



Federal Republic of Germany
Foreign Office

8TH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Geneva, 03.-05. September 2018

Statement on Art. 4 Compliance

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

As I already mentioned in my opening statement, Germany still has obligations to fulfil under Article 4 of the Convention and is working on clearing a former military training site close to Wittstock/Brandenburg.

Over lunch, we hosted a side event on our clearance efforts that presented the details of our work.

Let me briefly give an overview of the main take-aways:

The Site is about 12.000 hektars in size and was used as a military training facility from 1945 to 1993 both for air to ground targeting

practices as well as ground operations by the former Soviet forces in Germany.

The contaminated area on the site is estimated at 1100 hectares.

The site is closed to the public. Access is only permitted to government officials, EoD operators and emergency services. The main entry points are barred and signs warn the public.

After preparatory work on the site with survey and a fire protection system the clearance work has begun in March 2017.

As of June of this year we were able to clear about 80 hectares and found and destroyed some 800 cluster munition remnants.

Our article 4 deadline is coming up in 2020 and there are certain factors that could necessitate an extension request on our part:

Due to the vegetation on the site there is a need for controlled burning. This is a prerequisite for the clearance operation both, because of fire risks and for reasons of environmental protection.

Progress might be slower than expected, since weather-conditions do not allow for burning at any time.

We plan to employ about 10 Percent of the German commercial EOD personal only for that site. If construction business picks-up further in Germany there might be temporary shortages of trained EOD personnel.

Finally, the high concentration of other ERW's on the site will also have an effect on cluster munition-clearance on the site.

Mr. President, let me assure States Parties that we will keep them closely informed on the progress at Wittstock.

Thank you, Mr. President.