

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

I would like to inform the distinguished delegates about the latest developments in the process of the destruction of the stockpile of our anti-personnel mines.

The continuous changes of the final date for the complete destruction of our stockpile, the considerable delays of the initial timetables and finally the non-fulfilment of the agreement signed between the Greek Ministry of Defence and the company [EAS] [ABEE], led to the cancellation of the contract, as of the 16th June 2010, according to the procedures envisaged by the relative national legislation.

Moreover, the Ministry of Defence, proceeded rapidly in the necessary exploratory contacts with other relevant companies in their effort to accelerate the process, taking into consideration the image and the prestige of my country on an international level and our respect, regarding our obligations that derive from our participation in the Ottawa Convention. The result of this swift reaction is, that at present we are in the position to announce that we are in the final stage of signing a contract with a new, internationally renowned company. In this new contract it is explicitly foreseen, that the destruction of the remaining mines must be concluded 6 months from the moment of the signature.

This, will allow us to resume the destruction process shortly and we very much hope that by the 10MSP meeting, we will be able to report concrete figures and set another deadline for the fulfilment of our obligations under the art.4 of the Ottawa Convention.

At this point I would like to stress that despite the financial difficulties we're currently undergoing, we remain committed to fulfill our obligations under art. 4 the soonest possible. In the current situation is hard to expect that we will reach the deadline that we set up in Cartagena, namely the end of this year, but we are confident that early in 2011 we should be able to announce the complete destruction of our anti-personnel mines stockpile.

Furthermore I would like to reassure you that in close collaboration with the competent Bulgarian authorities, we have taken the necessary steps to ensure the destruction of the mines in the site of VIDEX.

Thank you for your attention.