Ankara (Turkey) - The 700-kilometer field of land mines, which caused thousands of people to die or become maimed for the past 51 years, is going to be swept, the Turkiye (Turkey) reported on Wednesday.

(16.07.2003)

The Ministry of National Defense has decided to sweep the land mines that had been planted on the Syrian border in 1952 in order to provide security and prevent smuggling.

Necessary funds have been raised, and the area which is 500 meters in width and 700 kms in length would be turned into arable lands.

An expert team would be assigned for sweeping of the land mines which have caused more than 3,000 people to lose their hands or legs and killed hundreds of people so far.

Vice-Admiral Can Erenoglu said the priority of the state was to give those fields back to their owners.

Relations between Turkey and Syria have improved considerably in recent years since Damascus expelled from the Syrian territory Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), five years ago.

Turkey has attached great importance to strengthening economic and political ties with neighboring Syria and Iran despite Washington's opposition.

The United States has accused Syria and Iran of supporting terrorism and planning to develop weapons of mass destruction, but the two countries have strongly denied the charges.

Von: 16 July 2003, Xinhua. All rights reserved.

<<< zurück zu: News