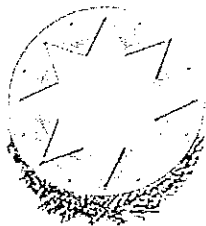


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## Remarks by the Delegation of AZERBAIJAN

TENTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES  
(APLC)

Geneva, 29 November 2010

Dear Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to express my respects to all participants and organizers of this event, its owing to their efforts we were able to meet and discuss problems faced by the international community in addressing the issue of antipersonnel mines, after a summit in Cartagena in 2009.

To date, Azerbaijan can not join the Ottawa Convention because of the conflict of territorial belonging of Nagorno-Karabakh, initiated by Armenia in 1990, which resulted in occupation of 20% of Azerbaijani land which are still under occupation by the aggressor. At the same time, with all its actions the Government of Azerbaijan openly demonstrates the full consent and support of all the basic tenets of the Ottawa Convention. Thus, de jure, not signing it, de facto, Azerbaijan is fulfilling all the obligations prescribed by the Ottawa Convention, and not only no worse, but perhaps even better than many countries which have signed and ratified it.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I want to bring to your attention the following item information:

Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action was established by presidential decree in 1998 and is the state agency responsible for the coordination of demining operations, planning, management, resource mobilization, quality assurance, training and execution of projects on Mine Risk Education, as well as victim assistance. ANAMA, having a developed infrastructure and a sustainable capacity, conducts all activities necessary to counter-mine danger in the territory of Azerbaijan and abroad.

Overall, about 600 people today are involved in mine action in Azerbaijan, which allows us to clear/reduce up to 20 million sq.m. per year. There are also another two priority directions successfully implemented in Azerbaijan, Mine Risk Education and Mine Victims victim assistance, which has greatly reduced the number of mine incidents in the country.

The problem of mines and unexploded ordnance in Azerbaijan is among the priorities for the Government, as the reconstruction and development of war-affected territories and security for the local population is directly related to mine action. Extremely important aspect is the integration of ANAMA in the strategically important State Plan on Socio-Economic Development of Azerbaijan for 2009-2013, approved by the President of Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani government annually allocates funds from the state budget for the maintenance of the Agency, and from year to year the share of government is growing and today it is 90% of the total budget ANAMA. ANAMA donors in different years were also the U.S., Japan, Canada, Norway, Great Britain, Italy, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland and Slovenia. ANAMA is a partner to such structures as the UN Development Program, State Department of U.S., NATO, EU, ITF and the State Development Department UK.

We have achieved some success in building and managing national capacity, gained experience in mine action, we are conducting the operations in full compliance with national standards which are fully adapted to the international standards. Having a strong capacity – manual demining and EOD teams, Mine Detection Dogs, Mechanical Demining Machines, Regional Bases, that are not only a reference point for operations management, but also have all the necessary infrastructure to be improved through numerous training sessions.

Thus, having accumulated considerable experience in mine clearance and having a strong

capacity in training of mine action personnel, ANAMA being Supported by the Government and our partner, UNDP Azerbaijan, in 2008 launched an initiative of organization of ANAMA based International Training Centre for mine action. We have successfully completed the plan, such a center was established in Azerbaijan, it works, and there have already been trained representatives from Georgia, Tajikistan and Afghanistan. The main activity of the Training Center is to provide assistance in building national mine action capacity for both Azerbaijan and other mine/UXO affected countries.

Using this opportunity I would also like to inform you that the Azerbaijani government, realizing the importance of humanitarian demining, and appreciating the support provided to ANAMA by international community throughout the years of its establishment, in 2009 the for the first time acted as a donor in the maintenance of building national capacity for mine action in Georgia and Afghanistan. I can assure you that such initiatives of the Government of Azerbaijan continue in the future.

Azerbaijan as a country on its experience undergone disaster caused by mines, fully supports the initiative of the need for a stable international legal framework to combat the production and use of mines. At this stage, unfortunately, the Republic of Azerbaijan has no objective possibility to become a full member of the Ottawa Convention, but the Azerbaijani government is doing everything possible to support the ideas reflected in the Convention and in a feasible form implement measures to counter-mine danger in Azerbaijan.

Among these steps, you can specify the statements by the representatives of the Azerbaijan Republic at various levels to support the principles of the Convention and the reflection of these ideas in most of the National Agency's activities established by the Government of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan was also presented with a report under Article number 7 of the Ottawa Convention. This is another important step, which fully reflects the position of Azerbaijan on the issue.

With my speech today, I again want to reiterate that the Government of Azerbaijan is true to its promises and will continue to keep this course in the future.