



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

4 –th STATES PARTIES MEETING
CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Lusaka, Zambia 9-13 September 2013

Implementation of Cluster Munitions Convention in Albania

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Distinguished Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first to express the pleasure of taking the floor on behalf of the Albanian Government and also thank the Government of Zambia for the hospitality and excellent arrangements for this important gathering. These meetings are a valuable opportunity for us, as State Parties, to review and discuss the progress and challenges in implementing the Convention.

In this regard, we would like to express our great satisfaction in witnessing that the Convention continues to strengthen its significance and welcome the progress that States Parties have made towards destroying more cluster munitions and clearing the contaminated areas. On the other hand, we would like to strongly condemn once more the use of cluster munitions, which causes unacceptable harm to innocent civilians, by any State, Party or not, to the Convention.

Albania is a country that not long time ago suffered serious consequences of the cluster munitions which caused the loss of many lives and injuries and blocked access to good productive land in already poor areas. As most of you know though, Albania completed clearance of all its contaminated areas in 2009 and people can now live and work in a safe environment.

Our efforts in implementing the obligations under the Cluster Munitions Convention were not over though with the clearance of the contaminated areas. We are

still working hard on alleviating the effects that landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants still have on the innocent people.

In this regard, a thorough “Needs Assessment of Socio-Economic and Medical needs of marginalized Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) victims in Albania” supported by the Austrian Government is being carried out by a local NGO. The focus of the assessment is on reviewing the status of ERW survivors, identifying their needs and drafting due recommendations to the Government. The findings from this project will be shared with relevant ministries and other government and non government sector at a national workshop in November 2013.

In addition, the Prosthetic Workshop in the Regional Hospital of Kukes where the majority of landmine and unexploded ordnance survivors reside has been recently upgraded with equipment, raw materials and components for the repairs and the production of prostheses and orthoses. Thank to this support from the Government of Austria, the Rehabilitation Unit in Kukes Regional Hospital will be able to assist not only mine and UXO survivors but also other amputees in need.

Lastly, as you might already know, the Government is making use of the valuable national capacities created during the implementation of the Mine Action Programme clear mine and cluster munitions areas into another country priority: that of clearing all the hotspots contaminated with unexploded ordnances and explosive remnants of war throughout Albania. Good progress has been made as to date in clearing these hotspots in cooperation with the Albanian Armed Forces even though considerable financial

support is still needed in order to achieve the main goal of clearing all UXO/ERW hotspots in Albania by 2015.

Thank you for your attention.