



SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

25 – 27 November 2020

Statement on Art. 4 Compliance

Mr. President,

[Please allow me to congratulate you on your election and assure you of our full support for your work as President of the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.]

Thank you for giving me the floor and for allowing me to update you and the States Parties once more on the situation at the former military training site of the former Soviet Union close to Wittstock/Brandenburg.

Germany has always acted in good faith when it comes to its obligations under Article 4. When ratifying the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Federal Government was not aware that the above-mentioned former military training site was contaminated with cluster munitions.

The Site is about 12.000 hectares 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.

Access to the site is limited to the owner, EOD operators and emergency services. The main entry points are barred and signs warn the public.

After thorough preparatory work on the site, including a survey and a fire protection system, clearance work began in March 2017.

Our article 4 request to extend the deadline to 2025 was granted by the 9th Meeting of the States Parties:

The total contaminated area on the site is estimated at 1,100 hectares.

Until the end of 2019 we were able to clear a total of about 244 hectares, with a remaining contaminated area of around 856 hectares; some 3,864 cluster munition remnants were discovered.

Clearance operations have been continuing throughout 2020. So far the COVID-19 pandemic has had no immediate negative impact on the clearance work. This year, more heavily contaminated areas with other forms of ERW in 2020 will be

cleared. We therefore increased the number of clearance personnel from 120 to 140 for this year's clearance operations. We expect that this measure will enable us to clear an area of a size similar to 2019.

In early 2021, the responsible authorities will issue an additional tender aiming at bringing the clearance personnel at the site up to around 200 in order to achieve a significant increase in areas cleared in the coming years.

In sum, Mr. President, we remain confident that by 2025 Germany will be 100% Cluster Munition free.

Thank you, Mr. President.