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AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ
ATƏT YANINDA
DAİMİ NÜMAYƏNDƏLİYİ



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
TO THE OSCE

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OSCE presents its compliments to all Permanent Missions and Delegations of the OSCE participating States and to the Conflict Prevention Centre and, in compliance with FSC Decision 7/04, has the honour to transmit herewith the reply of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War for 2019.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OSCE avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Permanent Missions and Delegations of the OSCE participating States and to the Conflict Prevention Centre of the OSCE the assurances of its highest consideration.

Enclosure: as stated



Vienna, 04 June 2019

**Permanent Missions and Delegations of the OSCE participating States
The Conflict Prevention Centre of the OSCE**

Vienna

AZERBAIJAN
2019
OSCE QUESTIONNAIRE ON ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES

Part I

1. Is your country a State Party to the 1996 Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices annexed to the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW)?

It is well known that the Republic of Armenia has occupied one-fifth of the internationally recognized territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, has deployed a large amount of weapons, which fall under the scope of the Convention in the occupied territories and continues to use them against civilian population of Azerbaijan. Under these circumstances Azerbaijan's accession to the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW), as well as to the 1996 Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices annexed to CCW seems to be impossible.

Therefore, putting an end to the ongoing use of force by Armenia against the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan would not only ensure the respect for the purposes enshrined in the UN Charter but also further promote the implementation of the Convention.

3. Is your country considering ratification/accession to the Amended Protocol II?

The Republic of Azerbaijan expects that once the armed conflict is resolved and our territories are no longer under the occupation, we would be in a position to accede to the 1996 Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices. However, at this stage without settlement of the armed conflict, restoration of territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and having a threat of hostility suspended, we cannot accede to the abovementioned Protocol.

4. What measures have been taken to prevent the indiscriminate use of mines, booby-traps and other devices?

Taking into account the still continuing occupation by the Republic of Armenia of 20 % of the territories of Azerbaijan, the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices is still needed in order to counter the intelligence and subversive operations of Armenia. Mines and booby-traps are considered to be an inalienable part of defence strategy. To prevent misuse of these devices certain provisions have been set: a) they are only laid in the combat sites; b) relevant registry documents (formulary and maps) are being compiled; c) only personnel authorized by commander of relevant military unit is cleared to the mined sites; d) safety and security of ammunition storages is ensured.

5. Would your country be interested in receiving assistance related to the implementation of this Protocol? If so, please describe.

The Republic of Azerbaijan does not consider implementation-related issues, since it has not yet acceded to the mentioned Protocol.

6. Does your country have the capacity to assist others related to this Protocol? If so, please describe.

The Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Azerbaijan can consider this issue upon request.

Part II.

7. Has your country ratified or acceded to the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction?

For the reasons mentioned under Part I (p. 1) the Republic of Azerbaijan has not acceded to the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

8 (b) If no, is your country considering ratification/accession to the Convention?

The Republic of Azerbaijan fully supports the goals, purposes and principles of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) and comprehensive ban of use, storage and transfer of anti-personnel landmines. Azerbaijan considers that full ban and destruction of anti-personnel landmines is an important humanitarian objective.

Under the current conditions with the ongoing occupation by the Republic of Armenia of the territories of Azerbaijan, it seems to be impossible to accede to the Ottawa Convention. Despite these difficulties, Azerbaijan follows most of the provisions of the Convention, in particular by not transferring antipersonnel mines.

Annually UN General Assembly adopts Resolution calling for universalization of the Ottawa Convention. The Republic of Azerbaijan supports this Resolution, by voting in its favor and thus expressing its support to the global endeavor of making the world free of the menace of mines.

8 (c) Has your country adopted legislation to address the humanitarian objectives of the convention, or taken any specific measures regarding the use, production, storage, transfer and destruction of anti-personnel landmines? In case a moratorium has been introduced, what is its scope and duration and when was it introduced?

Azerbaijan has not adopted legislation on the implementation of the Ottawa Convention since it is not a State Party to the Convention. Nevertheless, mine victim assistance (MVA) activity that constitutes one of the main objectives of the Convention is carried out in Azerbaijan under the Law on Prevention of Disability, Rehabilitation and Social Protection of People with Disability. This law, *inter alia*, envisages social and economic reintegration, medical and professional rehabilitation, and social security of disabled people, including mine victims.

9. Does your country have any specific measures in place to provide assistance to victims?

Mine Victim Assistance Program in Azerbaijan

In Azerbaijan, the 1997 Law on Prevention of Disability, Rehabilitation and Social Protection of People with Disability protects the rights of all people with disabilities in Azerbaijan, including mine survivors. The law prohibits discrimination against the disabled in employment, education and access to healthcare, or the provision of other state services. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare are responsible for issues relating to the disabled persons. Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) was established in July 18, 1998 and is responsible for planning and coordination, management and monitoring of mine action related activities all over the country, including mine victims assistance countrywide. ANAMA coordinates victim assistance through its Mine Victim Assistance Strategy by tasking implementing partners in the Mine Victim Assistance Working Group and fundraising. ANAMA's long term strategy is to ensure the national ownership of mine victim assistance programme in terms of assistance capacity as well as financial input.

Coordination of MVA activities: The members of the MVA Working Group, active since January 2001, coordinated their efforts in developing approaches towards resolving problems faced by mine survivors and meeting their needs through thorough analysis of the results Mine Survivors Needs Assessment Survey of 2004, and presented various projects, attended and discussed in details at the meetings of Working Group members with ANAMA staff members.

The specific sub-task - the **Countrywide Mine/UXO Victim Needs Assessment Survey** project was developed in 2003 and implemented in 2004. This Survey allowed to interview 1883 people, the great majority of mine victims and along with their needs in medical care, physical and psychological rehabilitation, economical assistance and financial support in getting education, in social and vocational adaptation, etc., get detailed information about their financial situations. The Survey results gave an opportunity to systematize the data on mine victims and classify all interviewed according to their needs. Subsequently, this database allowed developing and promoting a number of MVA projects with special emphasis on survivors' integration into society.

Development and implementation of MVA projects:

Mine Victim Assistance is a core component of mine action as well as post-conflict and development efforts of the country. Components of mine victim/survivors assistance are:

- Pre-hospital care (first aid and management of injuries)
- Hospital Care (medical care, surgery, pain management)
- Rehabilitation (physiotherapy, prosthetic appliances and assistive devices, psychological support)
- Social and Economic Reintegration (associations of persons with disabilities, skills and vocational training, income generating project, sports; social intermediation, business skills development training and counseling) and financial services (disbursing, monitoring and collecting micro-credits))
- Disability policy and practice (education and public awareness and disability laws)
- Health and social welfare surveillance and research capacities (data collection, processing, analysis and reporting)
- Enhancing the national service provision in the field of mine victim assistance and disabilities in general through engaging with State Partner Institutions and other stakeholders.

ANAMA within the Mine Victim Assistance Programme has been implemented number of projects. One of the main objectives of the ANAMA Mine Victim Assistance Program is to ensure the full integration of mine victims in the society. Within MVA Program up-to-date

“Medical treatment for mine victims in sanatorium”, teaching computer, carpeting, wheelchairs distributions, “Community Based Small Business Trainings and Micro-credit Revolving Fund for Azerbaijan Mine Survivors” projects have been implemented.

10. Does your country require assistance in mine clearance, stockpile destruction, mine awareness and/or victim assistance? If so, please describe.

Mine problem in Azerbaijan and further development of mine action capacity

The mine/UXO problem in Azerbaijan is mainly resulted from the military aggression of Armenia over the territory of Azerbaijan. Although the hostilities had ceased in May 1994, a permanent peace is yet to be achieved (negotiations are underway with the assistance of OSCE Minsk Group, chaired by the USA, France and Russia). Despite this, the rehabilitation of accessible war-torn areas is continuing since 1996.

The Scope of the Problem refers to problems in the accessible war torn territories. This is where the presence of mine/UXOs is impacting livelihoods of population and impeding development and rehabilitation efforts of the Government of Azerbaijan.

To have an idea on the magnitude of the mine/UXO problem for the purposes of both, strategic and operational planning, ANAMA has been exploring all possible ways & means, including outside support. In this context, the General Survey (Level 1 Survey) was undertaken in 2001 followed by the LIS (Landmine Impact Survey), conducted jointly with SAC in 18 districts from September 2002 to June 2003.

The LIS has identified 480 mine-impacted communities and 163 UXO impacted communities. Altogether 970 SHA (Suspected Hazard Areas) were identified as directly impacting the safety and livelihoods of an estimated 514,000 people. The LIS result termed the contamination level as ‘extensive’ with 736 mln sqm of land contaminated with mines and UXOs. They are all located in the war-torn districts along the ceasefire line and border with Armenia. Very high degree of contamination has been detected Fizuli, Agdam and Terter districts. UXO contamination is extensive throughout Aghstafa district.

In late 2006, according to the Government’s task, the ‘Re-survey’ has been undertaken by the local government authorities of the 11 mine/UXO affected districts. Their reports have partly confirmed the results of LIS. The outcome of the ‘Re-survey’, has reduced the figure to 306 mln sqm. Some new areas have also been identified in the course of mine action activities.

Today Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) has quite strong operational capacity and continues to undertake a comprehensive mine/UXO action program in accessible war-torn areas. With a pool of 610 skilled human resources, 49 mine detection dogs and 6 mechanical demining machines, 2 national NGOs (mine action contractors) and 6 regional structures (including the Regional Mine Action Resource and Training Center), ANAMA is capable not only to efficiently clear mine/UXO contaminated lands and conduct mine action training but also is ready to undertake any future tasks including clearance of occupied territories once they are liberated. ANAMA Regional Mine Action Resource and Training Center is manned and well-equipped to provide continued training supports to other mine affected countries.

ANAMA has elaborated the development strategy of the national mine action program which does not only cover the expansion of the operational human resources, but also seeks to acquire new types of special equipment, revisit the old equipment, refresher trainings for operational staff, enlargement of the scope of work, establishment of the new regional bases. This strategy indeed reflects Agency’s commitment and the needs for essential

resources to build further ANAMA capacity to clear the accessible minefield and battle areas in a more effective and sustainable ways.

Along with this, it is not possible at this stage to measure the extent of the mine/UXO problem in the occupied territories. However, based on the information from international sources it is estimated that about 800 million sq.m. are contaminated and up to 100,000 mines are expected on those areas.

The liberation of the territories and necessity of their urgent clearance will obviously require multiple expansion of the ANAMA's operational capacity. Hence, ANAMA is quite determined to build a strong and sustainable national capacity to be able to mobilize its demining team in a short time upon request from the Government of Azerbaijan.

Taking all these factors into account the support for the further development and strengthening of ANAMA capacity should be focused on the next areas which are still have a shortfalls within the ANAMA Work Plan:

- expanding of the manual demining capacity particularly Special Mobile Emergency Response Capacity, which is important tool in order to address the problem of quick reaction to some of the urgent clearance tasks;
- Development of the mechanical demining capacity as an invaluable asset for reduction of the massive suspected mined areas in time- and cost-effective manner;
- increase the mine detection dog capacity, which is quite efficient method of clearance and also required to support mechanical demining operations;
- strengthening of the planning, management, coordination and control mechanisms to oversee demining activities, as well as all directions of mine/UXO action, including establishment of the new regional bases and branches to provide rational planning and establish network to support activity;
- Enhancement of measurement accuracy including the renewal of the maps using the space imagery that is required for the purposes of the technical survey along with marking and fencing of hazard areas

Financial and technical support to these components will allow ANAMA to continue mine action activities in more efficient and effective way and provide progressive capacity development to be ready to rapidly implement a large demining program as a prior condition for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-torn areas and repatriation of refugees and IDPs to their lands without threat to their lives. Provision of safety is a principal factor for further sustainable improvement of the living conditions of local population through realization of different socio-economical projects on the development of the infrastructure of these regions.

As a part of the overall National Mine Action Strategic Plan ANAMA has elaborated the Development Strategy, which does not only cover the expansion of the operational human resources, but also seeks to acquire new types of special equipment, refresher trainings for operational and management staff. Exchange of experience through the involvement of ANAMA staff into different trainings, courses, sessions and workshops as well as within the international mine action exchange programs is one of the ANAMA concerns.

Mine Victim Assistance is considered by ANAMA as an important part of mine action program and all efforts are aimed at the implementation of practical measures to meet mine/UXO victims' needs. The main objective today is to ensure the funding of ANAMA MVA projects and continue provision of actual support to mine victims and their families.

Mine Risk Education (MRE) as one of the pillars of mine action is aimed at protection of people from the threat of mines and UXO and spreading safe behavior rules and is being undertaken in accordance with objectives of the Government of Azerbaijan to ensure safety of population and implementation of development projects. MRE can be considered as one of the successful directions of mine action in Azerbaijan. Additional financial support to MRE activity in Azerbaijan is required today to provide number of measures which are aimed at protection of people from threat of mine and UXO and ensuring safety of population in war-affected regions of the country.

11. Does your country have the capacity to assist others in mine action? If so, please describe.

The Ministry of Defense can consider the issue upon request.

During 2009 UNDP Azerbaijan conducted evaluation of existing capacities of ANAMA, as well as techniques and facilities to recommend on the possibility of converting ANAMA to an International Center for Mine Action. The Goygol Resource and Training centre, where ANAMA Training, Survey and Quality Assurance Division (TSQAD) is delivering different types of training was highly recognized by experts as fully equipped and suitable for not only local events but international as well.

TSQAD comprises a core of highly trained and experienced staff with developed competencies in basic HMA as well as a number of specialized fields (e.g. treatment of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), house and railway clearance, integration of MDD and MDM in Technical Survey and clearance operations, use of Differential Global Positioning Systems - DGPS). The Division's technical capacity has been built over the past several years by trainers from the US military (US Navy, USEUCOM, US Defense Intelligence School), Technical Advisors from a number of leading HMA organizations (NGOs and commercial companies) and through international training institutions such as James Madison & Cranfield universities. Staff have also received specialized training in deep search and UXO detection methods from several manufacturers (e.g. Institute DR. FOERSTER, Vallon, etc).

Since 2001 till the end of 2018 the division's Training and Monitoring Team delivered more than 193 Humanitarian Mine Action related training courses, and trained more than 2049 trainees. 315 of trainees were foreign students. In 2018, division conducted 9 training courses for 145 participants. Available training courses:

- General (Non-technical) Survey Course
- Basic Demining Course (first aid incl)
- Technical Survey Course
- Battle Area Clearance Course
- EOD Course (Level-1, and2)
- Team and Section Leader Course
- Demining Supervisor Course
- QA and QC Course
- Instructor Course

- Field Level Management Course
- Mine Risk Education Course
- Basic Info. Management Course
- GIS Course
- Mech. Demining Integration Course
- MDD Integration Course
- MDD Dog Handler Course
- Mechanical Demining Operator Course
- Water well clearance Course
- House Clearance Course
- Medic's Integration Course
- D-MINE courses

Training facilities and amenities

The Göygöl Regional Training Base (GGRTB), (where ANAMA TSQAD is delivering different types of training) was recognized by experts as fully equipped and suitable for training courses for local and international staff.

Location: GGRTB is located in Göygöl city, some 360 km west of the capital city Baku and approximately 10 km south from Ganja, the second largest city in Azerbaijan.

Training facilities: GGRTB base except the office and other facilities consist of two separate training buildings: 2 classrooms (1st is for 24 men, and 2nd is for 60) equipped with computers, laser projectors. In addition there is separate conference/meeting room.

Languages: ANAMA TSQAD instructors are able to teach courses in Azerbaijani, Russian, Turkish and English languages. In case of requests for other languages, ANAMA normally involves translators and interpreters.

Other facilities: Barrack for 28 trainees, guest house with containing 2 separate rooms, bath room, shower/kitchen, 2 separate buildings for 10 men, 8 very nice single hotel rooms with 24/7 free internet, laundry, heating station, garage, canteen for 72 people, and ect. There is also the choice of hotel accommodation in Ganja if alternatives to shared-lodging at the Centre are required. In this case, the Centre is able to provide daily transfers to and from Ganja city. In addition there is an International airport in Ganja city.

Sports: Volleyball, basketball, table tennis. It's planned to create a fitness room at the base as well.

Security: The Training Base is guarded by the Police.

Communications: Internet (line and WiFi), phone line and radio, fax and mass production color copy machine Workstation.

OSCE QUESTIONNAIRE ON EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR

1. Has your country notified the Depositary of its consent to be bound by the 2003 CCW Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) once it enters into force? Is your country considering doing so?

Refer to Part I (p.1)

OSCE QUESTIONNAIRE ON EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR

3. Would your country be interested in receiving assistance in clearing or otherwise minimizing the risks and effects of ERW? If so, please describe.

At the beginning of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, mines and explosive devices were laid without proper documentation (forms and maps) due to the lack of professionalism and existing of informal military formations during that period. That still causes serious difficulties in fulfilling the tasks. Mine clearance activities outside of defense sites are carried out by ANAMA. Upon the liberation of our territories the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan will be involved in clearing mines and explosive remnants of war there. At that stage some additional state of art mine clearing equipment, demining garments and mine detectors will be needed.

ANAMA is planned to conduct the clearance of Khizy Project (due to the explosion at the ammunition depot of the N military unit of the Defense Ministry located in the Khizy region of Azerbaijan Republic) under the umbrella of ANAMA-NATO/NSPA PfP Trust Fund. Currently, the Project is in negotiation stage.

4. Does your country have the capacity to assist others in clearing and minimizing the risks and effects of ERW? If so, please describe.

Demining unit of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan, designated to detect and destruct mines and explosive remnants of war, operates in Afghanistan within the peacekeeping operation under the Partnership for Peace. This unit is also engaged in providing relevant trainings.

ANAMA UXO Clearance Team has been trained within the framework of the NATO/NSPA-ANAMA joint project on clearance of unexploded ordnances and currently consists of 60 well-trained and fully equipped EOD. Along with the national trainers the international experts have also been involved in the trainings at the different stages of the projects.

Today within the package of standard trainings ANAMA is able to deliver all courses related to the Battle Area Clearance.