Thank you, Mister President. I would like to inform you about the clearance situation in Germany.

Of the originally identified 11 sqkm of contaminated area, 3.195.600 m^2 remain to be cleared, given that 7.804.400 m^2 within the cluster munition suspected area have been cleared between 2017 and 2024.
A non-technical survey has been carried out on the former military training area of the Soviet Armed Forces at Wittstock (in use between 1952 and 1993) with the aim to survey a possible contamination of this area with cluster munitions. At that time there was some evidence of possible contamination with single ShOAB-0.5 submunitions in an area not exceeding 11 sqkm. During the preparation of the technical survey only some ShOAB-0.5 submunitions have been found. The site as well as geophysical investigations conducted gave strong evidence of an occurrence of submunitions solely on or just below the natural ground surface not exceeding some 30 cm. With respect to the dense vegetation this finding opened up a new approach for the clearance of the contaminated area. The vegetation within the contaminated area will be burned in sections. These areas will then ensure an unobstructed view to the natural ground surface where submunitions can be detected by visual and geophysical means. In 2016 a site wide fire protection system has been implemented by remote-controlled caterpillar. After the burning of heartland the clearance operation has started in March 2017. As an indispensable prerequisite for the cluster munition cleanup, additional lines of the fire protection system, areas for the staff etc. had to be cleaned up in addition to the cleanup work at the cluster munition suspected area.
Due to European public procurement law, a new tender for the work on explosive ordnance disposal had to be carried out in 2021. In 2025 the next new tender must be issued. The new contract will take effect from 2026. The experience gained in previous years will be taken into account in the invitation to tender to ensure further optimization of the work.
There are currently two companies working at the clearance site. In 2024, some 140 people carried out the clearance work on average. The clearance work is supervised by 10 people.
There are various risk factors that influence the speed of clearance efforts, many of which lie partially outside the control of Germany's planning. One such factor is the high density of contamination with cluster munitions, other metal objects, and unexploded ordnance. Additionally, the lack of areas available for clearing—due in part to limited opportunities for controlled burning, which is only permitted on a few days each year and is dependent on meteorological conditions—also hinders progress.
Safety and security precautions, as well as conservation and environmental regulations, impose further limitations on clearing activities. The current number of clearance personnel has also reached capacity limits; increasing staff numbers is not feasible, as the shrinking space within the clearance site makes it impossible to maintain the required safety distances between teams.
There is also a general shortage of specialists within the industry, making it difficult to keep all staff positions at the Wittstock site filled. This is exacerbated by the site's peripheral location, a lack of trained personnel, and limited nearby accommodation for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel.
Weather conditions significantly affect operations as well. High temperatures in summer necessitate frequent scheduled breaks, while prolonged frost in winter can render clearance work impossible due to frozen soil. The ongoing drought has introduced additional restrictions, requiring extra fire protection measures and clearing work. Furthermore, long delivery times for new equipment and replacement materials result in equipment downtime, further slowing progress.
We note that we have submitted our reports on time. We will continue to provide updates on our progress, particularly regarding developments in Wittstock.

Thank you for your attention.