

Resolution 1775 (2010)¹

Final version

Military waste and the environment

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The production of weapons used in war, their detonation and the eventual storage of the hazardous material in military waste disposal sites could have serious consequences for the environment. The utilisation and management of military waste is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Council of Europe member states as a serious environmental threat.
2. Many substances present in military waste are still active and can endanger nature and human health. Furthermore, it has only recently been shown that the exposure to detonated material can have disastrous effects. Unfortunately, these problems cannot be solved by simply displacing stored waste, ignoring the dangers of abandoned arsenals or implementing standards on a country-by-country basis.
3. During the last two decades, 10 serious incidents involving military waste have been reported, all of which resulted in victims, environmental damage and expense for repairing the damage caused. Such incidents affect not only the states in question, but go beyond their frontiers and are in fact a pan-European problem.
4. Important quantities of weapons dating from the First and Second World Wars and the Cold War are still stored by the military. However, competition in weapons production and rapid technological developments have resulted in most of these weapons becoming obsolete.
5. In a special category of hazardous military waste are weapons that have been dumped into the sea, and in some cases into rivers, in vast quantities. Most of this waste is still chemically active and could be the source of serious environmental problems. The Parliamentary Assembly has already dealt with this particular issue in its [Resolution 1612 \(2008\)](#) on chemical munitions dumped in the Baltic Sea.
6. The Assembly consequently calls upon member states to de-classify information about military waste, where such classification still exists.
7. In the light of the above, and especially with regard to the negative effects on the environment, the Assembly believes that military waste has become a problem that is common to all European countries.
8. The Assembly therefore invites the Council of Europe member states to:
 - 8.1. create and implement a common European policy and methodology for military waste management, which also addresses means of recycling a part of this military waste, with a view to preserving the planet's resources and ensuring sustainable development;
 - 8.2. adopt acceptable regulations on freedom of information concerning the disposal of military waste in Europe and guarantee the availability of information on the types of waste material and any de-classification of information in this respect;

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 12 November 2010 (see [Doc. 12354](#), report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr Toshev). See also [Recommendation 1946 \(2010\)](#).*



8.3. consider creating a new international or European body to deal with the issue and to co-ordinate the efforts of member states. Such an institution could help member states that face serious difficulties in solving their military waste problems, co-operate with European neighbouring countries on the utilisation of their military waste and establish a joint control mechanism;

8.4. initiate co-operation in this respect with NATO member states, as well with those Council of Europe member states that are not members of NATO, with a view to harmonising policies and methodologies on utilisation of military waste.