red Cross and/or International Committee of the Red Cross. General or specific education related to means and methods of warfare, including the issue of ERW, and in particular Protocol V, is included in these courses.
FORM H: Other relevant matters

High Contracting Party: BELGIUM

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019

Any other relevant information:

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