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General and complete disarmament

Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/76/50.



I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 4 of its resolution [75/53](#), entitled “Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control”, the General Assembly invited all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General information on the measures that they had adopted to promote the objectives envisaged in the resolution and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report containing that information to the Assembly at its seventy-sixth session.
2. Pursuant to that request, a note verbale was sent to Member States on 18 January 2021 inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II below. Any replies received after 31 May 2021 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the language of submission. No addenda will be issued.

II. Replies received from Governments

Albania

[Original: English]
[31 May 2021]

The Republic of Albania takes into consideration the environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control. Also, during the demilitarization process, the Ministry of Defence evaluates and implements environmental legal norms (national and international).

The Albanian Armed Forces inherited a large amount of weapons and ammunition, more than it needs, from the previous system. Destroying this entire arsenal may have a direct impact on the environment. For this reason, the Ministry of Defence has relied on the following three main pillars to carry out the process within legal norms:

- (a) National legal framework for environmental protection
- (b) International legal framework ratified by the Republic of Albania
- (c) Institutional legal framework for environmental protection of the Ministry of Defence
 - (a) National legal framework for environmental protection
 - (i) Law No. 10431, dated 9 June 2011 “On environmental protection”. The aim of the law is to provide high level protection for the environment, maintaining and improving its prevention and reducing the risks to human life and health and safety and improving the quality of life for the benefit of present and future generations, as well as providing the conditions for sustainable development in the country. The law also defines the principles, requirements, responsibilities, rules and procedures for ensuring a high-level protection of the environment in the Republic of Albania.
 - (ii) Law No. 10440, dated 7 July 2011 “Environmental impact assessment”. The object of this law is to define the requirements, responsibilities, rules and procedures for the assessment of significant adverse impacts of proposed projects, private or public, on the environment of the Republic of Albania.
 - (iii) Law No. 10448, dated 14 July 2011 “On environmental permits”. The law defines the rules to allow the development of some activities that cause pollution of the environment in the Republic of Albania and the measures envisaged to prevent this contamination and, if this is not possible, the measures to reduce the emissions of gas, liquid and solid into the air, water and soil.

(iv) Law No. 10463, dated 22 September 2011 “Integrated management of solid waste”. The law aims to protect human health and the environment to ensure environmentally sound management of waste through:

- preventing waste, minimizing or reducing negative impacts from the creation and integrated management of waste;
- improving the efficiency of their use;
- reducing the overall negative impacts of resource use.

(v) Law no. 8897, dated 16 May 2002 “On protection of the air”. The law is intended to guarantee the right of citizens to live in an environment with clean air, protecting human health, fauna, flora and natural and cultural values of the Albanian environment from air pollution.

(b) International legal framework for environmental protection ratified by the Republic of Albania

(i) Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, ratified by Law No. 9263, dated 29 July 2004

(ii) Law No. 10063, dated 29 January 2009 on the accession of the Republic of Albania to the Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution on the Reduction of Sulphur Emissions or their Transboundary Fluxes by at least 30 per cent

(iii) Law No. 9299, dated 28 October 2004, on the adhesion of the Republic of Albania to Decision III/1, amendment to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal

(iv) Law No. 10062, dated 29 January 2009 on the accession of the Republic of Albania to the Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes

(c) Institutional legal framework for environmental protection of the Ministry of Defence

(i) Order No. 693, dated 2 May 2012, “On the approval of environmental policy document in Ministry of Defence”

(ii) Order No. 1944, dated 9 November 2012, “The establishment and operation of environmental management groups in the Ministry of Defence and the Albanian Armed Forces”

(iii) Order No. 545, dated 26 March 2013, “Environment licenses of Ministry of Defence structures and the Albanian Armed Forces”

(iv) Order no. 542, dated 26 March 2013, “Monitoring of the environment in Ministry of Defence structures”

(v) Order no. 443, dated 6 June 2012, “The establishment and functioning of the Environmental Inspectorate in the Albanian Ministry of Defence”

The Ministry of Defence facilities are equipped with environmental permits and enforce the legal framework mentioned above. The facilities are subject to ongoing monitoring by the Laboratory Center of the Albanian Armed Forces and Environmental Inspectorate of the Ministry of Defence to provide law enforcement and continuous improvement.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2021]

Mexico is committed to the environment and promotes an inclusive and human rights-based approach to environmental protection. Mexico is also a strong advocate of the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction, which is the only way to ensure a safer and more peaceful, equitable and inclusive world for present and future generations.

Consequently, in recent years Mexico, together with other States, has suggested extending and deepening the debate in nuclear disarmament forums in order to increase awareness and the information available regarding the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from the use of this type of weapon.

Mexico is very concerned about the possible intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, given the serious consequences that it would have for human health and its impact on food security, climate change, ecosystems, migration and humanitarian crises.

Following three international conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, held in Oslo, Nayarit, Mexico, and Vienna in 2013 and 2014, it was concluded that no State or international body would be able to deal with a human catastrophe of such magnitude.

The Humanitarian Initiative, according to which the existence of nuclear weapons poses an unacceptable risk, since as long as such weapons exist there is a chance that they will be used, has been supported through a series of United Nations resolutions, culminating in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 7 July 2017. This international instrument, which complements and strengthens the existing non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime and whose cornerstone is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, includes an obligation for States parties to take environmental remediation measures to address the effects of the testing or use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Mexico will continue to support initiatives recognizing the complex and interrelated nature of the immediate, medium- and long-term repercussions that the accidental or deliberate detonation of a nuclear weapon would have on the environment, food security, climate and development, which would be systemic and potentially irreversible for humanity as a whole.

With regard to conventional arms control, Mexico, through the Secretariat of National Defence, destroys seized conventional arms and, in doing so, seeks to ensure adequate environmental management and takes care to generate zero environmental impact, in accordance with International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard 1400.

When issuing general and/or special permits for the manufacture, repair, transport and sale of firearms, accessories, explosives and chemical substances, the Secretariat of National Defence ensures the observance of environmental norms by controlling and monitoring the transport, storage and use of those items, and complies with current regulations and the relevant recommendations of the United Nations group of experts.

Portugal

[Original: English]

[29 April 2021]

At its seventy-fifth session, the General Assembly, recalling the previous resolutions adopted on this issue, reaffirmed the importance of the observance of environmental norms in drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control, in particular in relation to the nuclear weapons. In that context, the Assembly adopted resolution [75/53](#), in which it recognized the importance of the adoption by States of measures assuring environmental progress, in the context of international security.

Portugal has adopted the highest standards of environmental protection and pollution prevention. Moreover, best-practice guidelines and recommendations from the relevant international organizations have been translated into national legislation, in particular the Environmental Directive for the Ministry of Defence, dated 19 April 2011. Furthermore, Portugal fully complies with European Union law concerning environmental norms.

In theatres of operations, the Portuguese Armed Forces, comply with the most environmentally protective or favourable provisions enshrined either in the Portuguese or the host country legislation.

When drafting and implementing contracts for dismantling military equipment or demilitarizing ammunitions, the Ministry of Defence requires contractors to have quality and environment management systems in place and to be certified according to ISO 9001: 2015 and ISO 14001: 2015 or an equivalent standard.

In this context, companies make a commitment to preventing pollution and complying with all the applicable European and national legislation concerning the management of waste, in particular for its collection, transport, storage, treatment, recovery and disposal, in order to avoid the creation of hazards or damage to human health and the environment, and to avoid or reduce the release of emissions into the air, water and soil and the generation of waste, in particular through recycling or proper disposal.

When drafting and implementing contracts for the design and construction of military vessels the Ministry of Defence requires that the provisions of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships of 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto, be observed.

In addition, Portugal is party to all major disarmament and non-proliferation conventions. In compliance with its international obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Portugal has disposed of or destroyed its stock of, inter alia, cluster munitions and landmines while fully respecting applicable environmental norms, which include standards agreed upon by the States members of the European Union (Council directive 94/67/EC on the incineration of hazardous waste).

Being party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction requires the adoption by Portugal of control measures, which are either fully in place or being implemented, thus contributing to environmental safety and security.

In addition, Portugal complies with those norms, when destroying firearms that are found or seized by police forces. The procedures by which they are destroyed are described in more detail in the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Portugal is a State signatory to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution [31/72](#)) which recalls the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm on 16 June 1972.
