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PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
GENEVA

Nr. 208

NOTE VERBALE

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the CCW Implementation Support Unit, and has the honor to submit the Albanian National Annual Report for 2017 pursuant to Article 10, paragraph 2 (b) of the Protocol and the decision of the First Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the CCW Implementation Support Unit, the assurance of its highest consideration. ✍



Geneva, 27 June 2018

CCW Implementation Support Unit
Office for Disarmament Affairs (Geneva Branch)
Room C.115
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

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REPORTING FORMS

**PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10, PARAGRAPH 2 (b) OF THE PROTOCOL AND THE
DECISION OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE HIGH CONTRACTING
PARTIES TO PROTOCOL V**

(As adopted by the First Conference at its second plenary meeting on 5 November 2007)

HIGH CONTRACTING PARTY: ALBANIA

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Ministry of Defence, Garrison "Skenderbej" Rr. "Dibres"

Tirana, Albania

DATE OF SUBMISSION: April 2018

(dd/mm/yyyy)

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

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FORM A: Steps taken to implement Article 3 of the Protocol: Clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war

High Contracting Party: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 3:

a) Mine/UXO contamination resulting from the Kosovo conflict in 1999

Albania has suffered a contamination of explosive remnants of war as a result of the Kosovo conflict in 1999. A post-conflict general survey by the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) right after the conflict identified originally 15.25 km² of mine contaminated area in 39 villages and affecting approximately 25,000 people along the 120 kilometer Albanian/Kosova border in the district of Kukes, Has and Tropoje. The threat identified in these areas included anti-personnel and anti-tank mines laid by FYR forces, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and sub-munitions from FYR rocket artillery.

The Government of Albania responded swiftly by conducting rapid surface clearance, which dramatically reduced civilian casualties. However, the work was not carried out in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and the area had to be re-cleared.

In addition, in order to adequately implement mine action, an inter-ministerial body – The Albanian Mine Action Committee (AMAC) was established to act as the overall policy making body for mine action. At the same time, an operational body – the Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE) was in charge to carry out the mine action program under direction of the AMAC and responsible of coordination and monitoring of: mine/UXO clearance, risk education and victim assistance.

From 2000-2009 international demining organizations conducting survey operations and humanitarian demining in Albania included RONCO, HELP, the Swiss Foundation for Demining (FSD) and Dan Church Aid (DCA). As a result of these coordinated efforts about 16,608,055 square meters of area in which anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordnance were known or were suspected to be emplaced were released through survey and clearance and certified as free of threat by AMAE at the end of 2009. This work has culminated in the destruction of more than 12,452 anti-personnel mines, 152 anti-tank mines and 4,965 UXOs. (Out of the total amount of 4,965 unexploded ordnances, 4,869 are cluster munitions which have been reported already under the Article 7 of the Cluster Munitions Convention).

The clearance operations throughout these years were funded by several donors including: The European Union and the Governments of United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Denmark, Canada and Czech Republic while implementing partners for mine clearance include: the local authorities of Kukes Region, the International Trust Fund Enhancing Human Security (ITF), the UNDP, UNMAS, DanChurchAid, the Swiss Foundation for Demining, RONCO, HELP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

b) UXO/ERW Hotspots in Albania

In addition to the contamination along the northeastern border Albania is still suffering also the contamination from unexploded ordnances hotspots created as a result of civil unrests in 1997. During these unrests and later, there were a number of explosions at Ammunition Storage Sites (ASS) across Albania. According to AAF estimates at the time, 38 army depots (storages) were destroyed due to the detonation of about 5,700 tons of ammunition in 15 different locations. The explosions killed and injured many civilians while thrown-out ammunition contaminated vast areas around the ASS.

The ammunition contamination of the territory is still a problem in Albania. Among the causes of such contamination are the unplanned explosions at Ammunition Storage Sites (ASS) across the country during the civil unrest in 1997, the unexploded remains of the WW II as well as former army ammunition demolition areas which need to be cleared of explosive remnants.

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UXO hotspots have been created also in few former army demolition areas and shooting or firing ranges polygons (former shooting & training sites), which have been closed down recently by the AAF. Most of these areas need a full subsurface clearance at a depth of up to 50 cm, before being used by the army or being released to the local community. New accidents have been recorded with ammunitions. There are in total 1002 mine/ UXO casualties (151 killed and 851 injured) recorded all over Albania during the period from 1997 till December 2017.

The Government and the Ministry of Defense have outlined a new Plan of Action for Elimination of Excess Ammunition in Albania aiming to dispose of all its surplus stockpiled ammunition by 2015 and to clear all the UXO/ERW hotspot areas by 2020.

Albanian Mine and Munitions Coordination Office (AMMCO) has carried out technical and socio-economic impact assessments in 19 identified UXO hotspot areas. The purpose of these assessments was to obtain a real picture of the remaining threat such as: exact location, estimation of threat, to determine the details of clearance operation requirements, impact to the communities and to propose due action. More than 1,9 million square meters were identified as dangerous in these hotspots, due to the presence of ammunition remnants.

The Ministry of Defense requested UNDP's assistance to deal with the UXO hotspots problem by engaging AMMCO (Albanian Mine & Munitions Coordination Office) as a professional structure to contribute through the same institutional arrangement and role, inclusive of its know-how in mine victim assistance and risk education/community liaison activities, in the area of hotspots clearance and ammunition disposal, to help ensure that these components are carried out in accordance with the International Humanitarian Standards. Coordination and monitoring activities are supported financially from US Department of State through ITF and UNDP.

Since August 2014, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), a humanitarian NGO experienced in mine action, signed the contract with ITF Enhancing Human Security, to conduct clearance of UXO hotspots in Albania, with the financial support of USA Government. Also, the EOD of Albanian Armed Forces is doing clearance of Hotspots in Albania with financial support from the Albanian Government.

During the reporting period January- december 2017, AMMCO was carrying out Coordination and Quality Management (Quality Assurance & Quality Control) of the cleared areas in UXO hotspots of Kordhoc and Picar Gjirokaster, Qaf Shtame (Selixe) Burrel and Jube-Sukth Durres.

The achievements in land clearance are respectively:

- 226,127 square meters of contaminated land cleared by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and the EOD AAF team, in the UXO hotspot of Kordhoc (8,362 square meters), Picar (13,937 square meters) and an additional 33,715 square meters released due to evidence of no threat), Jube-Sukth (169,993 square meters) and Qafe Shtame (Selixe) (180 square meters one tunnel).
- 23,992 items of UXO (different calibers of artillery ammunitions, fuzes hand grenades), 80 AP mine body found (containing only body and no explosives inside), 2 AT mine body and 354,719 items of Small Arms and Ammunitions (SAA) (≤ 23 mm and bullets) and 12 SALW are found during the reporting period in UXO hotspots of Kordhoc, Picar Gjirokaster, Qafe Shtame (Selixe) Burrel and Jube-Sukth Durres. All dangerous items found are destroyed in situ from EOD team of AAF and others are collected and stored in the military depo for further destruction on the demolition range from the EOD AAF team, coordinated and monitored from AMMCO.

The AAF Support Command provides all the necessary logistic arrangements according to safety regulations and respective international standards for the ammunition collected in the hotspots by the clearance company and considered safe for transport. In addition, the EOD experts of AAF dispose on the spot all dangerous ammunition that was unsafe for transportation. AMMCO coordinates and closely monitors the UXO clearance and disposal operations in order to ensure that these are carried out in strict compliance with the international humanitarian standards. Community Liaison and Risk Education activities are carried out also along with the UXO clearance operations in order to inform the communities aware of the ammunition risk.

Since the Government of Albania is currently struggling with several priorities, the international financial support is a crucial need for both clearance and the monitoring process of the clearance of these UXO/ERW hotspots, and Victim Assistance in order to be cleared within the set deadlines and so ensure the safety of the surrounding communities in ensure the medical and socio-economic rehabilitation of survivors.

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Any other relevant information:

Updated List of UXO Hotspots as of 31 December 2017

Nr	UXO/ERW Hotspot	Suspected Area in yrs 2012 in m ²	Remaining area in m ² as of January 2018
1	Sinanaj – Tepelene	200,000	200,000
2	Jube Sukth – Durres	1,326,714	1.156.721
3	Suç-Burrel	84,000	8,350
4	Qafe Shtame - Burrel	360	180
	Grand Total	1,611,074	1.365.251

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

High Contracting Party: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 **to** 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

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

The Albanian Armed Forces has not made any use of explosive ordnance and therefore there have been no instances required to record, retain or transmit information on the use of or abandonment of explosive ordnance in accordance with Article 4 of this Protocol.

Any other relevant information:

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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: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

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

All 39 villages affected by landmines and unexploded ordnance in northeastern Albania were covered regularly with Risk Education activities until clearance operations were successfully completed in 2009. As such the number of accidents decreased from 152 in 1999 to the last 2 accidents in 2005. The overall decline in the number of accidents was representative of the effective mine clearance and MRE activities taking place in the region. The MRE were effective in reaching all targeted groups in the affected region and were carried out in an integrated manner involving several stakeholders and implementing partners including UNICEF, ICRC, Albanian Red Cross, the NPO-Victims of Mines & Arms Kukësi - Association (VMA), the demining organizations and the village based Anti-mine Committees under coordination and monitoring of the Albanian Mine Action Executive.

In addition, Risk Education activities are continuing around the UXO/ERW hotspots areas and are closely linked with the community liaison efforts. Albanian Mines and Munitions Coordination Office (AMMCO) coordinates risk education activities in order to raise caution on ammunition threats and prevent new accidents among civilians living around the contaminated areas. Awareness materials and official warning signs are produced and distributed in the affected areas in cooperation with NPA.

Signs are erected around ammunition affected UXO hotspots pointing out and warning the public on explosive hazards. Warning posters with Risk Education messages are also installed in the most dangerous areas identified during AMMCO's technical and socio-economic surveys. UXO Hotspots sites that AMMCO has assessed as high risk areas and areas under clearance by the EOD teams of AAF are properly marked.

Improved communication between locals and relevant authorities is advancing safety and building trust in affected communities.

Any other relevant information:

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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: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 6:

The surrounding communities are duly informed about the remaining threat of unexploded ordnance (UXO) around the UXO/ERW hotspots areas. Ministry of Defence and Albanian Mines and Munitions Coordination Office are responsible of providing all required information about the threat.

Any other relevant information:

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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

High Contracting Party: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

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

The UXO/ERW Hotspots clearance programme has received funding so far from the US State Department and Germany through the International Trust Fund Enhancing Human Security (ITF) for the clearance operations while Governments of USA, Germany, Norway, Canada, UNMAS and UNDP have funded the coordination and monitoring operations of the UXO/ERW hotspots.

The programme though is facing a shortage of funding for clearance operations and coordination and monitoring activities. As such, clearance operations are continuing in Jub Sukth by Norwegians Peple's Aid (NPA) with financial support from Government of USA and in UXO Hotspot of Qafë Shtame (Selixe) by the EOD Unit of the Albanian Armed Forces.

The Ministry of Defence has prepared a National Action Plan for the UXO hotspots clearance in Albania which sets the main goal and strategic objective of the UXO Hotspots clearance and the resources required to complete clearance of these hotspots by 2020.

Any other relevant information:

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: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

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

There are at least 1002 UXO casualties (151 killed and 851 injured) all over Albania. There is plan aiming to support the mine and UXO victims throughout Albania. The plan complies with several Disarmament International Treaties ratified by Albania, such as Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and Convention on Cluster Munitions Convention. The implementation of this plan is contributing to the emergency and

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continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support, socio-economic reintegration, data collection, relevant laws and policies for all mine/UXO victims throughout Albania.

A “Needs Assessment of Social-Economic and Medical needs of marginalized Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) victims in Albania” supported by the Austrian and US Government, has been completed in 2016. The focus of the assessment was to review the status of the survivors, identifying their specific needs and drafting due recommendations for assistance to the Government and donors. To this purpose, a national workshop with participation of all stakeholders including donors was held in Tirana to present the findings and more important the medical/rehabilitation and socio-economic needs of survivors and/or their families.

Based on the above Needs assessments, US Department of State through ITF Enhancing Human Security funded two projects in Victim Albania during 2017. The first project supported the vocational training of 25 survivors. A selection process is done and 25 survivors have already completed the vocational training courses in Albania. The second project supported Prosthetics Workshop with raw materials and components for the repair and production of prostheses and orthoses.

During the reporting period, at least 31 new prostheses and 41 major repairs are done to amputees in need at the Prosthetic Workshop in Kukes Hospital and at 1481 physiotherapy sessions are done to 135 patients.

Albania needs support to further address the needs of Mine/UXO survivors and other persons with Disabilities. Albania has already identified for 2018 the financial gaps and needs in order to fulfill obligations under the APMBT, other disarmament conventions and the CRPD.

All activities were monitored and coordinated by Albanian Mine and Munitions Coordination Office (AMMCO) and carried out in cooperation with various implementing partners including the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Kukës Regional Hospital, and Directorates of Public Health, UNDP Albania, International Trust Fund Enhancing Human Security (ITF), University Rehabilitation Institute Republic of Slovenia and the NGO “Albanian Association for Assistance Integration and Development” (ALB-AID).

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

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FORM F: Steps taken to implement Article 9 of the Protocol: Generic preventive measures

High Contracting Party: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

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

a) Munitions production

The Republic of Albania does not produce any weapons or ammunition in its territory.

b) Munitions Management

The Albanian Armed Forces standards for the safe stockpiling, storage, packing of ammunition in arm army depots, with the aim to minimize the risk of uncontrolled explosions are as follows:

STANAG 4123; AASTP-3 - Manual of NATO Safety Principles for the Hazard Classification of Military Ammunition and Explosives

Law Nr. 9272, date 16.09.2004, "On the adherence of the Republic of Albania to the European Agreement " On international road transport of dangerous items (ADR) and the signature protocol".

National standards on management, storage and administration of weapons, ammunition and explosives approved by the Minister of Defence and the Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces, as set out in technical rules and regulations, manuals, respective orders and instructions.

The Armed Forces for the safe transport of ammunition are based on legal acts, dispositions and administrative acts as follows:

1. Law nr.8378, date 01.12.1992 " The Road Code of the Republic of Albania".
2. Law nr.8308, date 13.03.1998 "On the road transport".
3. Law nr.9272, date 16.09.2004, " on the adherence of the Republic of Albania to the european agreement "On international road transport of dangerous items (ADR) and the signature protocol".
4. Law nr. 9126, date 29.07.2003, "On the civilian use of explosive charges in the Republic of Albania".
5. Orders and instructions of the Minister of Defence and the Chief of General Staff of the Albanian Armed Forces.
 - Collection (tracing of arms and ammunition) is authority of the State Police. The Armed Forces, are responsible of storing the weapons and ammunition handed over by the State Police.
 - Measures and Procedures for lab and firing tests of ammunition are as follows:
 1. The test of chemical stability of the propellant with HPTLC
 2. Physical-chemical sensitivity tests of the firing primers.

Any other relevant information:

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FORM G: Steps taken to implement Article 11 of the Protocol: Compliance

High Contracting Party: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 **to** 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

Steps taken to implement the provisions of Article 11:

The Albanian Armed Forces personnel directly involved in UXO/ERW recovery and disposal are issued with appropriate instructions, operating procedures and receive training consistent with the relevant provisions of this Protocol.

In addition, army personnel from the Albanian Armed Forces, who participate in Joint International Peacekeeping Missions are briefed on the purpose and provisions of this Protocol.

Any other relevant information:

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FORM H: Other relevant matters

High Contracting Party: ALBANIA

Reporting for time period from: 01/01/2017 **to** 31/12/2017
[dd/mm/yyyy] [dd/mm/yyyy]

Any other relevant information: