



TURKISH GENERAL STAFF

1. Preface :

a. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Turkish Parliament has approved the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction on **9th May 2002**. In a short period of time, Turkey hopes to be in the position **to accede to the Convention**.

b. By acceding to the Convention, Turkey while demonstrating the importance she attaches to the **well being of the mankind** in international arena, she also wishes to form a **good model for her neighbors** which are not yet party to the Convention.

c. Although Turkey is in the process of acceding to the Convention, since the outset she has been **implementing the measures** of the Convention resolutely. Within this context, Turkey began to **clean the anti-personnel mines** and made treaties with **Bulgaria and Georgia** to clean the mutual borders off these types of mines.

2. Mine Clearing Activities :

a. There are nearly **900.000 planted** mines in Turkey. These mined areas, which had been built to prevent the illegal border trespassing many years ago, are all **marked, monitored and protected** by fencing or other means to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians.

b. As a proof of her determination to clean the anti-personnel mines from her borders, Turkey has begun a **comprehensive** clearing action **on her own initiative in 1998.**

c. Within these mine clearing activities; **“Mine Clearing and Coordination Centers,”** and **“Mine Sweeping Teams”** were formed and **Working Groups** are organized in order to inspect mine detection and sweeping methods.

d. In 2001, Turkey has decided to initiate a project to clean all the mines **along her border with Syria**. Following the completion of necessary activities concerning that project, mine clearing action will begin and these cleaned areas will be **transformed for agricultural use** in due time.

e. As a result of Turkey's mine clearing activities, **9,851 mines** were cleared as of the end of 2001. **As soon as these mines were detected they were destroyed on site.** Similar mine clearing activities are proceeding in full force.

3. Turkey's Support to Mine Clearing Actions Around the World

a. Turkey attaches great importance to mine clearing operations, which are being carried out around the world for **humanitarian reasons**. In this regard; Turkey is organizing courses about mine clearing techniques for the **foreign military personnel** and providing **personnel, equipment, and financial support** to those mine clearing activities.

b. Turkey has granted **50.000\$** for mine clearing operations in **Bosnia-Herzegovina**. Turkish military personnel under the command of KFOR and SFOR have attended the mine clearing operations in those areas.

c. Turkey has also granted **9.000\$** to **The Albanian Mine Action Centre**, which was formed to clean the mines that had been planted during the Kosovo conflict in the Northern part of Albania .

4. Conclusion:

Finally, the objectives of Turkey by acceding to the Ottawa Convention are; **to contribute to the world peace and to avoid the fatal damages** that anti-personnel mines can cause. In order to realize these goals, **Turkey is determined to keep on with her mine clearing activities.**



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