



MISIONI I PËRHERSHËM  
I REPUBLIKËS SË SHQIPËRISË  
PRANË ORGANIZATAVE  
NDËRKOMBËTARE  
VJENË



PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA  
TO THE INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATIONS  
VIENNA

Ref. 234

### NOTE VERBALE

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to all Permanent Delegations and Missions of the participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and to the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, and in accordance with the Decision 02/09 of the Forum for Security Co-operation, has the honour to submit the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Permanent Delegations and Missions of the participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and to the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, the assurances of its highest consideration. *E.G.J.*



**To:**  
**All Permanent Delegations and Missions to the OSCE**  
**OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre**  
**VIENNA**

## REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

### Information Exchange on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security for the year 2023

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#### Part 1: Interstate elements

##### 1. Measures for prevention and fighting against terrorism

##### 1.1 In what agreements (international, regional, bilateral) related to preventing and fighting against terrorism is your country a Party in?

1. Protocol between the Ministry of the Interior of Albania and the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Italy “On strengthening of bilateral cooperation in the fight against terrorism and trafficking in human beings”, signed on 03 November 2017 in Tirana, entered into force on the date of signature.
2. In the framework of regional cooperation against terrorism, the Protocol between the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Macedonia, “On cooperation to fight against terrorism”, on 03.02.2018, in Ohrid, Macedonia.
3. Albania is a party to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and to all Council of Europe counter-terrorism conventions, including those covering the seizure and confiscation of the proceeds of crime and the financing of terrorism.

##### Other bilateral agreements between the Republic of Albania and:

1. Slovenia - “On cooperation to fight against terrorism, illegal drug trafficking and organized crime”, signed on 24.11.1993, in Tirana.
2. Croatia - “On police cooperation” 14.12.1993.
3. Egypt - “Protocol on cooperation to fight against terrorism”, signed in Cairo, on 24.10.1995”.
4. Hungary - “On cooperation to fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime”, signed in February 1999 and ratified by law no. 8623, dated 15.06.2000;
5. Romania - “On cooperation to fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking of narcotic and psychotropic substances, as well as other illegal activities”, signed on 07.06.2002, in Bucharest.
6. Montenegro - “On cooperation to fight against organized crime, terrorism, illegal trafficking and other illegal activities”, signed in Podgorica, Montenegro, on 31.12.2003.
7. North Macedonia - “On cooperation to fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors, illegal migration and other illegal activities”, signed in February, in the Republic of North Macedonia 17.06.2004.
8. Bulgaria - “On cooperation to fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking and other illegal activities”, signed in Tirana, signed on 29.12.07.

9. France - "On cooperation in the area of domestic security, signed in Paris, on 15.05.2008", signed in Paris, on 15.05.2008.
10. Germany - "On cooperation in the area of security", signed on 31 May 2013 and ratified by law on 23 January 2014.
11. Bosnia-Herzegovina - "On cooperation to fight against crime, especially terrorism, illegal drug trafficking and organized crime", signed on 24.03.2009, and entered into force on 4.3.2010.
12. Kosovo - "On mutual cooperation in the area of security", approved by DCM no. 429, dated 20.05.2015.
13. Slovakia - "On cooperation to fight against terrorism, organised crime, illegal trafficking of narcotic, psychotropic substances and drug precursors, and other crimes", approved by DCM no. 485, dated 10.06.2015.
14. USA - "Cooperation agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the USA Government "On exchange of terrorism screening information", as well as the Operational Protocol ratified by law no. 72 dated 7.7.2016 "Memorandum of Cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania "On strengthening of cooperation to interdict terrorist travel and fight illegal migration and related serious crimes" approved in principle by DCM no.153 dated 1.3.2017.
15. Serbia - "On cooperation to fight against organized crime, international illegal drug trafficking and international terrorism", signed on 11.03.2010, and entered into force on 01.03.2012.
16. Latvia- "On cooperation to fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking of narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursors", signed on 16.12.2009

## **1.2 What national legislation is approved in your country for the implementation of mentioned agreements?**

Albania's legal framework is partially aligned with the EU acquis. The Criminal Code is under amendment including the definition of a terrorist organization, the criminalization of certain actions such as illegal data interference, and with regard to the assistance, support and compensation for victims of terrorism.

Concerning critical infrastructures protection, Albania is working on the adoption of security plans for each facility. Albania is working on the adoption of the legislation addressing the dissemination of terrorist content online, marketing and use of explosive precursors.

- On 17.12.2020 the Parliament of Albania adopted the Law no. 152 on some amendments and additions to the law no. 74/2014 "On Weapons".

By order of the General Director of State Police, it was approved the Work Plan "On the implementation of the Objectives of the Strategy for the Control of Small Arms, Small Arms, Ammunition and Explosives 2019-2024 and the Action Plan 2019-2021". The law No. 112/2020, "On beneficial owners register" entered in force in September 2020. It was drafted by the National Business Centre (NBC) with the support of Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE). The law stipulates that the NBC will handle the registration process of the beneficial owners of the reporting entities in the beneficial owner register. The Beneficial Owners Register was launched live on 1

February 2021 and is fully operational. Based on Law No. 112/2020, the existing reporting entities were asked to register the information of their beneficial owners in this register within 60 calendar days from the establishment of the register. New entities were required to submit their BO information within thirty days of their establishment as a legal person entity.

- The Parliament of Albania approved law no. 154/2020 dated 17.12.2020 "On the central register of bank accounts". This legal initiative is in line with Article 32 / a of the EU Anti-Money Laundering Directive (Directive 2015/849 as amended by the directive 2018/843).
- Pursuant to the adoption by the Albanian Parliament of the Law no. 62/2023, date 21.7.2023 "On some amendments and additions to the law no. 9917, date 19.05.2008 "On the prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing": The name of GDPML is changed to Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA).

By DCM (Decision of Council of Ministers) no. 81 date 14.02.2023 Albania adopted the "Cross-Cutting Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism and Counter Terrorism 2023-2025 and two action plans to prevent violent extremism and fight terrorism. The strategy is aligned with the European Union's Strategy for the Fight against Terrorism. The process of accountability, monitoring, and evaluating analysis is carried out every 6 months by the coordinating structures as follows:

- Integrated Policy Management Group (IPMG);
- The Sectorial Steering Committee (SSC) for matters of order and public safety, which will review and approve reports in view of the implementation of policies and objectives defined in this strategic document.
- The Deputy Minister/s responsible in the role of coordinators on the issues of counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism is from the Ministry of Interior with regard to the orientation/approval at the political level for the review and development of policies in these areas.

Regarding the implementation of the Cross-Cutting Strategy on Preventing Violent Extremism and the fight against Terrorism 2023-2025, the annual report was submitted in January 2024.

On 09.12.2022 in Brussels, the Albanian Ministry of Interior and the European Commission renewed the Arrangement Agreement for the implementation of "EU Joint Action Plan on Counter-terrorism for the Western Balkans". The first report (January-June 2023) for the implementation of the measures was sent to the EU Commission in September 2023.

On 27.12.2023 the National Committee for the Coordination of the Fight against Money Laundering approved the following documents:

- National Risk Assessment on Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Albania and
- The Action Plan of the NRA that addresses the findings.

Ministry for Europe and Foreign Relations and Ministry of Finance have drafted and jointly proposed draft law "On some additions and changes to Law no 72/2019 "On International Restrictive Measures in the Republic of Albania". These changes were adopted with the law no. 101/2023.

### **1.3 Which are the roles and missions of military, paramilitary, security forces and police forces in preventing and fighting against terrorism in your country?**

The Counter Terrorism Directorate (CTD) is part of the State Police. It operates in the whole country to prevent, identify, track and investigate persons suspected of being involved in terrorist acts. The CTD was created by the Order of Internal Affairs Minister no. 548/7 dated 17.10.2014, as a special structure in the General Directorate of State Police. It exercises its operational, investigative, and procedural functions throughout the territory of the Republic of Albania. The CTD is organized on central and regional level. The mission of the Antiterrorism Directorate is to detect, prevent and fight possible terrorist actions, and every other activity connected with and within the country.

The Counter Terrorism Directorate has a separate budget line. Head of the Directorate is appointed based on the State Police regulations and is directly dependent to the General Director of the State Police.

Regarding the reorganization of the Albanian State Police by order of Minister of Interior no. 47, dated 14.04.2023, it was approved the new reformed structure of the Albanian State Police and the Counter Terrorism Directorate. The number of employees increased by 6 new appointed positions.

The Counter-Terrorism Directorate has in its structure 85 employees, out of which 79 police officers and 6 civil employees. Also, the structure is organized at central level as follows:

- The Unit of Investigation and Coordination; (1 head + 4 specialists at central level)
- Unit of Analysis and Archive; (1 head of unit + 7 specialists at central level)
  - Unit of Logistic Services; (1 head of unit + 5 specialists at central level)
  - Counter-terrorism Operational Unit; (1 head of unit + 14 specialists at central level)
  - Verification of Terrorism and Security Unit; (1 head of unit + 9 specialists at central level)
  - 1 Specialist for Coordination with State Intelligence Service.
  - Financing of Terrorism Investigation Unit (1 head of unit + 2 specialists at central level) was established on February 7th, 2019 by Order of the General Director No. 159, of the State Police.
  - Crimes Against Humanity, Independence and Constitutional Order Investigation Unit (1 head of Unit+3

At local level, 4 Investigation Units are operational with 36 specialists and 3 assistant specialists as follows:

- Unit of Tirana, Kavaja and Durres; (1 head of unit + 12 police employees at local level)
- Unit of Elbasan, Korçë, Dibër; (1 head of unit + 7 specialists at local level)
- Unit of Fier, Vlorë, Lushnje, Gjirokastër, Berat; (1 head of unit + 5 specialists at local level)
- Unit of Shkodër, Kukës, Lezhë. (1 head of unit + 4 specialists at local level)

The CTD has signed several cooperation agreements, among which, on the inter-institutional level, the agreement with the Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) and on the international level the agreement with the US and Europol in view of the exchange of terrorism related information.

The Special Anti-Corruption and Organized Crime Structure (SPAK) which includes the National Bureau of Investigation, the Special Prosecution Office, and the Special Courts was established in 2019. The SPAK Courts took over the Serious Crime Courts premises. The

SPAK Courts comprise a first and appellate instance with nationwide jurisdiction. The Supreme Court is acting as a cassation instance.

### **The State Intelligence Service (the SHISH)**

SHISH collects information on terrorism, on the production and trafficking of narcotics, on the production of weapons of mass destruction, on the crimes against environment, as well as on organized crime and crimes that affect national security (for the use of preventive interception and Interception Law, see supra). According to the 2021 report, SHISH is committed to strengthen defense and analytical capacities against cyber threats – most likely to be the most ‘popular’ threats for the coming decades – what, in view of the present situation, can only be applauded. The importance of high-level IT tools and qualified staff can’t be underestimated given the growing risk of cyber terrorism, combining ample and anonymous use of the internet with indoctrination and terrorist threats.

The head of SHISH is accountable to the President, the Prime Minister and Parliament. The agency has a CT Department, covering 4 regions and 12 directorates on local level that gather information which is then passed to the Central Directorate for analysis. Serious measures on threatening national security may be discussed in the National Security Council.

**The Albanian Financial Intelligence Agency - FIA**, a specialized financial unit within the Ministry of Finance.

Its mission is the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing by means of collecting, analyzing and disseminating data on potential terrorist financing and money laundering to law enforcement agencies

**The Centre for Coordination against Violent Extremism (CVE Centre)** plays a key role in monitoring and implementing the National Strategy for the Prevention of Violent Extremism and the Fight against Terrorism. The center aims to prevent the spread of radicalization and violent extremism through localized efforts with the involvement of religious, cultural and educational networks as well as with the involvement of media and civil society. Regional Committees on P/CVE and CT as a regional reference instrument are established.

**The General Directorate of Prisons and the Probation Service** within the Ministry of Justice also has an important mission in preventing radicalization and violent extremism, given that this phenomenon finds a favorable breeding ground amongst convicts. 11 individuals are convicted and imprisoned for terrorism related offences, among them 6 hate preachers. They are detained in two high security prisons.

## **1.4 Providing any additional relevant information on national efforts to prevent and countering terrorism.**

- a) Building capacities and investigations and monitoring
- b) During 2023, the Counter Terrorism Directorate (CTD) staff, with the support of international partners (OSCE, PAMECA V, UNODC, and ICITAP), has participated/attended in trainings, conferences in 44.

- c) During 2023, CTD structures referred to the Special Prosecution Office against Corruption and Organized Crime (SPAK) and the Judicial District Prosecution offices, 38 criminal offences, 8 of which with terrorist intent.
- d) During 2023, the Counter Terrorism Directorate referred 4 cases for the offence of “Terrorism Financing” provided for by Article 230/a of Albanian Criminal Code. During 2022, there were 2 cases.
- e) During 2023 there were carried out 21 analytical profiles for subjects under investigation.
- f) During 2023, there were carried out 157 procedural actions for the inspection of profiles on social media.

### Exchange of information

The exchange of information during 2023 has been as follows:

- With Interpol 54 cases, received 35 and sent 19
- With Europol 25 cases, received 17 and sent 8
- With Liaisons Officers exchanged 26 cases, received 14, sent 12

Albania was placed on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)’s grey list in February 2020, and delisted in October 2023. This came as result of progress made by Albanian authorities in improving the understanding of risk and institutional coordination and cooperation, mutual legal assistance, detection, and prevention of criminal infiltration in the economy, beneficial ownership, prosecution and confiscation, and targeted financial sanctions.<sup>1</sup> During 2023, our country continued to be subject to compliance enhancing procedures from the Moneyval Committee of CoE as well as monitoring by the ICRG/FATF (FATF Ad-Hoc Working Group).

Overall, Albania, with regard to the technical compliance, out of the 40 Recommendations, Albania currently has:

- 6 Recommendations rated Compliant<sup>2</sup>;
- 31 Recommendations rated Largely Compliant;
- 2 Recommendations rated Partially Compliant<sup>3</sup> and 1 Not Applicable<sup>4</sup>;
- No “Not compliant” recommendations.

With regard to the recommendations remaining “partially compliant” (PC):

- Recommendation 7 “Targeted financial sanctions related to proliferation”:
- Ministry for Europe and Foreign Relations has drafted and jointly proposed draft law “On some additions and changes to Law no 72/2019 “On International Restrictive

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<sup>1</sup> FAFT, Jurisdictions under increased monitoring, 27 October 2023, <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/fatf-gafi/en/publications/High-risk-and-other-monitored-jurisdictions/Increased-monitoring-october-2023.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Compliant and largely compliant implies that the legal framework in Albania has foreseen the relevant mechanisms and legal guarantees in compliance with the recommendation being assessed.

<sup>3</sup> Recommendation 7 “Targeted financial sanctions related to proliferation” and Recommendation 15 “New Technologies”

<sup>4</sup> Recommendation 15 “Reliance on third parties”

Measures in the Republic of Albania” **adopted in the Assembly plenary session on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

- Recommendation 15 “New Technologies”: with regard to this recommendation we aim to comply shortly as the relevant institutions are working intensively, supported by the expertise provided in the framework of Project against economical crime in Albania, joint program of Council of Europe and European Union.

Albania has continued to make good progress in implementing the 2019 bilateral arrangement with the EU on putting the Joint Action Plan on Counterterrorism for the Western Balkans into implementation. A revised bilateral arrangement was signed in December 2022 and is being implemented. Albania should submit the first report on the implementation of the revised arrangement. Work has advanced on creating a body or mechanism for joint national threat assessments as well as on advancing the work on Critical Infrastructure Protection. According to the revision, the Albanian authorities should draft a report on critical infrastructures to assess the current situation and needs both from a legislative and an operational point of view, to align with the upcoming EU legislation and standards and ensure the resilience of critical entities.

#### **FTF (Foreign Terrorist Fighters) - Cooperation with Europol.**

The CT Directorate has continuously carried out exchange information with the specialized services of EU, EUROPOL, SELEC, CEPOL, Member States and EU agencies, partner services and the Security Offices accredited in Tirana.

The national legal framework on international cooperation and the exchange of information to counter terrorism is based on 21 agreements and protocols signed between our country and Western Balkans countries, EU, USA, etc.

The exchange of information with the neighboring countries and the EU Member States, have been quick, secure, effective and qualitative, within the legal requirements on the protection of personal data.

There have been trilateral meetings between counter terrorism counterparts of Italy, Kosovo and Albania, to exchange information regarding FTF individuals suspected of terrorist activities or financing of terrorism.

#### Repatriated operations:

Albania had 3 repatriation mission in Syria in 2020, 2021, and 2022. In total Albania repatriated 37 individuals (9 women and 28 children) from conflict zones during these three missions. The missions in Syria are extremely difficult, starting with the negotiation with the Syrian Democratic Forces, identification of the individual, and the use of the all the diplomatic channels available.

#### Criminal Investigations carried out:

The Counter Terrorism Directorate at the Albanian State Police recently concluded a comprehensive investigation into foreign fighters operating within the country. After 5 years of investigation, the police and the prosecution office were able to gather enough evidence to implement security measures for 21 Albanian Foreign Fighters, suspected of committing



criminal offenses "Participation in the organization terrorist" and "Participation in hostilities in a foreign country" provided by articles 234/a/2 and 265/a/1 of the Criminal Code.

Citizens allegedly affiliated to DA'ESH, currently held in detention center: Al HASAKH Prison: 10 individuals, (male foreign terrorist fighters)

Planned repatriations: No planned repatriations.

ASP (Public Security Department) main activities:

- On February 14, 2023, was held a meeting at the premises of the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM), which with the support of the Global Community Engagement and Sustainability Fund (GCERF) and in partnership with the Centre of the Coordination against Violent Extremism (CVE) is implementing the program "Sustainable re-integration into the community of Albanian citizens returned from Syria". This meeting took place within the framework of a monitoring mission on the activities and achievements of the program, in which two senior representatives of the GCERF office participated. Ms. Vese Kelmendi, Regional Advisor of GCERF and Ms. Ying Zhu (Dream), monitoring expert, who was in Tirana to conduct some informal meetings with the beneficiaries of the program.
- On February 22-23, 2023, based on the Order of the ASP, no. 166, dated 19.01.2023, three Albanian police officers attended the regional Seminar for the improvement of the national contributions of the countries of the Western Balkans, for the EUROPOL Report, regarding the Terrorist Tendency and Situation (TESAT), which took place in The Hague, Netherlands.
- On March 23-24, 2023, based on the Order of the ASP, no. 73/B, dated 21.03.2023, the training held in Tirana, on the topic: "Key points of strategic communications" and organized by RAN, Support Policies for the Western Balkans, (Network for Radicalism Awareness) was attended by the Albanian police officer from Department of Public Security.
- On May 19, 2023, based on the invitation of the Terre des Hommes Mission in Albania, the consultative meeting was held with the participation of the contact points in the central and local institutions, responsible for the implementation of the Cross Cutting Action Plan for the period of time 2023 - 2025, based on the Cross-Sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Violent Extremism, approved by DCM no. 81, dated 14.02.2023, held in Tirana.
- On September 22, 2023, based on the invitation of the Ombudsman Institution, one representative from Public Security Department in ASP together with three representatives from the Anti-Terrorist Directorate and a staff member from the Border and Migration Department, participated in the meeting organized with the support of the European Union in the framework of the Project "Strengthening approaches to prevent radicalization of young people in prisons and probation".
- On 05.10.2023 in the premises of the CVE Center, within the framework of the National Assessment that is being implemented by the Global Community Engagement and Sustainability Fund (GCERF) through the International Volunteer Projects organization and under the coordination of the CVE center, was held a meeting focused on the Support Specialists group/SPZ, in which were discussed the problems and difficulties encountered by these police officers in their areas.

- On 06-07.11.2023, in the framework of capacity building activities, the National Center against Violent Extremism (CVE), organized in cooperation with the Security Academy, the Faculty of Law in Tirana, the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM), Civil Society, The Institute for Activation and Social Change (IANS), the Center for Interreligious Cooperation and with the support of the OSCE, the two-day training course of police officers (chiefs of order/station/posts in local police stations) on the topic "Train the trainer", "On awareness against Violent Extremism and early signs of Radicalism, with a focus on young people". At the end, all participants were provided with attendance certificates.
- On 08.11.2023, a representative from Public Security Department in ASP participated in the training module for school security officers, held in Tirana, organized by the Institute for Activation and Social Change (IANS), supported by the US Embassy- and the OSCE Presence in Tirana.
- Several meetings of the Interinstitutional Technical Group (GTN) have been held on the repatriated citizen with all actors involved in the re-integration process of this family. During the meetings, the progress of this family so far was discussed, as well as the steps that will be followed in the future.
- QKEDH in coordination with partners the Institute for Activation and Social Change (IANS), the Minister of Education and Sports (MAS), the General Directorate of the State Police (ASP), the International Police Organization (IPO) and with the financial support of the US embassy and the Presence of OSCE in Tirana, conducted six training sessions with the participation of school security officers in pre-university education institutions on the topic: "School security officer - guarantor of a friendly and safe environment for the prevention of radicalism and violent extremism". This training will continue in the following days with the aim of the widest possible participation. These sessions are dedicated to a comprehensive process for ensuring an effective role of the school safety officer in prevention, early identification and case referral.
- On 19.12.2023, was held a meeting of the inter-institutional consultative group in the premises of the Municipality of Tirana, on the design of the model of the highly functional center in this municipality, for the rehabilitation, re-integration and prevention of Violent Extremism, as part of the Project "Prevention and Safe Reintegration: Holistic and Resilient Approaches to Violent Extremism", funded by the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) and the Terre des hommes Mission in Albania

## **Border control**

### **Technology usage (x-rays, body scanning) for not problematic travellers and baggage checks;**

- a. The Department for Border and Migration has at his disposal devices for protection against radioactive materials. This type of device is a pager and is carried by the frontier police officers in the belt when performing the service. The distribution was carried out according to the workload of the Local Border and Migration Departments as well as the Border and Police Stations for Migration.
- b. Regarding chemical and bacteriological materials, we are cooperating with the relevant Unit of the Ministry of Defence.

- c. Regarding the radioactive and nuclear materials, the Department for Border and Migration cooperates with the Institute of Nuclear Physics, which has capacities in this field. The Border Police has at his disposal equipment's that can only detect this kind of materials.
- d. In order to modernize the structure of the Border and Migration, during 2021, the border and migration police has been equipped with special tools and equipment: portable passport readers; video endoscope; a GPS set for topographic surveying; video scope, portable papillon device; control equipment, rechargeable flashlight, thermal cameras, GPS, binoculars, digital thermal cameras, laptops, network cameras, video projectors, computers, printers, telephones, electronic kits, GPS for geodetic measurements, magnifying glass for examining documents for the Airport of Kukës.

#### **Awareness raising with trade companies (international airlines);**

The Department for Border and Migration is monitoring the process of citizens' movement as part of visa liberalization, cooperating with "FRONTEX" in data analysis.

Regarding the travel of Albanian citizens to all Schengen / EU countries during this period, Albanian border police and migration authorities at Border Crossing Points proceeded as follows :

- a. Specific interviews are being applied to citizens travelling for the first time or rely on profiling the person to travel.
- b. At Border Crossing Points, border police officers apply guidelines for the use of interviewing techniques to identify potential asylum seekers at the moment of departure from Albania.

The Department for Border and Migration has established a clear mechanism to monitor the situation of Albanian citizens by addressing cases of their refusal by police authorities of Schengen countries for:

- a. Registration in the SIS or in the national system;
- b. Lack of financial means;
- c. Other reasons;

Regarding the travel of Albanian citizens to the Schengen/EU countries during this period, the structures of the border and migration police at the Border Crossing Points carry out:

- Detailed verification for citizens traveling for the first time having as a destination the Schengen/EU countries,
- Border guards, through interviewing techniques, aim to identify and prevent citizens who utilize the free movement without visas by abusing the right of asylum in EU countries.

The Border and Migration Police is the implementation body for:

- Order of the Minister of Interior No. 641, dated 20.12.2019 "On strengthening the control of Albanian citizens who cross the state border",
- Instruction of the Minister of the Interior No. 640, dated 20.12.2019 "On determining the special rules for the crossing of minor Albanian citizens at the border",
- Action Plan of the State Police no. 1011, dated 10.06.2015, "For the prevention of the asylum-seeking phenomenon of Albanian citizens in EU countries.

- As well as the rogatory letter of the Director of the Department for the treatment of minor citizens at the border,

a) In the implementation of these legal acts, the border guards have strengthened border crossing control at all Border Crossing Points, especially those having as a destination the EU countries by conducting interviews dedicated to the identification of citizens who do not meet the conditions of free movement traveling without a visa. Through these itineraries, it is intended to prevent any tendency to abuse the free movement without visas and to attack the phenomena of the use of forged documents as well as the detection of persons who may have promoted, facilitated, trafficked citizens to the Schengen area, etc.

b) During the interviews, these citizens were requested to give information on their free will to raise awareness of other potential asylum seekers. This type of interview was conducted not only for those directed to the countries of the European Union, but also during the free movement of citizens to neighboring countries.

c) All Albanian citizens who have been denied entry or who have been deported to Albania from EU/Schengen countries but also from other countries are interviewed at the border by the Border and Migration Police. Their data is recorded in the TIMS system specifying the reasons why they were refused entry or return.

d) These data are registered into the system and if this citizen wants to travel again from Albania, the border police and migration officers create a clear profile of the person, in accordance with the Action Plan of the State Police, in order to prevent the abuse of visa-free movement in the Schengen area.

### **Organizing of an informative campaign of high level on the rights and obligations of visa-free traveling, with a target on the areas affected by illegal migration.**

The awareness process of citizens who travel without visas to the countries of the Schengen area has continued every year and will continue in 2024.

#### **➤ Border security, residence permits (including immigration and refugees);**

Regarding residence permits, there is established the central database, Module E-Permit, at the Electronic register for foreigners.

Regarding the permit of stay, it is ongoing the production of biometric document (permit of stay), in cooperation with ALEAT Ltd.

#### **➤ Air security, maritime security;**

Cooperation with all agencies operating in ports and airports that have legal obligations in the exchange of various information, pursuant to the Albanian and international legislation, due to which these agencies have respective obligations, expressed in Decision No. 745, date 26.10.2016, "On Performing Joint Actions".

#### **➤ Real time access at the Interpol database on border controls;**

- With regard to the real-time access to the Interpol database on border control, each border police officer in the post of Assistant, Task Force Officer, Head of Station, during the Border Verification process has a legal obligation to consult and exchange data with The

Central Office of Interpol Tirana.

- Use of the advantages offered by electronic travel documents in border control (by electronic / chip validation through the ICAO (Central Civil Aviation Organization), biometric verification, approach to one counter, list controls, etc.).

#### **TRAVEL DOCUMENT SAFETY:**

Albanian travel documents are according to following standards:

- Implementing the international standards (ICAO/EU) in this area;
- Travel documents of Albanian citizens - Biometric passports and Biometric ID, in compliance with the standards ICAP and the EU
- Participation in the Public Main Platform (PQP) of ICAO;
- Usage of new Biometric technology: (face, fingerprints, iris);
- Reporting of lost and stolen documents at the Interpol database (DHVU);
- In our TIMS system, an automatic search is conducted at this Interpol database.
- Border police has various trainings for detecting forged documents.

#### **CONTAINER'S SECURITY**

Risk analysis for goods and containers is handled by General Directorate of Customs.

Border Police conducts joint controls with customs' authorities, implementing Decision No. 745, dated 26.10.2016 "On conducting joint activities".

The joint control unit of the containers works based on the Joint Order of the General Directorate of the State Police and General Directorate of Customs: "On the establishment, activities and SOP's of the joint unit for container control".

Technologies/scanners on goods' checks are in the competence of the General Directorate of Customs.

After the approval of the organic structure of ASP from July 2023, the Container Control Section was set up and is operating at the Local Police Directorate of Durrës, subordinate of the Serious Crimes and Trafficking Sector. Work has been done to prepare the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) of this structure.

#### **USING THE INTERNET AND OTHER INFORMATION NETWORKS FOR TERRORIST GOALS:**

In 2017, at the Antiterrorism Directorate was established and functions the Unit for Verifying Terrorism and Security. Among other duties this Unit monitors 24/7 the media and the social networks for the persons or groups that promote terrorist actions.

- **LEGAL COOPERATION AND EXTRADATION:**

##### **1. Europol**

Exchange of information.

The Counter-Terrorism Directorate has users of the Siena system and has its file in the system where it exchanges information with all the counter-terrorism offices of the countries that have operational agreements with Europol.

During 2023, access to the SIENA System was granted to the Financial Intelligence Unit (General Directorate of Prevention and Money Laundering), AL-MB Task Force, Passenger Information Unit (PIU). Currently, access is granted to an employee of the Financial Intelligence Unit who is trained, as well.

Currently, the following agencies have access to the SIENA System: SPAK, BKH, Anti-Skifter Task Force, General Directorate of Customs, Financial Intelligence Unit, AL-MB Task Force and Passenger Information Unit (PIU).

EUROPOL's SIENA system is used and accessed by the institutions of the State Police as the national coordinator with EUROPOL since 2011, by the Ministry of Finance and Economy, Customs since 2022, the Financial Intelligence Unit AIF-FIU starting from the year 2023 and the National Bureau of Investigation (BKH), which gained access in 2022.

## **2. Interpol**

Based on the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, extradition is allowed based on an official request addressed to the Ministry of Justice.

As stated in Article 6 of the Extradition Convention, every state has the right to refuse the extradition of its nationals, unless the states have agreed by means of a bilateral agreement.

The Republic of Albania has expressed its reservation in relation to paragraph 1, "a", of Article 6 of the Extradition Convention, refusing the extradition of its citizens, unless otherwise stipulated in the international agreements to which Albania is a party.

This principle is provided for in article 491/f of the Albanian Criminal Procedure Code for cases of non-approval of extradition "when the requested person is an Albanian citizen and there is no agreement that provides otherwise".

The Republic of Albania has signed bilateral agreements on extradition with the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Kosovo and finally with Spain.

## **2. Stationing of Armed Forces on foreign territory.**

### **2.1 Provide information on stationing of your States Armed Forces on the territory of other participating States in accordance with freely negotiated agreements as well as in accordance with the international law.**

Albania does not have Armed Forces permanently stationed in the territory of other OSCE participating States. Based on resolution and the international agreement, Albania deploys on temporary basis military units in the framework of multinational military formations which carry out activities, mission and operations as part of the NATO, EU and UN.

The temporary deployment of Albanian military personnel on the territory of other OSCE participating States in the context of training and exercises, which is governed by bilateral agreements with the respective countries or organizations.

With reference to the area of application of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, the Albanian Armed Forces have participated as follows:

- EUFOR operation “ALTHEA” in Bosnia Herzegovina, with 1 (one) military personnel in the position “Lesson Learned & Evaluation Officer, Plans Training & Exercise Section, J-3/7 Branch of the HQ EUFOR “ALTHEA”.
- NATO mission in Kosovo “KFOR” with 74 military personnel (19 officers, 32 NCOs, 21 soldiers and 2 civilians). AAF military personnel are engaged in KFOR headquarters in Pristina, in KFOR ISR battalion in Peja and RCW kinetic battalion Peja.
- NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in Latvia with 22 military EOD personnel (5 officers and 17 NCOs).
- NATO enhanced Vigilance Activity (eVA) in Bulgaria with 30 military infantry personnel (3 officers and 27 NCOs).

Outside the OSCE area of responsibility the Albanian Armed Forces have contributed as follows:

- NATO Mission Iraq, (NMI) with 2 (two) military personnel, 1(one) officer as Advisor for personnel matters at the Advising Directory NMI, and 1 (one) NCO assistant at TRN Directory of HQ NMI.
- United Nations Peace Keeping Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) with 3 (three) officers as Staff Officers.
- United Nations Peace Keeping Mission in Abyei Zone South Sudan (UNISFA) with 1 (one) officers as Staff Officers.
- Multinational Force Observers in Sinai, Egypt with 3(three) military personnel in Provost Marshall Unit of MFO.

The legal framework for the participation of the civilian and military personnel of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) in international operations is regulated by law no. 9363, dated 24.05.2005, “On the means and procedures of deployment and transferring of foreign armed forces in the territory of the Republic of Albania and sending Albanian Armed Forces outside of the country”, as amended.

The Council of Ministers with the proposal of the Minister of Defense decides on the participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania in international military operations organized, authorized or directed by the UN, NATO or the European Union, case by case, by defining the mission, level of participation, duration of the mission, as well as any other necessary element to conduct military operations.

Participation of the Albanian military units under these circumstances applies only in case there is a preliminarily international or bilateral agreement on the status of forces for the Albanian personnel with the country where the military operation are deployed.

For the participation of the AAF in the international operations, the Albanian government has approved the following decisions:

The Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) no. 822, dated 18.12.2019, “On amendment to the DCM no. 145, dated 20.2.2013, “On the participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania with representatives in the headquarters “EUFOR”, within the framework of the European Union's "ALTHEA" military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as amended.

DCM no. 820, dated 18.12.2019 "For certain amendment in the DCM no. 910, dated 22.12.2014" On the participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania in the International Military Operation KFOR, Kosovo".

DCM no. 475, dated 08.06.2017 "On the participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania in the NATO International Military Operation (eFP), Latvia".

Law no.23/2019, approval of Normative Act no.1, dated 20.03.2019 of Council of Ministers. "For the participation of the personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)". DCM no. 270, dated 02.05.2019, "On the participation of the personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)".

DCM no. 630, dated 28.09.2022, "On the participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania into the presence of Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai.

### **3. Implementation of other international commitments related to the Code of Conduct.**

#### **3.1 Provide information on how your State ensures that commitments in the field of arms control, disarmament and confidence and security-building as an element of indivisible security are implemented in good faith.**

The OSCE documents on arms control, disarmament and confidence- and-security-building measures constitute an essential pillar of Europe's current security architecture. The faithful observation of the provisions contained therein and the implementation of existing commitments in the spirit of transparency and cooperation - as a tangible contribution to Europe's indivisible and cooperative security system is ensured in close cooperation with appropriate state structures, in particular with the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense.

The Albanian Arms Control and Disarmament policy is based on the principle of undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armament. The Republic of Albania is continuously working towards the effective implementation of all international obligations, including the implementation of international treaties and conventions.

The Republic of Albania fully complies with the commitments and the spirit of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the Vienna Document 2011 (VD-11).

In the provisions of Chapter IX of the VD-11 (Compliance and Verification) on inspections and evaluation during 2023 (as active quotas) Albania conducted an Inspection Visit in Armed Forces of Cyprus, 20 - 23 June 2023, with one "guest inspector" from the Portugal Verification Agency.

One Albanian inspector has been part of the North Macedonian Inspection Team, which conducted inspection visit in Armed Forces of Sweden, 11 – 14 April 2023.

One Albanian inspector has been part of the Portugal Inspection Team, which conducted evaluation visit in Armed Forces of Moldova, 22 – 25 May 2023.

All those exchanging guest inspectors were within the framework of the bilateral agreements approved at the annual meeting with the partner countries.

Additional activities where Arms Control has participated during 2023 were:



- Visit to Air Bases and Military Facilities in Croatia, 11-16 November 2023 with 2 (two) inspectors;

Furthermore, the Republic of Albania has already fulfilled all legal obligations stemming from Conventions on Chemical Weapons, Cluster Ammunitions and Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines. With respect to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, and on their Destruction, Albania has fulfilled all necessary obligations.

Albania exchanges military information, defense planning information and all data concerning all arms control agreements, presenting a good will for cooperation, transparency and openness among all OSCE participating States.

### **3.2 Provide information on how your State pursues arms control, disarmament and confidence and security-building measures with a view to enhancing security and stability in the OSCE area.**

Disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and confidence and security-building measures, are key elements in enhancing security and stability in the OSCE area and beyond. Therefore, Albania has continuously supported initiatives and fulfilled obligation in these fields.

Albania is part of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). It supports and fully implements these two treaties.

The Republic of Albania does not possess any WMD, **nor** will **it** develop **or** support any activity that leads to their dissemination, but it will contribute with all the capacities to the establishment and improvement of national interoperable mechanisms with international ones, as well as an efficient and undivided system for preventing, stopping and controlling actions related to the proliferation of WMD.

The National Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Action Plan for its implementation (no. 33/2020) outlines the overall framework of the measures, mechanisms and actions that the Republic of Albania will undertake for **Countering** WMD. The strategy defines the role of different institutions and structures in order to improve cooperation, coordination and exchange of information between state and public authorities and other legal entities in the Republic of Albania as well as with other states and security organizations. The Strategy is an integral part of the national strategy framework and complements the crisis management and emergency management response mechanisms.

This National Strategy will enable fulfillment of our country's obligations as a NATO member and the obligations within the international organizations (UN and OSCE). Aspiring the EU membership, the Republic of Albania also agrees with the obligations deriving from it, which according to the European Security Strategy, consider proliferation of WMD to be one of the top five security threats.

The Ministry of Defense (MoD) supports fulfilling the objectives of this strategy through the National Civilian Protection Agency (NCPA), as well as expertise when requested through State Export Control Authority (SECA), which ensures that the licensing of individuals and business entities is conducted in accordance to the laws that are related with the export and import in the Republic of Albania of dual-use goods, military goods and dual-use technology goods. SECA, in cooperation with Customs and the Ministry of Interior (MoI), which are the main actors for C-WMD, will fully implement the legal framework and activities for the control

of military and dual-use goods. Ministry of Defence (MoD) will be responsible for managing the knowledge, information and expertise of the AAF, as well as the development of operational capacities that will address the incidents in case of proliferation or use of WMD.

## **Section II: Intra-State elements.**

### **1. National planning and decision-making process.**

#### **1.1 What is the national planning and decision-making process in determining/approving military posture and defense expenditures in your State?**

The basis for the Defense Planning system is laid down in the national legislation. The key institutions of defense planning include the Parliament, the Government's Working and Coordination Body. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) plays a crucial role in the overall management of Defense Planning and in coordination with measures ensuring the state's readiness for defense. The Defense Planning Process includes political objectives, and National Security Policy. MoD has assumed overall responsibility for conducting both the medium-term and yearly planning.

At the strategic level, the defense planning consists of long-term development plans and programs, which project the future of capability targets, as well as anticipate the main requirements and priorities of the AAF development.

The Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution System is synchronized and is in line with the national Integrated Planning System (IPS) of the government. This system will better serve the purpose of coordination program with the resources, and provides a sound decision-making of the government regarding the defense budget.

The budgeting process starts with the Council of Ministers decision on budget limits. The Strategic Management Group in the Ministry of Defense sets the budget limits for the expenditure structures according to the Government's Annual Budget Law and their requests for extra funding. After the opposite discussions, the final draft is sent to the Ministry of Finance for approval. The Parliament, at the end of the parliamentary session, approves the Government's Annual Budget Law. This law includes all the governments' institutions expenditures for the next year.

#### **1.2 How does your State ensure that its military capabilities take into account the legitimate security concerns of other States as well as the need to contribute to international security and stability?**

Albania is a law-abiding member of the international community of nations and acts in accordance with the international law.

The compilation and adoption of policy and planning documents that defines military capabilities of the Albanian Armed Forces, is being conducted in a transparent and open manner and all adopted documents are available to domestic and international public. In that way, all interested states have insight in the current situation and reasons for development of military capabilities.

Albania contributes to the international security and stability by engaging in dialogue and cooperation with countries throughout the world, as well as by providing contributions in peacekeeping and humanitarian aid.

In the framework of regional security environment and beyond there are approved a number of bilateral and/or multilateral agreements in order to contribute and increase the national and international security. Inter alias, emphasis is put in bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the defense field with countries of the region and beyond. In addition, there are approved different agreements as follows:

- "Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Defense of Albania and the Ministry of Defense of the Latvia on cooperation in the Field of Defense
- Cooperation Agreement with Turkey in the field of Civil Emergencies"
- Agreement between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kosovo for cooperation in the field of mountain search and rescue and territorial waters"
- "Technical Agreement (TA) between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Italy, regarding the maintenance of vehicles within the advanced and reinforced presence (eFP) in Riga, Latvia"
- "Service Package Agreement between the NATO Communication & Information Agency (NCIA) and the Albanian Ministry of Defense regarding the Provision of Communication and Information Systems Services for the Republic of Albania for the year 2023".
- "The Project Agreement for the Service Support Package (SSP) related to the provisions of communication and information systems services (CIS) in SHAPE NMR for Albania for the year 2023".
- "Agreement on the establishment and operation of the SHAPE International School (SIS)".
- "Technical agreement between the Albanian Ministry of Defense and the Montenegrin Ministry of Defense in the field of defense".
- "For the ratification of the "Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania regarding cooperation in the field of defense". Approved by Decree No. 25, dated 15.2.2023
- "On the accession of the Republic of Albania to the Convention on the International Organization for Maritime Aids to Navigation".
- "Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Albania, for the participation of Albania in the Civil Protection Mechanism of the Union". UCPM Approved by Decree No. 26. date 15.2.023
- "Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Multinational Forces and Observers for the participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania in the Multinational Forces and Observers in Sinai (MFO) Signed on 8.1.2022 and entered into force on 16.5. 2023
- The technical agreement between the Slovenian Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Defense of Albania. Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy and North Macedonia regarding the exercise "TRIGLAV STAR 2023" in Slovenia".
- "Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Defense of Albania and the Ministry of Defense of the State of Israel for cooperation in the field of defense".

- "Technical Agreement between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kosovo, in the field of Military Medicine".
- Declaration of cooperation between the Ministry of Defense of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Albania on increasing bilateral cooperation in the field of defense.
- "MoU between the Ministry of Defense of Albania and the Ministry of Defense of Hungary, Italy and Slovenia regarding the principles for the creation and operation of the battalion group in the Union European available to the European Union 2024".
- "MoU between the Ministry of Defense of Albania and the Cooperation Agency (DSCA) for the program of defense advisors (MoDA)".
- "Letter of intent certified by NATO regarding the multinational use of airspace for NATO activities".
- The technical agreement between the Ministry of Defense of Albania and the Ministry of Defense of Montenegro regarding the conduct of joint pre-deployment training for contingents participating in the "eVA" mission, Bulgaria, which will take place in the territory of the Republic of Albania.
- "Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Defense of Albania and ITF Strengthening Human Security in Slovenia, in the Field of Multinational Military Medical Cooperation, within the Balkan Medical Task Force (BMTF)".
- "Protocol between the Republic of Albania and the Republic of Italy for strengthening cooperation in the field of migration".
- "Note of Accession of the Republic of Moldova to the Agreement on the Coordinating Committee in the Framework of the Ministerial Process of Defense of Southeast Europe".
- Note of accession to participate in host nation support and other responsibilities set up within the Republic of Latvia (HN). Technical Agreement (TA) between the MoD of the Republic of Latvia and the Department of National Defence of Canada and Canadian Armed Forces concerning the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence in Latvia and the Provision of Host Nation Support and other Responsibilities.
- TA between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Latvia and the Department of National Defense of Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces regarding the advanced and enhanced NATO presence in Latvia and the provision of support by the host country and the responsibilities of the others (Albania has become a party with an Acceptance Note).
- Agreement between the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of France concerning the cooperation in the field of defence.
- Note of accession to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation as well as Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe regarding the provision of Host Nation Support for the execution of NATO military activities.
- Note of accession to participate in the agreement between the Government of Hungary and the Supreme Allied Commander Transformation HQ as well as the Supreme HQ Allied Powers Europe regarding the provision of Host Nation Support for the execution of NATO operations, exercises and similar Military activities.
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among the MoD-s Italy, Albania and Slovenia as well as the Supreme Allied Commander Transformation HQ concerning the functional relationship regarding the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence (NATO-

SFA-CoE) and establishment, administration and operation of the NATO Security Forces Assistance Centre of Excellence (NATO-SFA-CoE).

- Note of Joining Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) for Air Policing over the Airspace of the Republic of Albania's.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Poland and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Estonia and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of Romania and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to participate in the MoU between the Government of the Hellenic Republic and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe regarding the provision of host nation support for the execution of NATO operations and exercises.

- Note of Accession in the MoU between the Federal Ministry of Defense of the Federal Republic of Germany and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession in the MoU between the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation regarding the provisions of Host Nation Support for the Execution of North Atlantic Treaty Operations and Exercises.
- Note of Accession in the MoU to the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden and the Headquarters of the Supreme Allied Command for Transformation, as well as the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe, offering the provision of senior service military operations and exercises and military activities for the deployment of NATO” (DCM no. 672, dated 07.11.2018).
- Note of Accession in the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Finland and the Headquarters of the Supreme Allied Command for Transformation, as well as the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe, regarding the provision of state support for the host country. NATO's similar operations and exercises and military activities” (DCM no.271, dated 02.05.2019).
- MoU among the MoD of the Republic of Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Communication and Information Agency of NATO (NCIA) regarding to the cooperation on implementation of extending the projects of Air Control and Commanding Systems (ACCS).
- Note of Accession in the MoU between the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the HQs of the Supreme Allied Command for Transformation, as well as the Supreme HQs of the Allied Powers in Europe regarding the provision of support to Host Nation for the execution of NATO Operations/Exercises/Similar Military Activities". (DCM no. 148, dated 11.3.2022).
- Note of Accession in the MoU between the Government of Montenegro and the HQs of the Supreme Allied Command for Transformation, as well as the Supreme HQs of the Allied Powers in Europe and the HQs of the Supreme Allied Command for Transformation in Connection with the Provision of Support to the Host Nation for the execution of NATO Operations/ Exercises". (DCM no. 149, dated 11.3.2022).
- MoU between the MoD of Albania and the MoD of Latvia on cooperation in the field of defense.
- MoU between the MoD of Albania and the MoD of North Macedonia for cooperation in the field of defense".

Through a steady and serious commitment, Albania has been very active in fostering constructive regional cooperation and enhancing connectivity by working closely with our neighbors, either in bilateral and as well in regional platforms. In this context, we highlight the key initiatives for cooperation in the region such as:

- US-Adriatic Charter (A-5). In this initiative Albania supports the policy of ‘open doors’, as well as the promotion of political dialogue and good neighborliness, the increase of cooperation for joint representations, as well as the efforts against terrorism and radical

extremism. MoU between the MoDs of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro and the Department of Defense of the United States of America on Joint Military Exercises in the Adriatic Charter

- South-East Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM). The SEDM Process has developed the security of South-East Europe by promoting regional cooperation and good neighborly relations, strengthening regional Defense capabilities as well as cooperation through collective efforts and establishing links facilitating integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. The SEDM process is a successful confidence building mechanism in SEE, a platform that has strengthened the relations among our countries and has contributed to their proper efforts towards a common Euro-Atlantic future. The sixth Additional Protocol to the "Agreement on the Multinational Peace Force in Southeast Europe", is being implemented.
- Balkan Medical Task Force (MTF). The aim of BMTF is to enhance utilization of existing military medical capabilities in the Western Balkan region into the framework of a multinational medical Unit (MMU), facilitating deployment ability and sustainability for longer than one year period.
- Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Center (RACVIAC). Albania as a member country of this center has been active and plays a very important role and contribution increasing the security and cooperation in the region. With the new agreement, ratified in December 2011 by the member countries this center is called Centre for Security Cooperation. RACVIAC remains an important initiative in the South Eastern Europe contributing in enhancing trust, stability and security cooperation in the region. It's the leading regional security platform that supports its members in the EU and Euro-Atlantic accession processes and in overcoming the current and emerging security challenges through enhanced cooperation.

RACVIAC's Steering Group, Multinational Adviser Group (MAG) which includes all RACVIAC members and is the Political Decision Making Body, approved, "RACVIAC Strategy 2021-2026". This Strategy (2021-2026), is a key document that frames the future development of RACVIAC and defines the main priority areas in which the Organization will focus, thus supporting the countries of the SEE region in their efforts to fulfill national, regional and global objectives.

The Republic of Albania successfully lead for a four and a half period the position of Director of RACVIAC, and on April 2023 hand it over to the new Director from the Republic of Romania.

- Technical agreement between the MoD of the Republic of Italian and the MoD of the Republic of Albania regarding the provision of logistical support in "Camp Villaggio Italy", KFOR, Kosovo.

- Memorandum of Understanding signed between the International Trust Fund (ITF) and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Albania, in the field of Conventional Weapons Destruction, dated 11 May 2017.

## **2. Existing structures and processes**

### **2.1 What are the constitutionally established procedures for ensuring democratic political control of military, paramilitary and internal security forces, intelligence services and the police?**

## ***Military Forces***

The Constitution of Albania and other legal acts on civil-military relations provide a clear delineation of authority and a system of subordination and command and the control on the echelons of defense structures in times of peace, crisis and war. They provide for the civilian democratic control of the Armed Forces at the strategic level, whereas at the operational level the command and control is held by military authorities. Democratic political control of the Albanian Armed Forces is constitutionally guaranteed through article 12, paragraph 2, which stipulates that the armed forces are subject to civilian control.

Article 167 of the Constitution stipulates that military personnel in active duty cannot be elected or appointed in other state offices and cannot participate in political parties or other political activities. These constitutional principles are implemented through the provisions of the Law no. 64/2014 "On the authorities and powers of commanding and guidance of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania", Article 7 of the Law no. 64/2014, stipulates that authorities and powers of command authorities of the Armed Forces have the following hierarchical order: the Parliament, the President of the Republic, the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, the Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces, the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Commanders of the Land, Navy and Air Forces, the Commanders of the supporting structures.

As this order defines, the Parliament is clearly vested with the oversight authority. It approves the National Security Strategy, the Defence Policy and Military Strategy, the Defence Laws and Budget and exerts parliamentary control over activities related to the armed forces. The oversight authority is exercised through the standing Security Committee. The competences of the Committee are foreseen in the internal regulations of the Parliament.

In line with the stipulations of the Constitution and above-mentioned law, the President of the Republic of Albania exercises the leadership of the Armed Forces through the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence in peacetime. In wartime the President of the Republic appoints and dismisses the Armed Forces Commander.

The Prime Minister is responsible for the leadership, development, and the state of the Armed Forces in peacetime. The Council of Ministers is the highest executive body. It proposes laws on defense, executes the laws approved by the Parliament, defines the main approaches of national policy, and issues normative acts with temporary legislative power. The Council of Ministers manages the activity for the accomplishment of the tasks in the defense field, in accordance with the constitution, laws and decisions of the National Security Council.

The Minister of Defence is accountable before the Parliament, President and Prime Minister for the development and execution of defense policies. The Minister of Defence is a member of the Council of Ministers and the National Security Council. The Minister of Defence is responsible for the headship and control of the Armed Forces, the accomplishment of their mission, the management of the defense budget and the fulfillment of defense policy objectives.

## ***National Intelligence Service***

Law no. 8391, dated 28.10.1998 "On national intelligence service" and other bylaws constitute the legal framework for the activities of Albania's National Intelligence Service. Article 4 of this law stipulates that the National Intelligence Service operates under the authority of the



Prime Minister. In order to control the activities of the Intelligence Service, the Council of Ministers appoints a General Inspector who reports to the Prime Minister (article 12 of the law).

Articles 7 and 8 of the law provide for the parliamentary control of the activities of National Intelligence Service. The control is exercised by the relevant standing parliamentary committee, which can also oversee the use of funds allocated to the National Intelligence Service. The director of the National Intelligence Service reports to the Committee at least once a year. The Director of the National Intelligence Service also reports to the Council of Ministers, as determined by the Prime Minister.

The Director of the National Intelligence Service is appointed by the President of the Republic of Albania upon proposal by the Prime Minister.

### **The Albanian State Police**

Civil and democratic control on the State Police is achieved through the Assembly of Albania, Ministry of Interior and the Ombudsman.

The activity of Albania's State Police is governed by Law no. 9749, dated 04.06.2007 "On State Police". The State Police is part of the Ministry of Interior and reports to the Minister of Interior (article 7 of the law). The budget of the State Police is approved by the Parliament.

The Minister of Interior reports to the Parliament and to the Standing Security Committee on regular basis.

The Parliament of Albania has established the Internal Control Service (ICS) in the Ministry of Interior (Law no. 10002, dated 6.10.2008). ICS mission is to guarantee to the community a responsible, democratic and transparent police service, in keeping with the relevant enforced legislation. The activities performed by the ICS aim at preventing, unveiling and investigating criminal offences committed by police officers. The ICS also inspects the activities of the State Police against the implementation of the legislation in place.

The law places the ICS under the direct authority of the Minister of Interior, who is responsible for its activity.

### **The Guard of the Republic of Albania**

The Republican Guard of Albania is one of the security structures operating in the Republic of Albania. It is an institution, part of the state administration, directly under the authority of the Minister of Interior.

The constitutionally established procedure for ensuring a democratic control over the Guard of Republic of Albania is carried out by the Minister of Interior, as outlined in article 102/4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania.

The Republican Guard exercises its function based on the organic law 33/2021 "On the Republican Guard of Albania", as amended, and the subordinate acts for its implementation. According to the legal framework, the institution enjoys a special status and is an armed structure. Its mission is the protection and defense of state personalities of the country and foreign dignitaries when visiting Albania, as well as the protection and defense of objects of

special importance. The mission does not change in extraordinary circumstances or during wartime.

Based on the law, the Republican Guard protects and defends:

- a) The President of the Republic of Albania, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Prime Minister, as well as members of their families, when the categorization and reasons for the protection and defense of family members are determined by decision of the Council of Ministers;
- b) The elected President from the moment of voting in the Parliament;
- c) the Vice Speaker of the Parliament, the Deputy Prime Minister, the minister responsible for public order and security issues, the minister responsible for foreign affairs;
- ç) The Chairman of the Constitutional Court and the Chairman of the Supreme Court;
- d) Other personalities specified by decision of the Council of Ministers;
- dh) Foreign dignitaries of the same level as the Albanian personalities mentioned in points "a" and "c" of paragraph 1 of this article, who come for official visits to the Republic of Albania;
- e) Foreign dignitaries upon assessment and at the request of the State Protocol during their stay in the territory of the Republic of Albania.

The Republican Guard also protects and defends:

- a) The facilities where the President of the Republic, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Prime Minister, and the residences where they live or stay are located;
- b) The facilities where the plenary sessions of the Parliament and parliamentary committees are held;
- c) The building of the ministry responsible for foreign affairs;
- ç) The facilities where foreign dignitaries of the same level as the country's personalities specified in point "a" of paragraph 1 of this article stay and conduct their activities when they come to our country;
- d) Other facilities specified by decision of the Council of Ministers.

The organizational structure of the Republican Guard is approved by the Minister of Interior. The Guard is organized at the level of General Directorate, Directorate, Sector, and Section. The General Director is the highest executive, organizational, administrative, and operational authority, who directly reports to the Minister of Interior for the fulfillment of the Guard's mission. The General Director of the Republican Guard is appointed by the Prime Minister upon the proposal of the Minister, based on the criteria specified in Article 17 of the law 33/2021 "On the Republican Guard of Albania", as amended.

Based on Article 11 of the law (also in accordance with the provisions of point 23 of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security), it is prohibited for the employees of the Guard to:

- a) join or participate in the activities of political parties or associations, in any form they appear, at the central or local level, as well as propaganda in favor of or against them or candidates in elections;
- b) manifest behaviors and hold attitudes that undermine the status of the Guard employee;

c) participate in strikes.

The financial income of the Republican Guard are part of the budget of the Ministry of Interior, which is an integral part of the state budget.

Recruitment, employment relationships, financial treatment, and the social treatment of the employees of the Guard are conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions outlined in its internal legislation and the Labor Code, which are in line with human rights and fundamental freedoms. Additionally, the Republican Guard takes care to ensure and facilitate the career development of its employees by offering educational and training opportunities. In this regard, in 2023 (no. 1206 prot., date 30.05.2023), the Republican Guard signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the General Command of the Italian Carabinieri, which consists of bilateral cooperation in the fields of training and further capacity building.

## **2.2 How is the fulfillment of these procedures ensured, and which constitutionally established authorities/institutions are responsible for exercising these procedures?**

The principle of democratic control over the security forces is enshrined and stems from the Constitution of Albania and other Constitutional principles. It is implemented by specific laws of the Governments and Authorities of Commanding and Strategic Guidance of the Albanian Armed Forces, State Police, and National Intelligence Service.

One of the main purposes of Law no. 64/2014 "On the authorities and powers of commanding and guidance of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania" is the application of the democratic principle of civilian control over the Armed Forces.

The democratic control over the security forces is exercised by the Parliament of Albania, through its mechanisms for approving the state budget and performing oversight functions, in particular by the standing Security Committee.

According to article 80, paragraph 1 of the Albanian Constitution, the democratic control is exercised over the Ministers through hearing sessions or questions sessions. In its activities the committee is entitled to draw upon independent and professional expertise. In order to investigate its particular national and public interest, the Parliament can also set up ad-hoc inquiry committees.

The constitution defines the main rules concerning the functioning and organization of the Parliament. The parliament regulation derives from this provision and is approved by the majority of the members. The Parliament, as the high legislative institution, exercises control over the executive and the constitutional institutions, to verify implementation of the legal framework adopted.

The Constitutional Provisions and the Regulation foresee the instruments to exercise this control. These instruments are as follow:

- Parliamentary motions. Art. 80, point 1 of the Constitution, Art. 96-97 of the regulation.
- Answering the questions in a written/oral/urgent way or in front of a commission. Art. 80, point 1 of the Constitution, Art. 91, 93-95 of the regulation.

The Parliament of Albania is the highest authority of the strategic command and control of the Armed Forces (Art. 8, Law no. 64/2014)

- a) The President of the Republic, according to the Constitutions and actual law, is the Commander in Chief of the Albanian Armed Forces. In peacetime he exercises the command of the Armed Forces through the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence (art. 9/2, Law no. 64/2014).
- b) The Council of Ministers on cases provided by the Constitution and the Law no. 64/2014.
- c) The Prime Minister on cases provided by the Constitution and the Law no. 64/2014.
- d) The Ministers of Defense and Minister of Interior, who, in their respective areas of activity, are accountable for and control the Armed Forces and the Police Forces. According to article 80 of the Constitution and article 19 of the Parliament's internal regulations, the Ministers report to the Security Committee and to the plenary session of the Parliament.
- e) The Minister of Defence is the authority who leads the Armed Forces activity in accomplishing the constitutional mission within the main direction to the State Police.
- f) The Chief of the General Staff, as the leader of the Armed Forces activity, responds (is accountable) to the President of the Republic of Albania, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. He is the highest military authority in rank and at the strategic command hierarchy of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania.

#### **Legal Control of the Defence Intelligence and Security Agency.**

This control is exercised through parliamentary oversight, administrative/financial/legal control in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and Law no. 65/2014 "On the Defence Intelligence and Security Agency". The authorities that exercise this control are as follow:

- The Parliament, which exercises parliamentary oversight of the activities of the Defence Intelligence and Security Agency.
- Prime Minister, who exercises control of the Defense Intelligence and Security Agency activities, as well as financial control of specific operational budget.
- Minister of Defense, who exercises directly administrative, financial, and operational control in the Defense Intelligence and Security Agency activities.
- General Director of the Defense Intelligence and Security Agency (DISA), controls the activity of the Agency personally or by other authorized persons.
- The Minister of Defense or the General Director of the Defense Intelligence and Security Agency (DISA) report on the activity of Defense Intelligence and Security Agency to the parliament commission or sub-commission for security cases and intelligence information at least once a year or whenever the Parliament so requires.
- The General Director of the Defense Intelligence and Security Agency submits to the Minister of Defense a yearly report regarding the agency's activity, and the execution of the tasks.

- Supervision, control and reports from the above-mentioned authorities are carried out based on procedures for saving sources and classified information respecting the actual laws.

### **2.3 What are the roles and missions of the military, paramilitary and security forces, and how does your state controls that such forces act solely within the constitutional framework?**

#### *Military forces*

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, the mission of the Armed Forces is to:

- Defend the territorial integrity of the country.
- Protect the constitutional order as it is determined by law.
- Always be present in areas incurring menace.
- Assist the population in case of natural and industrial disasters and warn the risks of military and non-military nature.
- Participate in international operations as part of multinational forces.
- Prevention and management of environmental damage from military activities.

According to the Constitution, the Parliament, the President and the Council of the Ministers have responsibilities and rights, in regards to the national security and defense issues.

The Parliament of the Republic of Albania is the only entity that approves laws in the security and defense field of the country. The Parliament has the constitutional competencies to declare the war, emergency state, partial and general mobilization, ratification of the agreements and the scrutiny, management and approval of defense budget.

Parliamentary democratic control is exercised through legal means, directly from the Parliament and respective commissions. In this context, its activity is focused in laws, defense budget and policies execution in order to ensure that the Armed Forces act only within the constitutional framework. Members of the parliament can draw attention to acts of the Armed Forces, which in their view may be contrary to the Constitution.

The President of Republic has the constitutional authority as the Head of the State, who represents the unity of the nation. He is the Head of the National Security Council and the highest authority of the Albanian Armed Forces. All senior officers of the Albanian Armed Forces are appointed by the President who, at any time and as defined by law, can also dismiss them. The President of the Republic is Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and he appoints and dismisses the Commander of the Armed Forces.

The National Security Council is an advisory entity to the President and exercises its activity based on the Constitution, laws and obligations derived by international agreements ratified by the Parliament. This Council advises the President of the Republic for the issues concerning security and defense of the country.

The Council of Ministers is the highest entity of the executive power. It is responsible for the implementation of the National Security Strategy and the state and development of security instruments and national resources in accordance with the Constitution and laws.

### **3. Procedures related to various forces personnel.**

#### **3.1 What kind of procedures for recruitment and call-up of personnel for service in your military, paramilitary and internal security forces does your State have?**

##### *Military forces*

The AAF (Albanian Armed Forces) consists of military and civilian personnel employed in its structure. As of 1 January 2010, Albania has a volunteer military service system. Policies and practices for further career development of military personnel are based on their experiences, training and years in service.

The system of management and development of the human resources has at the center of gravity the training and education of the officers, NCOs, soldiers, and civilian personnel with the necessary experience and skills to serve within the country and abroad. This system includes the management of the entire life cycle of the personnel, from the identification of the needs, recruitment, education and training of the personnel in service, the economic and financial support, promotion and career development, until their final retirement and support and integration into the civilian society.

The policies and recruiting strategies based on modern marketing, which promotes the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) values, benefits and social guaranties of the personnel and their families, aim at the qualitative growth of the AAF.

The recruitment to become a soldier in the AAF offers equal opportunities, with no racial, ethnicity, color, gender or religious belief discrimination, as well as payment, profits, and other remuneration according to specific military services.

##### **According to the Law nr. 59/2014, Art. 14, 15, the admission criteria are:**

- *Nationality:* Albanian; *Age:* 18-27 years old (with the exception of the officers, soldiers/sailors who are planned to serve as medical personnel, who must be under 32 years old);
- *Education:* High School /University degree (NCO/OF), 9-year mandatory education for soldiers (privates);
- *Height:* Males over 170 cm, Females over 165 cm;
- *Health certificate:* By the Military Medical Center in Tirana (in good health);
- *Free of law penalties:* not being under investigation;
- To have the right to exercise his/her profession/public administration activity by law;
- To successfully pass the physical and intelligence tests.

The AAF requires the recruited personnel to have the highest qualities for serving in the Armed Forces, as being a complete professional Force. The AAF will recruit soldiers with necessary knowledge in accordance to the work requirements, specific specialties, by improving the procedures and policies of admission, giving priority to individuals with high education, unique abilities, and qualities for specific branches.

Soldiers' recruitment will be carried out in a concentrated way to complete the AF structures. The selection of the most suitable participants will be performed based on medical, physical and intelligence abilities, according to defined standards and procedures. The General Staff reviews the tests in November, every year and adapts them in accordance with the Force's

needs for staff. Since 2012, the categories of the intellectual test have been prepared in order to test the supplementary individual abilities according to the requirements of each branch.

The candidates submit the necessary documentation at the Recruitment Center of the districts, fill in the application Form no. 1 and the Questionnaire regarding professional soldiers in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania. After a pre-check verification, the Recruitment Centre of the districts sends all documentations of the candidates to the National Personnel Recruitment Centre. If there are no problems in the application, the Recruitment Centre calls the candidates and informs them for the presentation date and continuation to take the intelligent and physical tests.

Physical and intellectual tests are organized in the National Personnel Recruitment Centre. The applicants are recruited as soldiers after passing the verification and testing process. In the Personnel Recruitment Centre, the candidate will take the intellectual and physical test and will also be interviewed.

### **Selection of the candidates**

The interview is part of the selection procedures, in which the Commission evaluates the motivation, experience and communication skills of the candidates. The National Personnel Recruitment Centre is led by the motto “Recruiting the best individuals for a professional Force”, and candidates are qualified according to the records. After the winners are announced and appointed in a unit of the AF, they start the Basic Training.

The training for the new recruits starts with the individual basic training. During this period the recruits get necessary knowledge on military regulation, national laws, military equipments and weapons, physical training, military tactics and practicing shooting infantry weapons. At the end of this 9-week training, all the recruits have to pass the tests and get promoted to professional soldier, following the NCO military career.

### ***Paramilitary forces***

The Republic of Albania has no paramilitary forces.

## **3.2 What kind of exemptions or alternatives to military service does your State have?**

In the Republic of Albania there is no mandatory military service. Thus, as a consequence, there is no alternative military service. Unfulfilling the criteria's mentioned in (point 3.1) results in comports exemption/exclusion from military services.

## **3.3 What are the legal and administrative procedures to protect the rights of all forces personnel as well as conscripts?**

### ***Principles on the legal status of military personnel***

The rights and limitations of the freedom of military personnel in Albania are defined by law. According to the Law on “Military Status”, the military personnel serving in the Albanian Armed Forces enjoy special status and privileges stemming from the nature of their service to the country.

Military personnel enjoys the right to be informed, protection of personality, free medical care, health insurance in case of illness or injury while performing their duty, the right to vote and the right to exercise religion. Military Forces are neutral related to the political parties. Having a particular duty in service of homeland and society, the military personnel cannot be a member of any political party therefore cannot participate in political meetings and are forbidden to make political propaganda on behalf of any political party.

**Active military personnel enjoy the following rights:**

- a) His/her job in the Armed Forces is guaranteed in accordance to the applicable law;
- b) To get promotion in his/her rank (career), according to legal acts;
- c) To be protected by the state laws when performs the military duties;
- d) To be trained, qualified and to follow studies in military or civilian educational institutions within the country or abroad, only when receiving permission according to the legislation and in accordance with the profession;
- e) Practice his/her right of belief and religious event, outside of the unit or military institution without a military uniform;
- f) To serve inside the territory of the Republic of Albania and abroad in various international operations, with the permission of the appropriate authority;
- g) To wear civilian clothes out of the working hours of service, or when it's required by type of duties;
- h) To be organized in associations, which are not political or syndicates

**Military Personnel of the Armed Forces has the following duties and responsibilities:**

- a) To recognize, respect, implement and act in compliance with the enforced Constitution and legislation;
- b) To keep up the honor and dignity of the military;
- c) To be ready to serve where the interests of the Republic of Albania demand;
- d) To be prepared as militarily, disciplined, for the sacrifice towards the defense of the Homeland;
- e) To provide for the general public, stakeholders and public institutions the required information, except when the information is classified, in accordance to the law;
- f) To respect with accuracy the working time schedule and use it efficiently;
- g) To enhance his/her professional skills and participate in training activities.
- h) To not accept any material benefit on the duties, except the salary and benefits defined by law and other legal acts;
- i) To hold his/her responsibility for the legal actions during the duty;
- j) To follow the rules of ethics.

**Article 19 (law.9210, dt.23.03.2004) -“Detention because of duty or service” Military personnel are prohibited:**

- a) To be a member of political parties, organizations or associations of a political nature, as well as participate in political activities organized by them;
- b) To organize or participate in strikes; protests and demonstrations;
- c) To use state's property for personal benefits;
- d) To go abroad without order by authorities as defined by law.

***Summary list of decrees relating to legal assistance of military personnel***



Law no. 173/2014, “For the discipline in the Armed Forces of Republic of Albania”, defines the norms and rules for the military personnel’ violations, penalties and responsible law enforcement authorities. Art 17. The rights of the military personnel during disciplinary proceeding process: In cases of proceeding for serious discipline violations the military personnel has the right to be listened, to submit evidence and facts by himself or by another person authorized by him. If he is not able to get a representative, he can make a written request and address it to the responsible authority or to the respective disciplinary commission which assigns a military jurist to advocate him.

### **The Ombudsman role**

The Ombudsman is a constitutional institution, which protects the rights, freedoms and lawful interests of individuals from unlawful acts or omissions of irregular public administration bodies. The Ombudsman submits an annual report to the Parliament. The Ombudsman has the right to make recommendations and propose actions in cases of when violations of human rights and freedoms by the public administration.

The office of the Ombudsman is divided into five specialized sections. The specialized section is the section for police, secret service, prisons, armed forces and judiciary.

The Ombudsman contributes to the preparation of reports of the Albanian State to international organizations in the implementation of conventions ratified by Albania, concerning human rights and freedoms in the Republic of Albania and can submit parallel reports.

The Ombudsman promotes inclusion of human rights and freedoms in the curriculum, as well as the implementation from the educational institutions. He serves the right to make proposals and appeals (Article 15 of the Law no. 9210, dated 23.3.2004 on "On the military status of the Albanian Armed Forces personnel).

Active military personnel has the right to make, as appropriate, proposals, requests or complaints about illegal actions of superiors, when their rights are violated.

The proposals, requests or complaints are directed to the competent authorities, in a written form, according to the legislation. The military personnel is not subject to any disciplinary sanctions because of the submitted complaints or requests.

- Actually in the Albanian Legislation there applies the Law no. 9210, date 23.3.2004, concerning the “Status of the military in the Albanian Armed Forces”.
- Instead, in the disciplinary field there applies the Law no. 173/2014, concerning the “Discipline in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania”.

## **4. Implementation of other political norms, principles, decisions and international humanitarian law.**

### **4.1 How does your State ensure that International Humanitarian Law and Law of War are made widely available, e.g., through military training programmes and regulations?**

The Albanian Armed Forces are commanded, manned, trained and equipped in ways that are consistent with the provisions of International Humanitarian Law, obligations and commitments related to the use of Armed Forces in armed conflict, including The Hague

Conventions of 1907 and 1954, the Geneva Conventions of 1949, the Additional Protocols of 1977, as well as the 1980 Convention on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. Such provisions are included in different field manuals and regulations, published and distributed to all officers and NCOs.

The military education system in all levels of Armed Forces use the manual “Law of the Armed Conflict”, approved by order of General Chief of Staff, no. 747, dated 22.09.2009.

The Ministry of Defense in cooperation with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Committees have prepared published and delivered a training folder for the instructors. The military personnel before deployment on the mission get knowledge and train how the law on Armed Conflict is implemented. For this purpose, a brochure is prepared, published/printed and it is used as training and learning material titled “Essential Bases of Armed Conflict Law”, approved by the order of the General Chief of Staff, no. 226, dated 30.08.2001.

The Military Education System includes the curricula in all levels which contain topics regarding International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Law of War (LoW). The number of hours of training devoted to this subject for the military personnel is up to 400 training hours, spread out in official training courses.

Law no. 7864, dated 09.29.1994 “Albanian Red Cross”. Law no. 7865, dated 29.09.1994, “For the protection of the emblem and name of the Red Cross”

The Albanian Armed Forces personnel who are sent abroad in mission, besides usual tests have a special examination for IHL and LoW. After that, the military personnel for the mission is examined and certified for the acknowledgement of the above mentioned laws.

- Actually, the Republic of Albania has ratified different agreements related to this field. Specifically, the Republic of Albania adopted the Law no. 7531, date 11.12.1991 “For the ratification of the Convention for the rights of the children” signed in New York, on 26.01.1990;
- Moreover, the Republic of Albania has adopted the Law no. 9833, date 22.11.2007 “For the accession of the Republic of Albania in the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention “For the children rights”, concerning the involvement of the children in the Armed Conflicts” signed on 25.05.2000;
- After the implementation of the aforementioned agreements, the Albanian Armed Forces have adopted different texts in the Albanian Armed Forces Academy in order to prepare and train the troops for peacekeeping operations in the framework of the international operations led by UN, EU and NATO.
- These texts have been adopted in accordance with “NATO Standardization Agreement, STANAG 2449 Lo (Edition 1) (Ratification Draft 1) - Training in the Law of Armed Conflict, 14 February 2003, NSA (ARMY) 0143-LO/2449” and have been updated with “STANAG 2449 Ed. 2 (2013)/ 20 March 2013”.

#### **4.2 What has been done to ensure that Armed Forces personnel are aware of being individually accountable under national and international law for their actions?**

The Albanian Armed Forces personnel who are vested with command authority are trained to exercise it in accordance with relevant national as well as international law and Rules of Engagement are made aware that they can be held individually accountable under those laws for the unlawful exercise of such authority and that orders contrary to national and international law must not be given.

The Albanian Armed Forces personnel is trained and instructed in the international humanitarian law, rules of engagement, conventions and commitments governing armed conflict and they are aware for their accountability under national and international law for their actions.

The Military training system consists of institutional and functional courses for individual and collective training for units or pre-deployment training of particular units and personnel. Provisions of International Humanitarian Law are included in the current general training programs.

The military education is centralized within the Armed Forces Academy (AFA). This institution provides appropriate education, including mandatory lectures of International Humanitarian Law to all commanders and members of their staffs. There is a significant amount of these lectures both in Bachelor's curriculum and Master's curriculum.

The International Humanitarian Law is applied through National Law, no. 8003, date 30.10.1995 "Military Penal Code" - Chapter VIII "Felony in Military Operations".

#### **4.3 How does your State ensure that Armed Forces are not used to limit the peaceful and lawful exercise of human and civil rights by persons as individuals or as representatives of groups nor to deprive them of national, religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic identity?**

The mission and tasks of the Albanian Armed Forces are driven based on the legal and sub-legal acts and documents approved by the relevant authorities.

According to strict limitation set forth in these documents, Armed Forces cannot perform other tasks. The activities of armed forces are under the control of constitutional authorities or authorities to whom such control is entrusted to, by a special article of the Constitution, thus in case of transgression of competences, it is upon civilian authorities to act accordingly.

The Constitution of the Republic of Albania is the main document ensuring that Armed Forces are not used to limit the peaceful and lawful exercise of human and civil rights by persons as individuals or representatives of groups to deprive them of national, religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic identity. In this document are stated all procedures for usage of AAF and penalties for those who violate them.

Law no. 173/2014, "For discipline on the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania", in Article 13, some of the major discipline violations are:

- Supporting of the campaign of a party, political origination, member of the political party or independent candidate, contributing personally or financially.
- Supporting or participation in political, religious or non-profitable organizations activities, during working hours, in the workplace, military assets, or when he/she is wearing the uniform and military symbols.

- Permissions of persons from political, religions and non-profitable organizations to make propaganda in Albanian Armed Forces' areas.
- Usage, delivery, or displaying in the military areas and assets of symbols or advertisement of political and social organizations except when they have humanitarian character.

The Commissioner for protection from discrimination is an institute which exercises human and civil right by persons. The parliament has approved: - Law no. 10221, dated 04.02.2010 "On protection from discrimination"; - Law no. 9970, dated 24.07.2008 "On gender equality on society".

Likewise, the free media contribute as an additional element to prevent Armed Forces actions which might serve to limit the exercise of human and political rights. The Human Rights are also part of training programs and curricula in different courses. In case this action is on support of the Police Forces and the Armed Forces units, they are used for guarding and protecting the duties of critical infrastructure and constitutional order.

#### **4.4 What has been done to provide for the individual service member's exercise of his or her civil rights and how does your State ensure that the country's Armed Forces are politically neutral?**

The rights of the military personnel are embodied in Human Rights Charter no. 2/1993 Coll., (which is applicable for every person under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Albania and is part of its constitutional law). Limits of basic rights and freedoms may be imposed only by enacted law and based on conditions set forth in the Human Rights Charter. The military personnel represents a special group whose rights may be limited to fulfilling their tasks.

The Republic of Albania has institutionalized civilian democratic control over the Armed Forces in its Constitution. A Command and Control system at the strategic level is headed by the highest civilian authorities, whereas at the operational and tactical levels it is led by the highest military authorities. According to Article 12 of the Constitution, the Albanian Armed Forces are politically neutral.

Members of the Armed Forces are forbidden by Law to be a member of any political party and make propaganda in the interests of any political party.

Law no.9210, date 23.3.2004, "Military Status" (article 15 defines the rights for proposal and grievances of military personnel in Armed Forces). (Referred in point 3.3 subtitles "The ombudsman role")

#### **4.5 How does your State ensure that its defense policy and doctrine are consistent with international law?**

The Albanian Defense Policy and Doctrine are consistent with international law related to the use of Armed Forces, including in armed conflict and the relevant commitments of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. According to the Albanian Constitution any international obligation must be embodied into the Albanian legislation.

The Albanian Armed Forces respect the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts

(Protocol I) on June 1977 and the obligations under Article 82. Provisions of the international law which are included in the doctrines and different field manuals derive from these doctrines.

#### **4.6 What has been done to integrate women into conflict prevention, crisis management and post conflict rehabilitation through its activities?**

##### **I: Prevention**

##### **1. Measures to increase armed forces personnel understanding of the special needs and contributions of women in conflict.**

The Albanian Military personnel before participating and being deployed in international Peace Support Operations conduct a specific training. Part of this specific training is to be well acquainted with the customs, traditions and culture of the country where they will serve and the issues related to the protection of the rights of girls and women in the conflict areas.

Gender issues, protection of women's rights, gender discrimination, sexual violence issues are included in the programs of education for the military personnel of the Armed Forces. There are also included the availability plans to address and gather information about the culture and customs from local women populations in areas at risk of conflicts. The inclusion of systematic analysis for gender in conflict areas includes gender-disaggregation, social-economic indicators and power over resources and decision-making process. Information collected in areas where Albanian troops are deployed, which include gender issues as well, is analyzed and processed through the chain of command of international HQ.

The military personnel that are contingent to participate in a peacekeeper mission have attended different courses, which are dealing with these training issues such as "Diversity and Inclusion in the Security Sector - Key Leadership Conference and Gender Training of the Trainers Course organized in and outside our country. The military academies have revised curricula which comprised topics on gender equality and all of them are involved in the training programs of Military personnel.

##### **2. Measures to address the violation of the rights of women and girls, in line with international standards.**

The basic document that protects fundamental individual rights and freedom is the Constitution of the Republic of Albania. It affirms the principle of equality as a fundamental principle and pre-condition for the functioning of state entity and does not allow any form of discrimination against the individual (Constitution, Article 18, paragraph 1 and 2).

Another important document is the "Law on Gender Equality Society", no. 9970, dated 24.07.2008, based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination and other principles enshrined in the Constitution, the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, as well as all other international acts ratified by the Albanian Parliament (Article 3, paragraph 1).

The implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2021-2030, which is approved by Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 400, date 30.06.2021, the MoD and the AAF are implemented a Plan of Action 2022-2030.

The Council of Ministers in Albania has adopted the Inter Institutional Action Plan for the Resolution 1325, approved by DCM 524, dated 11.09.2018, published in the Official Journal 134/2018, an important step in ensuring the increasing of women's inclusion policies in the security field. It was prepared by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and other ministries, in consultation with of civil society organizations, national and international organizations which are working to achieve gender equality in Albania. The main policy of the AAF is to increase women's participation in Peace Keeping Operations, Conflict prevention and implementation of positive discrimination in this field requires up growth number of women in PKO Missions.

The program of the government has expressed the commitments for all public institutions in the fight against violence against women, reinforcement of the justice system for the prevention and support of victims of violence. In terms of the AAF, the main policy is to increase women's participation in peacekeeping operations, conflict prevention and resolution.

Application of positive discrimination in this area seeks to increase the number of women in the peacekeeping missions. These are accompanied with training of staff of peacekeeping missions on gender equality and awareness rising for the reduction of gender stereotyping in peacekeeping missions.

The National Council on Gender Equality was established with DCM no.3, dated 08.01.2009. This Council is chaired by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, and is composed of 9 (nine) ministries on Deputy Minister Level and three other members who come from the civilian society.

Law no. 173/2014, "For the discipline on the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania", in article 12, "Serious disciplinary violation", which classifies sexual harassment committed by military personnel during and after working hours or leisure time in the category of serious disciplinary violation is under implementation. The purpose of this law is to prohibit sexual harassment in order to defend human dignity, freedom and privacy and in order to promote equality.

During 2023, there were not reported cases on sexual harassment committed by military personnel. This issue is monitored closely in order to avoid the gender abuses during the military service.

## **II: Participation**

### **1. Measures to increase the number of women in general and in decision-making positions in the armed forces and the Ministry of Defense.**

Based on the "Human Resource Management Strategy in the Armed Forces, 2020-2024" and the Action Plan for its implementation, approved by Minister of Defense order, no. 246, dated 24.02.2020, the prior strategy stated that 15% of personnel serving in AAF had to be female, but this condition has been omitted.

The total number of women (military + civilian) serving in the Albanian Armed Forces by the end of 2023 was 1581 or 20.4%. Meanwhile, the total number of military women serving in the Albanian Armed Forces by the end of 2023 was 918 or 15.2% of the total number of military personnel.

Female Military Officers: 379 or 21.3% of total officers.

Female Noncommission Officers (NCO-s): 361 (OR9 – OR5) or 13.5% and 178 OR4 – OR1 or 11.4%.

For 2023, 464 persons have been recruited, 66 of which are female or 14.2%. - From total 376 recruits as soldiers/sailors, 43 of which are female or 11.4%, and from 88 applicant selected for new cadets, 23 of which are females or 26.1%.

Current activities targeting potential female applicants range from local initiatives like spread of leaflets in universities/high schools and recruiting open days' seminars in MoD, and visits on local colleges of women in senior leadership position like Minister of Defense and other senior military position. They share their experience and provide the young female with important career information about AAF and highlight the significant contribution made by women in AAF and abroad. They also increase awareness of career opportunities for women and men in AAF.

Also, in order to attract greater number of qualified applicants from Albanian workforce the Personnel Recruitment Centre has undertaken the initiative for promotion of women and men participation in military throughout National Employment Office. The recruitment campaign was also spread on national/local media and official website of the Albanian Armed Forces.

The percentage of female personnel who are promoted and advanced in their ranks and career in 2023 is as follows: - Officer 25%; - NCOs 10% and Soldiers 13%.

During 2023, female officers in Ministry of Defence, General Staff and in Armed Forces continued to perform duties in command positions and with high responsibility, such as: - Deputy Chief of General Staff, - Military Attaché, - Deputy Chief of Staff of Logistic in KFOR, - Deputy Director, - Commander and Deputy Commander at different levels,

The Albanian Armed Forces are working to obtain expertise in the field of gender equality and to strengthen our capacity in fully implementing the UNSCR 1325.

## **2. Measures to increase the number of women in peacekeeping forces.**

There are no regulations in the Albanian Army Forces limiting the deployment of women. Deployment is tasked through the chain of command to subordinate organization. For additional positions, or capabilities not provided by an already-formed unit, personnel is selected for deployment positions based on their rank, occupation, and any required special skills sets, with no consideration of being a man or a woman.

During 2023, 20 female military personnel or 5.22% of total military personnel engagement in mission abroad has been female. Albania continues to contribute in UN, NATO and EU missions with 3 female military officers in South Sudan, 11 (eleven) in KFOR Kosovo, 1 (one) in eFP Latvia, 3 (three) in Bulgaria and 2 (two) in Aegean Sea.

### **III: Protection**

#### **1. Increased access to justice for women whose rights are violated.**

The number and percentage of reported cases of exploitation and abuse allegedly perpetrated by uniformed peacekeepers are referred, investigated and acted upon.

For 2023, there was no case for Albanian peacekeepers women whose rights were violated.

### **IV: Other information.**

## **Section III: Public access and contact information**

### **1. Public access**

#### **1.1 How is the public informed about the provisions of the Code of Conduct?**

Experts from various state institutions (MoD, MEFA, MoI, Parliament, etc.) in charge of the implementation of different sections of the Code of Conduct participate on a regular basis in international and regional events dedicated to the implementation and exchange of information on this document. However, further efforts are needed to improve public awareness on the aims of the Code and its provisions.

Public has the possibility to be informed about the parliamentary debates regarding military issues. National Recruitment Personnel Center organizes meetings and briefings at high schools and universities based on a detailed plan. The public can participate in these military events, open-door days, organized by military structures. Public access to information is available on the official web sites of the Ministry of Defense and General Staff.

#### **1.2 What additional information related to the Code of Conduct, e.g., replies to the Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct, is made publicly available in your State?**

As of now, no additional information related to the Code of Conduct nor even the replies to the Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct have been made public and available.

#### **1.3 How does your State ensure public access to information related to your State's armed forces?**

Public access to the information related to the Armed Forces is becoming easier. The Law on the Transparency and Access to Public Information that ensures the rules of public access to the information regarding the state administration in general includes, as well as, the Albanian Armed Forces.

The Ministry of Defense provides transparency and public access to information related to the Armed Forces. The information center is operational in the Ministry of Defense. The Albanian Parliament approves the defense expenditures and exercises constraints and limitations in military expenditures. All documents of strategic level such as: The National Security Strategy, the Defense Policy, the National Military Strategy, the Long Term Development Plan, etc., are open to the public. The Ministry of Defense offers a wide spectrum of information from military magazine which is published monthly and military newspaper which is weekly publication (electronic webpage).

Based on Law no. 119/2014 "On the right for information" anyone requires information on the activity of the public body without being obliged to explain reasons. Even when the decision is negative the subject has to be informed. The MoD has specific structure "Inspection and Anticorruption Directorate" (IAD), which is responsible for the enforcement of the above mentioned law (for the fulfillment of the right to information for the citizens).

### **2. Contact information**

#### **2.1 Provide information on the national point of contact for the implementation of the Code of Conduct.**

The national point of contact for the implementation of the Code is:

**MINISTRY FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS**



Directorate of International Organizations

The Unit of International Organizations

Contacts: **Mr. Kujtim MORINA**

**Phone:** + 355 42 36 40 90 Ext. 181

**Mobile:** + 355 (0) 69 7636977

**E-mail:** [kujtim.morina@mfa.gov.al](mailto:kujtim.morina@mfa.gov.al)

**Address:** Boulevard “Gjergj Fishta”, no. 6, Tiranë.

## **ANNEX 1**

### **I. UNITED NATIONS**

- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents (New York 14 December 1973); Ratified. Entered into force on 21.02.2002.
- International Convention against Taking of Hostages, (New York, 17 December 1979); Ratified. Entered into force on 21.02.2002.
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, (New York, 9 December 1999); Ratified. Entered into force on 10.05.2002.
- International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, (New York, 15 December 1997). Entered into force on 21.02.2002.
- International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (New York, 13 April 2005); Signed on 25 November 2005. Not ratified yet.

### **II. INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO)**

- Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (Tokyo, 14 September 1963); Ratified on 06.03.1997, Entered into force on 01.03.1998.
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (The Hague, 16.12.1970); Ratified on 06.03.1997, Entered into force 20.11.1997.
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal, 23.09.1971); Ratified on 06.03.1997 Entered into force 20.11.1997
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal, 24.02.1988). Ratified. Entered into force on 22.05.2002
- Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (Montreal on 01.03.1991), Ratified. Entered into force on 06.03. 2000.

### **III. INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)**

- **Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials**, (Vienna, 3 March 1980); Ratified on 5 March 2002; Entered into force on 4 April 2002
- **II.1. Agreements between Albania and the IAEA** - Agreement between the Republic of Albania and the Agency on the application of protective measures on all nuclear activities of Albania, signed on: 1 July 1986, Ratified on 28 January 1988, Entered into force on 25 March 1988.

### **IV. INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO)**

- Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (Rome, 10.03.1988); Ratified. Entered into force on 17.09. 2002.
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, (Ratified on 10.03.88). Entered into force on 17.09.2002.
- In 2009 it was established the Inter-institutional Maritime Operational Centre (IMOC), aiming to create a new inter-institutional cooperation platform in order to ensure the

surveillance of the Albanian in planning, organizing and guiding all the maritime operations, in guaranteeing the law and sovereignty of the Albanian State in the sea.

### **COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

- European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (Strasbourg, 27.01.1977); Signed on 04.04.2000. Ratified on 21.09.2000. Entered into force on 22.12.2000.
- Protocol amending the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (Strasbourg, 15 May 2003); Signed on 9.10.2003. Ratified on 15.11.2004.
- European Convention on Extradition (Paris, 13.12.1957) and first and second Additional Protocols. Signed on 19.05.1998. Ratified on 19.5.1998. Entered into force on 17.08.1998
- European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (Strasbourg, 20.04.1959) and first and second Additional Protocols. Signed on 19.05.1998. Ratified on 04.04.2000. Entered into force on 03.07.2000.
- European Convention on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters (Strasbourg, 15.05.1972); Signed on 19.05.98. Ratified on 04.04.00. Entered into force on 03.07.2000.
- Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime (Strasbourg 1990). Signed on 4.4.00. Ratified on 31.10.01. Entered into force on 01.02.02
- Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest, 23.10.2001) Signed on 23.11.2001. Ratified on 20.06.2002. Entered into force on 01.07.2004.
- Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime concerning the criminalization of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems. Signed on 26.05.2003. Ratified on 26.11.2004. Entered into force 1.3.2006.
- Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (Warsaw, 15.05.2005). Signed on 22.12.2005. Ratified on 06.02.2007. Entered into force on 01.06.2007.
- Council of Europe Convention on laundering, search, seizure and confiscation of the proceeds from crime and on the financing of terrorism (Strasbourg, 15.05.2005). Signed on 22.12.2005. Ratified 6.2.2007. Entered into force on 01.05.2008.

### **V - OTHER AGREEMENTS**

Albania is party to several bilateral and multilateral agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) aimed at countering organized crime, international trafficking and terrorism.

- MoU between the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of Albania and the MoI of the Federal Republic of Austria to strengthen cooperation in the area of internal security. Signed on 27.01.2010.
- Agreement between the Government of Albania (GoA) and the Government of the Kingdom of the Belgium on police cooperation. Signed on 22.05.2005. Entered into force on 01.05.2008.
- Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina on cooperation in the fight against trafficking, in particular terrorism, illegal drugs trafficking and organized crime. Signed on 24.03.2009. Entered into force on 04.03.2010.

- Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria in the fight trafficking and organized crime. Signed on 29.01.2007. Entered into force on 04.10. 2007.
- Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Czech Republic on the fight against crime. Signed on 27.04.2009. Entered into force 01.01.2010.
- Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the French Republic on internal security cooperation. Signed on 15.05.2008. Ratified by law no. 9955, dated 17.07.2008.
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on cooperation in the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime. Signed on 12.02.1999. Entered into force on 24.08.1999.
- Agreement of cooperation between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Italy in the fight against crime. Signed in Tirana on 19.06.2007. Ratified by law no. 9799, dated 10.09.2007.
- Agreement of cooperation between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Latvia in the fight against terrorism, organized crime and illegal trafficking of narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursors. Signed on 16.12.09. Entered into force on 22.07.10 and ratified by law no. 10265, 26. 04. 2010
- Agreement of cooperation between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Malta in the fight against illegal trafficking of narcotics, psychotropic substances and organized crime. Signed on 19.02.2002. Entered into force.
- Agreement of cooperation between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking of narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursors, illegal migration and other illegal activities. Signed on 17.06.2004. Entered into force on 20.05.2005.
- Agreement of cooperation between the GoA and the Government of the Republic of Rumania in the fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking of narcotics and psychotropic substances and other illegal activities. Signed on 07.06.2002. Entered into force on 19.12.2002.
- Agreement of cooperation between the GoA and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in the fight against terrorism, illegal trafficking of narcotics and organized crime. Signed on 24.11.1993. Entered into force.
- Agreement of cooperation between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Montenegro in the fight against organized crime, illegal trafficking and other criminal activities. Signed on 31.10.2003. Entered into force.
- Agreement of cooperation between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Serbia in the fight against organized crime, illegal international trafficking of narcotics and terrorism. Signed on 11.03.2010 and ratified by the Parliament.

- MoU between the Ministry of Treasury of the Republic of Albania and the Investigative Board against Financial Crime of the Republic of Turkey to exchange financial intelligence information regarding money laundering and the financing of terrorism. Signed in Ankara and Tirana respectively on 14.07.2008 and 21.07.2008. Entered into force upon signature.
- Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on cooperation in the fight against crime. Signed on 27.05.2003. Entered into force.
- Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Federal Council of Switzerland on police cooperation in the fight against crime. Signed on 21.9.2005. Entered into force on 18.07.2007.
- "Convention on police cooperation in South East Europe. Signed in Vienna on 05.05.2006. Ratified by Albania in October 2007.
- Additional protocol on Combating Terrorism to the Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States in Combating Crime, in particular its Organized Forms. Signed on 03.12.2004. Ratified by law no. 9500, dated 03.04.2006. Entered into force.
- Since September 2009 Albania is part of the EU initiative, undertaken in cooperation with the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovenia, to exchange with the Western Balkans EU's counter-terrorism Best Practices.
- Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania, Nr. 452, dated on 16.06.2010 "On approval in principle of the" Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation and support for the Secretariat of the Police Cooperation Convention for South East Europe, 21.05.2010"
- On 28 January 2011 in Ljubljana/Slovenia Albania signed the "Declaration on Police Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism", which is a continuation of International Police Cooperation Initiative in the fight against terrorism. By signing this declaration Albania becomes a member of this initiative, together with Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro, Austria and Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Minister of Interior of the Republic of Albania and Ministry of Interior of the Federal Republic of Austria on reinforcing the cooperation in the field of internal security, signed in Vienna on 27.01.2010.
- MoU between OSCE presence in Tirana and Albanian Ministry of Defense for the elimination of Chemical Stocks, 16.04.2012 and MoU data 10.10.2014.
- MoU between UNDP and Albanian MoD on bilateral cooperation in the implementation of the Albanian UXO Hotspots Clearance & Ammunition Disposal Programme, 01.01.2011
- MoU between United Nations Development Program and the Albanian Ministry of Defense in Support of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Control and Physical Security and Stockpile Management Activities in Albania, 2016.

- MoU between MoD of Republic of Albania and the United Nations Development Programme in support of the Small Arms and Light Weapons and Physical Security and Stockpile management Activities in Albania, 27.06 2019. This MoU is amended