



Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office in Geneva

9th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

Geneva, 24-28 November 2008

Mine Clearance

27 November 2008

Mr. President,

As it has been repeatedly stated by this delegation, on previous occasions, Greece has maintained minefields, along the Evros river, in the North-East part of the country, along the border with neighboring Turkey, since 1974. A total of 24.751 antipersonnel mines were emplaced in the above mentioned areas, of which 22.589 M16 type and 2.162 M2 type.

All minefields have been clearly defined and marked and have double-fenced perimeters, well above the requirements of established NATO standards.

Clearance of antipersonnel mines in the Evros minefields, started immediately following the ratification of the MBT, and is carried out by the Land Minefield Clearance Battalion (TENX), under the responsibility of the Ministry of Defense.

According to official data provided for the purpose of this meeting by the Ministry of Defense, as of November 20th, 2008, Greece has completed de-mining operations in 49 of the minefields in question, while operations continue in the remaining 8.

Out of the total of 24.751 antipersonnel mines in the above mentioned mined areas, 21.403, corresponding to 86,47%, have been cleared and destroyed.

With an average cost of 800.000 EUROS per year, the total cost of the operation so far has reached the sum of 3.5 million EUROS.

Given the progress achieved after 3,5 years of clearance operations, in compliance with the provisions of article 5, Greece will fulfill its mine clearance obligations, by 2010, 4 years in advance of the deadline of 2014, established by the Convention.

I thank you Mr. President