



THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Agenda item 8.c

Clearance and destruction of cluster munition remnants and risk reduction education

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Dear Mr. President, distinguished colleagues,

On August 1st 2020, the Minister of the Interior and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia submitted a Declaration of Compliance on behalf of the Republic of Croatia, in accordance with Article 4.1.c of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, formally confirming the finalization of obligations regarding the clearance and elimination of all cluster munition remnants that were located in the areas of the Republic of Croatia that were determined to be hazardous.

By ratifying the Convention on Cluster Munitions and with its entry into force back in 2010, the Republic of Croatia had decisively set challenges in finding methods for determining the CMR contaminated areas, as well as methods for the clearance and destruction of cluster munition remnants. CMR contamination is a consequence of the military activities during the Homeland War in which the aggressor side used air cluster bombs and 262 mm “Orkan” M87 type (kb-1 bomblets) missiles in the period from 1991 to 1995. It is importantly emphasized that the Republic of Croatia did not produce cluster munitions, it has never imported them, they are not in the operational use of the Croatian Armed Forces and as such do not exist in the military security doctrine of the Croatian Armed Forces development. The Republic of Croatia, throughout the operational activities of the Ministry of Defense, completed the plan for the destruction of cluster munitions stockpiles in 2018.

Fulfilment of clearance obligations was performed in the areas that were part of 8 counties and 28 municipalities of the Republic of Croatia in the originally determined size of 5.3 square kilometres.

Areas contaminated with cluster munitions remnants were confronted with different clearance methods using the combination of manual and mechanical methods in accordance with standard operating procedures developed by the Croatian experts, in line with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). Clearance of the mentioned areas was performed on a commercial basis, throughout public tenders of bidders authorized by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. The Croatian Mine Action Centre, and since January 2019, the Civil Protection Directorate officials, have carried out quality control activities during and after the clearance operations, while also performing a non-technical and technical survey of CMR contaminated areas. Over the years, more than 2,840 different types of cluster munitions remnants were found and destroyed.

Regarding the residual risk, we use this occasion to highlight the cooperation between the Civil Protection Directorate and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) on research activities, which resulted with the case study “National Capacities and Residual Contamination – Croatia”, published in August 2019, presenting the methodology of the Republic of Croatia in resolving the residual risk after the clearance. Correspondingly, residual risk challenges in the Republic of Croatia will be addressed under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior – in line with the operational responsibility of the Police Directorate (EOD Service) and the Civil Protection Directorate (Croatian Mine Action Centre).

It should be further emphasized that in the Republic of Croatia, the activities that are obligatory to be undertaken in the case of residual findings, in example subsequent definition of the area as contaminated, are predefined by the Act on Mine Action. In these specific cases, and in

accordance with the Convention obligations, the responsible institutions will, without delay, issue this information towards the general public, mine action stakeholders and CCM States Parties.

Even though we succeeded in fulfilling the obligations set out in the Articles 3 and 4 of the Convention, the Republic of Croatia remains determined in maintaining a strong commitment while continuing the important efforts in the promotion of the Convention. This is particularly important in the elements of strengthening and developing the systematic care for the ERW victims and their family members. Both current and future VA activities in this field will be adapted to the age and gender of the victims, and would include comprehensive aspects of rehabilitation and support, as well as social and economic inclusion.

The Republic of Croatia hereby remains available to share its acquired knowledge and experience through the exchange of technical solutions, courses, trainings / certification of experts, assistance in finding legal or implementing normative, certification of equipment and other elements that have contributed towards the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention.

In conclusion, we are extremely pleased to be able to emphasize that in the period since the first review conference, following the Dubrovnik Action Plan, the Republic of Croatia has fully fulfilled its obligations under Articles 3 and 4 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and that it is deeply committed to fulfilling other commitments.

Finally, the Republic of Croatia supports the guidelines of the Lausanne Action Plan and will continue to promote convention norms and their full implementation.