

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

FSC.EMI/184/19  
31 May 2019

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

Nr. Prot. 256

### VERBAL NOTE

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to all Permanent Delegations and Missions to the OSCE and to the Conflict Prevention Centre, and in accordance with Decision 7/04 of the Forum for Security Co-operation, has the honor to transmit herewith the Albania's replay to the OSCE Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Landmines and on 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 to the OSCE and to the Conflict Prevention Centre the assurances of its highest consideration.



Vienna, 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2019

**To: All Permanent Delegations and Missions to the OSCE**  
**The OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre**  
**The OSCE Secretariat**



**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

**QUESTIONNAIRE  
ON ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES**

(FSC.DEC/7/04)

**OSCE**

**2019**

## OSCE QUESTIONNAIRE - 2018

### 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:**

3. **If no:**

*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?*

Albania has passed since April 2006 a New Law on the implementation of the APM 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 February 2000.

- 8.(a) *If yes, please attach 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>

- (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 case a moratorium has been introduced, what is its scope and duration and when was it introduced?*

Albania has passed since April 2006 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?*

There are at least 1003 UXO casualties (151 killed and 852 injured) all over Albania and the data are disaggregated by age and gender. The aiming to support the mine and UXO victims throughout Albania, complies with 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 continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support, socio-economic reintegration, data collection, relevant laws and policies for all mine/UXO victims throughout Albania.

Emergency and ongoing health care capacities are improving in Albania. Medical equipment's for former mine /UXO affected region are provided by donors and government. A Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PMR) Programme supported by donor and the government have developed a sustainable national response to the PMR needs of mine/UXO victims and other people in Albania.

Around 35 students are enrolled at the state University of Medicine/ Faculty of Nursing, Physiotherapy branch and around the same number are graduated on yearly bases. This Programme is fully integrated with State Faculty and supported by the government.

The rehabilitation unit is established at former mine affected region is supported with raw materials and equipments and upgraded to repair and produce prostheses.

During 2018, at least at least **17 new prostheses and 22 major repairs** are done to amputees in need at the Prosthetic Workshop in Kukës Regional Hospital and at **2,266 physiotherapy** sessions are done to **165 patients**. This prosthetic workshop is fully integrated within the structures of the government hospital. More staff is added in the structure of the physiotherapy unit in order to fulfill the needs of mine/UXO survivors and other people with disabilities.

Albania established for all health professionals the “National Center of Continuing Education (NCCE)” a public institution that functions as a technical agency of the Ministry of Health. The units of the center work together to plan, coordinate, monitor and evaluate continuing education activities of health professionals.

In terms of socio economic employments, 120 mine/UXO survivors and their family members completed vocational training courses, supported by donors through the mine action Programme. Recently, the government with support and technical assistance of donors opened vocational training schools in the country and young people are encouraged to register in these schools. The vocational training centers available almost in every region in Albania are designed to support also persons with disabilities, including mine/UXO survivors.

Survivors of mine/UXO, people with disabilities and NGOs involved in the disability issues, are active in organizing awareness activities on the rights of the people with disabilities. As usual, they are participating in these activities and make appeals to the representatives of the local government in order to receive more attention to mine/UXO survivors and other people with disabilities.

Mine/UXO survivors and other persons with disabilities widely participate in meetings, round tables, seminars, other public events, etc, and lobbying for their rights, raising voices on their needs and problems they face in everyday life.

Regarding the physical barriers, since 2007 by law, new buildings, roads, sidewalks must be according to known standards for PwD. Also, old building, sidewalks etc are continuously being made accessible for Persons with Disabilities.

The government in recent years has increased the capacities including the financial resources and aims to do more to fulfill the needs of survivors and other people with disabilities. These requests also a distribute geographically especially the rehabilitation services. Albania needs support to further address the needs of Mine/UXO survivors and other persons with Disabilities and has already identified for 2019 the financial gaps in order to fulfill obligations under the disarmament conventions and the CRPD.

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. Below are the identified needs of survivors and/or their families.

#### **Medical/Rehabilitation Needs**

- 527 persons with amputations need to be fitted and periodic maintenance of their prosthesis, orthoses; this number includes below and upper limb prostheses, including partial foot and lose of fingers.
- 528 injured persons need to have regular medical checks.
- 610 persons need to attend physiotherapy sessions.
- 137 injured survivors should have periodic checks of their eyes from the specialists.
- 12 injured survivors should undergo operation for their vision.

#### **Economic reintegration/income generation activities**

- 583 survivors are in need of further economic support such as; employment opportunities, income generation activities and support with micro - loans for family home based businesses.
- 347 survivors wish to attend vocational training Courses.

#### **Psycho-Social/Peer Support, Sport Activities**

- 262 injured survivors should attend psycho-social sessions
- 32 injured survivors have special needs such as following: supplies with reading

tools for blind persons (Braille), Sign language media(sound with brails), Somniferous books ( special books with sound with brails)

- Almost all survivors want to participate in recreational activities and psychosocial support to overcome the trauma, including in the peer support programs.

Upon request a concept paper or detailed project can be shared upon request

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

No

### **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.*

In addition to the contamination along the northeaster border Albania is still suffering also the contamination from unexploded ordnances hotspots created because 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.

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.

The Government and the Ministry of Defence 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) have 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 Defence 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 2018**, AMMCO was carrying out Coordination and Quality Management (Quality Assurance & Quality Control) of the cleared areas in UXO hotspots of Suç and QafShtame (Selixe) Burrel, Jube-



SukthDurrësand SinanajTepelenë. The achievements in land clearance are respectively;

- **307,563 square meters** of contaminated land cleared by Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) and the EOD AAF team, while AMMCO QM Team provided quality assurance and quality control in the UXO hotspot of Suç (25.000 square meters) is checked by metal detector and excavated under the ruins of exploded depot and (ii) (59.000 square meters) released due to evidence of no threat through Non-Technical Survey (NTS) method (visually checked and this area was planted and used by local farmers for many years), QafeShtame (Selixe) (750 square meters second tunnel),Jube-Sukth(218,252 square meters) and Sinanaj(4,561 square meters).
- **44,559 items of UXO** (different calibers of artillery ammunitions, fuses hand grenades), **4 AT mines and 4,586 (SSA)** items of small arms and ammunitions ( $\leq 23$  mm and bullets) are found during the reporting period in UXO hotspots of Suç and QafeShtame (Selixe) Burrel, Jube-Sukth Durrës and SinanajTepelene. All dangers items found are destroyed in situ from EOD team of AAF and others were collected and stored in the military depo and they weredestroyed on the demolition range of Biza from the EOD AAF team, coordinated and monitored from AMMCO.

In addition to the UXO Hotspots Clearance the EOD AAF is doing the EOD tasks allover Albania. During 2018, EOD performed in total **37 tasks** in the country and found and destroyed 942 different types of ammunitions.

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 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.

**Table: Updated List of UXO Hotspots as of 31 December 2018**

No	UXO Hotspot	Suspected Area in m <sup>2</sup>	Remaining area in m <sup>2</sup> as of January 2019
1	Sinanaj – Tepelene	200,000	161439
2	Jube-Sukth, Durres	1,326,714	938,529
	<b>Grand Total – 2018</b>	<b>1,875,474</b>	<b>1.099.968</b>

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

Due to our turbulent history, and as a result of various parties dumping large quantities of munitions during both World Wars, we have a significant problem with underwater unexploded ordnance along the entire coast of Albania. The most significantly contaminated area is in Vlore bay, but other areas, particularly in southern Albania also have stockpiles of unexploded ordnance in the waters. Additional surveys need still to be carried out around these areas.

During the reporting period January - December 2018, the EOD divers was carried out the reconnaissance and clearance operations in contaminated area such as: - Porto Romano bay; , Durrës; - Seman embouchure ; - Vlora Bay; Sazan Island; Karaboruni Peninsula.

In those operationsthe result is significant and positively are founded: - 1 sea mine; - 185 shells 76 mm; - 11 shells 122 mm; 2 shells 100 mm; - 8 shells 37 mm; - 23 shells 60 mm and 1 shells 82 mm. The total 1 sea mine and 230 (shells) pieces the Underwater Explosive Remnants of War. All dangers items found are destroyed from EOD team of AAF on the designated demolition range.

The most problematic site is in very shallow waters in Vlore Bay. The ship remains completely full of unexploded ordnance. The task of clearing this ship alone is a technically complex task.

No.	The Underwater ERWTypes	Calibre	Quantity	Status
1.	Sea mine	-	1	Destroyed
2.	Howitzer (shells)	122mm	11	Destroyed
3.	Cannon(shells)	76 mm	185	Destroyed
4.	Mortar(shells)	60 mm	23	Destroyed
5.	Mortar(shells)	82 mm	1	Destroyed
6.	Howitzer(shells)	37 mm	8	Destroyed
7.	Howitzer(shells)	100 mm	2	Destroyed

Albania appreciates the technical assistance already provided by EOD expert team from United States in the reconnaissance and identification of the underwater munitions in the Albanian see waters.

An excellent cooperation between Albanian NAVY Force and France NAVY Force has continuing on training and clearing contaminated zone. On 2018, a Training Exercise and Clearance Operation is conducted for tracing and clearing the underwater ERW which were involved EOD personnel of Albanian Diving Center and Clearance Diving M-622 PLUTON Ship of France NAVY Force.

The MoD has requested the necessary equipment's for clearance operation which is will enable to make a serious commitment to cleaning up our coastal waters, and thus making these safer for our citizens. We need and will greatly appreciate the support of the international community with this project.

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

The Albanian MoD provided the EOD team of Albanian Armed Forces in the European Union mission and to assist with European Union Military Committee (EUMC) in EOD operations in Mali. Its mission is to provide security and full support for the destruction of unexploded ordnance (UXO) to the Armed Forces of Mali, to maintain the proper security level at the KTC (Koulikoro Training Camp), including the response from the threats arising from UXO and explosive remnants of war. Also another task is the development of Countering Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) training with the Malaysian combat units.