



**Permanent Mission of Greece  
Geneva**

***Standing Committee on Mine Clearance  
Geneva, 26 April 2007***

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair,

As it is well known, Greece, conscious of the dire humanitarian impact of antipersonnel mines and recognizing the need to take effective measures against their use, signed the Mine Ban Treaty on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1997, ratified it, on reciprocity understanding, simultaneously with neighboring Turkey, on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003, and the treaty entered into force on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004.

Since then my country reported regularly, in its annual article 7 reports on its demining operations, in fulfillment of mine clearance obligations under article 5 of the Treaty.

Greece has maintained minefields, along the Evros river, in the North-East part of the country, along the border with 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 above minefields are clearly defined and marked and have double-fenced perimeters, well above 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 the information contained in our 2007 article 7 national report, which will be officially submitted to the UN Secretariat, hopefully, before the end of the week, as of December 31, 2006, Greece has completed de-mining operations in well above 50% of the areas mined with anti-personnel mines. Of the minefields in question 33 have been already cleared, while operations are continuing for the remaining 24.

Out of the total of 24.751 antipersonnel mines in the above mentioned minefields, 14.503 (13.148 M16 and 1355 M2) corresponding to 58.6%, have been cleared so far and destroyed in situ for safety purposes.

Given the progress achieved so far, the initial demining plan has been revised and we are now confident that Greece will be in the position to fulfill its article 5 mine clearance obligations, by 2010 - 2011, well in advance of the deadline of 2014 provided by the Treaty.

Thank you

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY