



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Intersessional Meetings of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
Geneva, 22 – 24 June 2021**

Statement of Greece on Stockpile Destruction

Mr President,

As it is the first time I take the floor under your Presidency, allow me to congratulate you , on the assumption of your duties as well as the ISU, on steering us towards a positive outcome, and to assure you of Greece's full support in your endeavors.

Mr President

Greece has made every effort to complete its contractual obligations under the Mine Ban Treaty including the destruction of the APLMs stockpile through a contract in force with the Hellenic Defence Systems (HDS) for this purpose.

To date, Greece has destroyed more than 1,2 million APLMs, completed mine clearance obligations 4 ½ years ahead of the deadline set by Article 5 of the convention and fulfills its financial obligations in a timely manner to ensure the sustainability of the meetings of the Convention. Furthermore, Greece has demilitarized 1.654 APLMs from the initial quantity of 7.224 that was declared in accordance with Article 3 in 2008.

Mr President

Greece has been unable to entirely fulfill its obligation under Article 4 due to unforeseen circumstances such as the deadly explosion at the Videx facilities (Bulgaria) and a legal dispute with the HDS, which led to a pause in the destruction process for almost 2 years. The above circumstances are beyond the MoDs control

This unfortunate situation due to these unforeseen circumstances has been recognized by all Presidents of the Convention thus far.

By July 2021 a new public tender will be issued in order to appoint a new subcontractor for the demilitarization of the remaining APLMs stockpile.

The competent department of the Ministry of National Defense submitted a query to the State Legal Council in order to formulate its opinion on legal issues related to the current contract with the HDS and any necessary further steps for its revision or termination if a further extension of its duration will not be legally possible. We have been informed that the decision is forthcoming.

Mr President

The mere fact that Greece has missed its deadline under Article 4 does not in and of itself constitute a breach of Article 1.2. We believe that from a legal perspective, a State Party that has missed its deadline under Article 4 must be considered in breach of Article 1.2, only if it is not taking any measures whatsoever in good faith to destroy its stockpile. Greek competent authorities have remained steadfast in their task despite unforeseen hurdles

Last but not least, I would like to reiterate that the Hellenic Republic fully recognises its obligations stemming from the Ottawa Convention, and – despite the challenges which we have encountered we have never wavered from our commitment to the Convention's implementation.

Thank you