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MISIONI I PËRHERSHËM
I REPUBLIKËS SË SHQIPËRISË
PRANË ORGANIZATAVE
NDËRKOMBËTARE
VJENË

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

Ref. 237

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 honor to submit herewith the Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Mines.

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.



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

2025

OSCE QUESTIONNAIRE - 2024

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 has ratified the 1996 Amended Protocol II of the CCW and is fully committed to its provisions concerning the use of mines, booby-traps, and other devices.

- 2. *If yes: Albania has been a State Party to the Amended Protocol II of the CCW since 28 August 2002, demonstrating a long-standing commitment to regulating the use of mines, booby-traps, and other devices in accordance with international humanitarian law.***

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 enacted a comprehensive law implementing the Anti-Personnel Mines Ban Convention. This legislation establishes strict administrative and penal sanctions against any activities involving the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines. Through this legal framework, Albania reinforces its commitment to preventing the use of such devices and promoting compliance with international humanitarian standards.

- 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.***

N/A.

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 ratified the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction on **29 February 2000**, demonstrating its firm commitment to the global effort to eliminate anti-personnel mines.

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, Albania enacted comprehensive legislation implementing the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. This law establishes administrative and penal sanctions against any activities prohibited to State Parties under the Convention, whether undertaken by individuals or occurring within Albanian territory. Additionally, the legislation designates the Minister of Defence as the national authority responsible for overseeing all mine action activities, ensuring coordinated implementation of the Convention's humanitarian objectives. No moratorium has been introduced separately, as the law provides a clear legal framework for compliance and enforcement.

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

Albania has taken important steps towards the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In implementation of this Convention, the Parliament of Albania adopted Law No. 93/2014 "On Inclusion and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities", foreseeing general concepts on social inclusion, accessible services and non-discrimination for all categories of persons with disabilities.

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection coordinates policies on the rights of Persons with Disabilities in order to guarantee that persons with disabilities in accessing social protection, access to justice, education, health, social housing, employment and vocational training, in accordance with the objectives and measures of the National Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025, approved by Decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 276, dated 12. 05. 2021 according to the following link:

https://shendetesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Plani-Kombetar-2021-2025_ENG.pdf

The plan contains measures for access to healthcare, in implementation of the National Health Strategy 2021 – 2030, approved by Council of Ministers No. 210, dated 06.04.2022. Specifically, the National Program for the Rehabilitation and Modernization of Health Institutions has ensured an improved infrastructure in health institutions at the national level. To increase access and quality in the provision of health services, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has improved the infrastructure in health institutions. Around 400 health centers have been rehabilitated recent years which helps in providing quality health services.

The model of socio-health services has been expanded to 103 socio-health centers, at the national level, where family medicine teams have been joined by psychologists and social workers, who provide psychosocial support and interventions for various vulnerable groups, including the category of persons treated by this convention. Also, at this level of service provision, to continuously improve the provision of rehabilitation and therapeutic services, about 50 speech therapists and physiotherapists have been added to the family medicine teams.

Meanwhile, the services provided at the hospital level for people with disabilities, specialized interventions, are provided at the Kukes Regional Hospital and the University Hospital of Trauma. The Kukes Regional Hospital offers an orthopedic prosthesis service, providing mainly repair services.

Meanwhile, at the tertiary level, at the University Hospital of Trauma, various services are provided for people with disabilities of all categories. This hospital has in its structure: the University Orthopedics Service, which is divided into three clinics, the Physiotherapy Service and the Plaster and Prosthetics Sector.

Through the Social Fund financing mechanism, new community services have been established for people with disabilities. During this year, a priority has also been the strengthening of the roles and figures of professionals who work with vulnerable groups, such as social health operators and personal assistants for the disabled.

The new model of bio-psycho-social assessment of disability is carried out based on the criteria approved in the guidelines for adults and children, which use ICF codes. This assessment scheme is applied to the assessment of disability throughout the country.

Regarding employment, the amendments approved in Law no. 15/2019 “On the Promotion of Employment”, have established the Social Employment Fund, through the provision and administration of financial mechanisms for the promotion of employment, integration and social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The legal framework for social housing also provides for the coordination of housing programs with public health, social assistance, employment and job training programs. The housing legislation has provided for all the enabling schemes that support the independent living of persons with disabilities.

Based on Law No. 111/2017 “On legal aid guaranteed by the state”, according to Article 11, persons with disabilities, regardless of their income, are direct beneficiaries of primary and secondary legal aid. Sub-legal acts have been approved, enabling cooperation with legal clinics to increase access to justice for persons with disabilities.

Regarding mental health, the Mental Health Action Plan 2023 – 2026 is in implementation, which continues to promote the provision of mental health services at the community level, through the deinstitutionalization and decentralization of these services.

At the meeting of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, held on 4 December 2024, the findings and recommendations of the mid-term report of the National Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025 were also presented

Moreover, within the framework of the Platform for Social Inclusion, during 2024, the MoHSP organized consultations on the Mid-term report of the National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025, in four regions: Shkoder, Durrës, Elbasan and Berat. Participants from civil society represented persons with disabilities including representatives of mine survivors. These meetings were attended by around 120 participants from regions, municipalities and regional directorates that provide social, health, employment and free legal aid services.

At the same time, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection will soon begin the process of evaluation of implementation of National Action Plan on Persons with Disability 2021-2025 and drafting of the new National Action Plan for Persons with Disability 2026-2030.)

- 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 mine victims' assistance, including the repair and servicing of prosthesis. There is needed a fact-finding mission to consult with mine victims' associations and respective authorities on the specific assistance from the foreign donors.

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

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?**

Yes. Albania is a State Party to Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), having deposited its instrument of ratification on 12 May 2006. By doing so, Albania has formally expressed its consent to be bound by the obligations outlined in Protocol V. The country remains committed to the principles and objectives of the Protocol, particularly the prevention and mitigation of the humanitarian impact of explosive remnants of war.

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

As a State Party, Albania has already completed the necessary steps to join and implement Protocol V. Notably, Albania successfully completed the destruction of its stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines by 2009, in accordance with its obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Since then, Albania has continued to support mine action and explosive remnants of war (ERW) clearance activities, both domestically and through international cooperation. Efforts remain ongoing to ensure compliance with Protocol V through risk education, victim assistance, and the clearance of remaining ERW.

- 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 international assistance in clearing explosive remnants of war (ERW) and mitigating their impact on affected communities. This process is ongoing, reflecting the country's sustained commitment to improving safety, supporting post-conflict recovery, and enabling the safe use of land across impacted areas.

Update on the Elimination of Excess Ammunition and Clearance of UXO/ERW Hotspots – 2024 Progress Report

As part of the Albanian Government and Ministry of Defence's ongoing commitment to enhance public safety and environmental security, the Plan of Action for the elimination of excess ammunitions continues its implementation throughout 2024. This strategic initiative focuses on the safe disposal of surplus stockpiled ammunition and the clearance of known UXO (Unexploded Ordnance) and ERW (Explosive Remnants of War) hotspots across the country.

Operations in 2024:

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) have been actively engaged in clearance operations at two new hotspot areas during the year. These efforts are part of the broader objective to systematically address all known contaminated sites and reduce the risks posed to local communities.

Status of Specific Hotspots:

a) "Bëç" Hotspot – Tepelenë:

As of 2024, there has been **no change** in the status of the "Bëç" hotspot located in the Tepelenë region. Despite initial assessments and plans for clearance, the area remains uncleared, and no new EOD operations have been initiated or completed during this reporting period. "The reason for this stagnation is that the EOD Teams are currently engaged in ongoing clearance operations in the Durrës region, where they are performing similar tasks. As a result, resources have been temporarily reallocated, and the clearance of the 'Bëç' hotspot in Tepelenë has been postponed until team availability permits."

Hotspot "Bëç", Tepelenë	
Total Estimated Areas in sq. metres	6 489 sq. meters
Total Cleared Area in sq. meters	6 489 sq. meters
Total Items found	2574 UXO/ Items
Remaining area to be cleared:	-
Clearance organization	Albania Armed Forces
Donor's	Albania Ministry of Defence

- b) During 2024**, the situation at the "Fushë Roshaj" hotspot in Voskopojë, Korçë has remained unchanged. No clearance operations have been conducted at the site during this period, and its status remains pending further evaluation and scheduling based on the availability of EOD resources and prioritization within the national clearance framework.

Hotspot “Fushë Roshaj”, Voskopojë, Korçë	
Total Estimated Areas in sq. metres	169 472 sq. meters
Total Cleared Area 31.10.2023	112 925 sq. meters
Total Items found 31/10/2023	864 UXO/ Items
Remaining area to be cleared:	56 547 sq. meters
Clearance organization	Albania Armed Forces
Donor’s	Albania Ministry of Defence

c) Clearing Operation in the Jubë-Sukth Hotspot, Durrës.

During 2024, the EOD teams have made measurable **progress** in the clearance operations at the Jubë-Sukth hotspot in the Durrës region. The following key achievements have been recorded:

UXO Hotspot Jubë - Sukth, Durrës (TD-HS-17 c) - Phase Two	
Total Estimated Area in sq. meters:	420,000 sq. meters
Total Cleared Area in 31 /12/2023:	95.475 sq. meters or 22.7 %
Total Items Found 31/12/2023	2341 UXO Items
Remaining area to be cleared:	324.525 sq. meters
Clearance organization	Albania Armed Forces-Two Teams
Donor’s	Albania Ministry of Defence

These efforts represent a significant step toward the complete remediation of the site and contribute to the broader goal of eliminating the risks posed by surplus and abandoned munitions across the region.

Further updates will be provided as new developments occur and as the Ministry of Defence continues to mobilize efforts toward a safer and ammunition-free Albania.

Mine clearance and rehabilitation programs:

As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance national explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) capabilities, the Albanian Armed Forces have organized a series of structured training programs in 2024. These courses were designed to cover different operational levels and to build a sustainable and professional EOD capacity.

The following EOD training courses were conducted:

No.	Type of Course	Period of time	Number of military personnel participating
1	EOD Course Level 1	18 November 2024 – 17 January 2025	21
2	EOD Course Level 3	12 February 2024 – 29 March 2024	8
3	EOD Course Level 3+	19 August 2024 – 20 September 2024	8
4	EOD Mentoring Course	15 January 2024 – 26 January 2024	10
5	EOD Mentoring Course	4 November 2024 – 15 January 2025	10

These courses have been instrumental in increasing operational readiness and ensuring a consistent pipeline of trained personnel for current and future mine clearance and rehabilitation operations throughout Albania. The inclusion of both foundational and advanced-level training, as well as mentoring programmes, reflects a strategic approach to capacity-building in line with international best practices.

With support from the U.S. Department of Defence, the **International EOD Course** is being conducted in the United States from **September 9, 2024, to April 25, 2025**. This course aims to enhance the skills and expertise of participating EOD personnel through advanced training and international cooperation.

NATO Tactical Military Engineering Course Ingolstadt, Federal Republic of Germany.

Duration of the activity: May 12, 2024 to May 18, 2024.

Number of Participants: 2

EOD Response to Callouts:

In addition to their primary mission of clearing UXO hotspots, the EOD units of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) also provide rapid response to callouts initiated by police and local authorities. These responses typically involve the safe handling and disposal of explosive ordnance in situations classified as non-criminal acts, such as the discovery of suspicious objects or reported hazardous materials. This vital service supports public safety and community confidence by ensuring timely and professional intervention in potentially dangerous situations outside of criminal investigations.

Physical Security & Stockpile Management (PSSM) Support:

- As part of the Physical Security & Stockpile Management (PSSM) Program, the US Department of Defence and US EUCOM have continued to provide ongoing assistance to the Albanian Armed Forces. This support focuses on enhancing physical security measures and implementing safety upgrades at key ammunition storage facilities, specifically the Miraka and Engineering Battalion ammunition depots. These

improvements are critical for ensuring the safe management, storage, and control of ammunition stockpiles, thereby reducing risks associated with unauthorized access, theft, and accidental detonations.

Underwater Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) Contamination in Albania: Training and Capacity Building Efforts.

In response to the critical issue of underwater Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) contamination along Albania's coastline, a significant project has been launched to support the identification, clearance, and safe disposal of these hazardous materials. This effort is essential for ensuring maritime safety, environmental protection, and the security of Albania's coastal infrastructure.

One of the key concerns is the presence of underwater ERW contamination along the coastline. The areas considered most affected are primarily in southern Albania, particularly in locations such as Vlora and Saranda Bay. Additional surveys are required in these areas to assess the extent of the contamination.

In 2024, underwater search operations were conducted in Albania to clear unexploded ordnance (UXO) from the sea. These operations, carried out by Albanian Navy divers in the area of the Vlora port quays, concluded with the following result: no unexploded ordnance was found.

As part of the ongoing project, personnel from the Albanian Naval Force have actively participated in specialized training programs aimed at enhancing their capabilities in underwater mine detection and clearance operations.

Key Activity:

- **Training Course on "Water Mines"**

Date: 6–28 May 2024

Location: Underwater Training Centre of the Albanian Navy, Vlora

Participants: 4 personnel from the Port Security Force, Durrës

This training focused on improving both theoretical knowledge and practical skills in underwater mine identification, risk assessment, and neutralization procedures. The initiative underscores Albania's commitment to international mine action standards and underwater ordnance disposal, while also contributing to regional maritime security through strengthened national capabilities.

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 Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) have contributed an EOD platoon as part of the Canadian contingent within NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) mission

in Riga, Latvia. This deployment consists of 21 military EOD personnel. The mission operates on a six-month rotational basis and remains ongoing, demonstrating Albania's continued commitment to collective security and multinational cooperation.