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ENGLISH only



MISIONI I PËRHERSHËM
I REPUBLIKËS SË SHQIPËRISË
PRANË ORGANIZATAVE
NDËRKOMBËTARE
VJENË

PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
TO THE INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS
VIENNA

Ref. 172

NOTE VERBALE

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to all Permanent Delegations and Missions of the participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and to the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre and, in accordance with the Decision 07/04 of the Forum for Security Co-operation, has the honour to submit herewith the Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Mines and Explosive Remnants of War.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Permanent Delegations and Missions of the participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and to the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, the assurances of its highest consideration. E-GJ.

Vienna, 06th of June, 2023



To:
All Permanent Delegations and Missions to the OSCE
OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre
VIENNA



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

**QUESTIONNAIRE
ON ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES**

(FSC.DEC/7/04)

OSCE

2023

OSCE QUESTIONNAIRE - 2022

PART I

1. ***Is your country a State Party to the 1996 Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices annexed to the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW)?***

Yes, Albania is a State Party to the Amended Protocol II of the CCW.

2. ***If yes:*** Albania has been a State Party to the Amended Protocol II of the CCW since 28th August 2002.

If no:

3. ***Is your country considering ratification/accession to the Amended Protocol II?***

N/A

4. ***What measures have been taken to prevent the indiscriminate use of mines, booby-traps and other devices?***

Since April 2006, Albania has approved a new Law on the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mines Ban Convention, which imposes administrative and penal sanctions on any activity involving indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines.

5. ***Would your country be interested in receiving assistance related to the implementation of this Protocol? If so, please describe.***

N/A

6. ***Does your country have the capacity to assist others related to this Protocol? If so, please describe.***

No.

PART II

7. ***Has your country ratified or acceded to the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction?***

Albania has ratified the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel mines and on their destruction since 29th February 2000.

8. ***(a) If yes, please attaches the most recent report submitted by your country in accordance with Article 7 of the Convention or give the appropriate electronic address for the report.***

<http://www.unog.ch>

<https://geneva-s3.unoda.org/artvii-database-dump/Albania/2019.pdf>

- (b) If no, is your country considering ratification/accession to the Convention?***

N/A

- (c) Has your country adopted legislation to address the humanitarian objectives of the convention, or taken any specific measures regarding the use, production, storage, transfer and destruction of anti-personnel landmines? In ease a moratorium has been introduced, what is its scope and duration and when was it introduced?***

In April 2006, Albanian has approved a new Law on the implementation of the APM Ban Convention, 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 Defence as the authority in charge for all mine action activities in the country.

9. ***Does your country have any specific measures in place to provide assistance to victims?***

Ministry of Health and Social Protection covering the inclusion of all categories of persons with disability, in relation to mine victims. Social Services and financial assistance is provided to persons with disability.

UNDP Albania through the Joint UN project "Leave no one Behind" has supported community meetings to inform and discuss with community and service workers needs and services in 5 municipalities (Divjake, Rrogozhine, Kamez, Kruje and Patos Municipality) to inform on available services and the needs in municipality level such as referral to social or health services and social housing.

National Health Strategy 2021-2030 "On the approval of National Strategy for Health" foresees objectives for vulnerable groups receiving health services, accessible and affordable for health of the Albanian population.

MoHSP has continued the improvement of the infrastructure and reconstructed 340 Health Centers, hospitals and polyclinic. Mobile units provide services also in remote areas.

University of Trauma in Tirana has been renovated and provides orthopaedic prostheses. The Regional Hospital in Kukes has been transformed recently in a modern health service structure for the northern region, however the prosthetic center and the social service must target in coordination the needs on landmine survivors.

Law No. 93/2014 “On Inclusion and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities” dispositions foresee coordination of cross-sectoral effort for inclusion of persons with disabilities in all areas of life. Law No. 57/2019 “On Social Assistance in the Republic of Albania” foresees the financial benefits for Persons with Disabilities, along with Law 121/2016 “On Social Care Services in the Republic of Albania”. The latter provides for all municipalities to draft Social Plans, conducting needs analysis for social integrated services in the community, identifying vulnerable groups and services needed. There is improvement in accessibility in central and local government infrastructure, where there is a good practice of local plans for accessibility and inclusion under implementation

MoHSP is cooperating with partners to improve the accessibility of services near the population and continues to cooperate with UNDP on the implementation of the NAP 2021-2025 “On Persons with Disability. Moreover, Caritas Albania and Albanian Red Cross provided support for persons with disability to strengthen resilience of persons with disabilities, mental health and psycho social health and advocacy for rights of persons with Disabilities.

10. Does your country require assistance in mine clearance, stockpile destruction, and mine awareness and/or victim assistance? If so, please describe.

Yes, particularly for the victim’s assistance, including the repair and servicing of prosthesis. There is needed a fact-finding mission in order to consult with mine victims’ associations and respective authorities on the specific assistance.

11. Does your country have the capacity to assist others in mine action? If so, please describe.

There are needs related to capacity building mainly in health rehabilitation, social-economic support to mine victims and enhancing participation in society through assistance based on rights and coordination of relevant stakeholders including support for victims associations and advocacy.

PART III

1. Has your country notified the Depositary of its consent to be bound by the 2003 CCW Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) once it enters into force? Is your country considering doing so?

Albania is a State Party to Protocol V of the CCW on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).

2. If yes, at what stage is the process?

3. Would your country be interested in receiving assistance in clearing or otherwise minimizing the risks and effects of ERW? If so, please describe.

Albania has received assistance in clearing and minimizing the effects of ERW and is

continuing this process.

UXO Hotspots Contaminated areas:

The Albanian Government and the Ministry of Defence have outlined a Plan of Action for the elimination of Excess Ammunitions in Albania aiming to dispose all of its surplus stockpiled ammunition and to clear all the UXO/ERW hotspot areas.

The current number of dangerous UXO hotspots is at present reduced to 1 from initially 19 ones identified in 2011.

UXO Hotspot Jubë-Sukth, Durrës.

The Norwegian People Aids (NPA) deployed two clearance teams to the Jubë - Sukth UXO hotspot executing. The Clearance Operation started in 2017 and Phase 1 was completed on December 2018. NPA teams cleared a total of **388,185 square meters** in the **Phase I** of clearance.

The remaining **420,000 square meters** were left for clearance by the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) Teams in Jubë - Sukth and is subject of the current operational clearance plan.

UXO Hotspot Jubë - Sukth, Durrës Phase 2

In 2019 Phase 2 began for the clearance of the remaining **420,000 square meters**.

During 2022 the EOD team of AAF has been employed to continue clearing operation from UXO of Juba – Sukth, Durrës, as below.

UXO Hotspot Jubë - Sukth, Durres (TD-HS-17 c) - Phase Two	
Total Estimated Area in sq. meters:	420,000 sq. meters
Total Cleared Area in sq. meters 31/12/2022:	89.545 sq. meters or 21.32 %
Total Items Found 31/12/2022:	2252 UXO Items
Remaining area to be cleared:	330.455 sq. meters
Clearance organization	Albania Armed Forces-Two Teams
Donor's	Albania Ministry of Defence

Mine clearance and rehabilitation programmes: During 2022 AAF (EOD) has organized 4 EOD training course 1 (one) training course for level 1; 2 (two) training course for level 2,

and 1 (one) training course for level 3. Total number of the EOD personnel trained in these courses are 36.

EOD Response to Callouts:

In addition to the UXO Hotspots Clearance, the EOD units of AAF perform the EOD response based on the request from police and local authorities which are classified as non-criminal act.

Physical Security & Stockpile Management (PSSM) Support:

With additional funding from the Department of Defense, the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) utilized the New Jersey National Guard through the State Partnership Program (SPP), and U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) to conduct EOD Level 2 training events with the AAF.

The US Department of Defense and the US EUCOM as part of Physical Security & Stockpile Management (PSSM) Program has provided on-going assistance for the improvement of physical security and safety upgrades at the Miraka and Engineering Battalion ammunition depot facilities Ministry of Defence's (MoD).

The Underwater Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) contamination problem in Albania.

We have a significant problem with underwater unexploded ordnance along the entire coast of Albania. The most significantly contaminated area is in Vlora Bay. Other areas, particularly in southern Albanian coast, such as Saranda Bay, which have also unexploded ordnance in its waters. Additional surveys need to be carried out in these areas.

During 2022, the Albanian Naval Force conducted 2 (two) training courses for "Sea mines Warfare.

- 20 - 24 September 2022. Training course: "The detection, engagement on mine countermeasure (MCM) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal". This training course was organized in framework of A5 initiative, in Koper, Slovenia.
- 13 - 26 November 2022 Training course: "The EOD and Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD)". This training course took place in Pashaliman, Vlora, Albania and is organized based on bilateral agreement with United Kingdom.

During the year 2022, the diving center in Pashaliman, in collaboration with EOD Group from Support Command SNMCMG2 group and French Minesweeper Pluton have completed successfully 11 operations.

2 (two) operations in Vlora bay removing 109 ammunitions, 20 mm - 155 mm caliber,
1 (one) operation in Dhërmiu Bay, for removing 1 (one) UXO.

8 (eight) other operations are conducted in the hotspot and harbors where NATO ships conducted exercises. Therefore, we require the support of the international organizations to clean up our coastal waters, and thus making them safer for our citizens.

4. Does your country have the capacity to assist others in clearing and minimizing the risks and effects of ERW? If so, please describe.

As of June 2017, the AAF has engaged with an EOD platoon as part of Canadian contingent in NATO enhanced Forward Presence (e-FP) in Riga, Latvia with 21 military EOD personnel (4 officers and 17 NCO-s).

The total contribution of AAF in NATO e-FP in Riga Letoni from 2017 till 31 December 2022 has been 227 military personnel.