

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2022
 NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE IN QUESTION

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
 MINE CONTAMINATION:

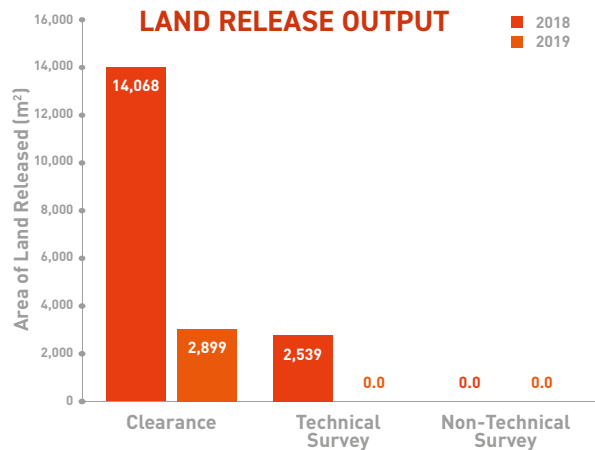
LIGHT, 40,056M²
 (GOVERNMENT ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
 CLEARANCE IN 2019

2,899M²

AP MINES
 DESTROYED IN 2019

62



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Ecuador's clearance output fell for the third consecutive year and, in 2019, it managed only a paltry 2,899m² putting its compliance with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in doubt. At the same time, its estimate of remaining contamination has more than halved: Ecuador has reported this is due to land being reassigned to Peru. However, this is not consistent with the figures provided in previous years.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ecuador should clarify the extent of remaining contamination.
- Ecuador should ensure it deploys its limited resources in the most efficient manner and that it conducts both non-technical and technical survey, as appropriate, before full clearance.
- Ecuador should provide clarity on the resources it is able to provide going forward and what, if any, additional support is required from the international community.
- Ecuador should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and mine action data should be systematically disaggregated by sex and age.
- Ecuador should develop a strategy for managing residual contamination post completion.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	6	Ecuador's estimate of outstanding mine contamination more than halved in 2019. This difference cannot be fully accounted for by land release or by the reassigning of a suspected hazardous area (SHA) to Peru.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	5	There is clarity of roles and responsibilities at a national level and Ecuador has necessary demining infrastructure in place. Ecuador had a funding shortfall in 2019 and support has been offered by the international community. It is, though, unclear whether Ecuador will commit sufficient resources to complete clearance by 2022.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	4	Ecuador does not have a gender and diversity policy or plan and does not employ any women in its mine action programme. Women, children, and ethnic minorities are consulted during risk education activities when they are also informed about planned demining operations.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	4	Ecuador's Article 7 report covering 2019 generally shows an improvement in the consistency and accuracy of the data within the report, something which has been an issue in previous years reports.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	6	Ecuador provided an updated plan for clearance based on the revised estimate of remaining mine contamination. It did not meet the land release targets for 2019 and has set itself a target for 2020 that should be achievable provided that sufficient resources are available.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	Ecuador claims to conduct survey and clearance according to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). All clearance is conducted manually and demining capacity is reported to have remained the same since 2018.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	2	3	Ecuador's land release output fell again in 2019 and the country is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline even with the very small amount of remaining contamination it is now reporting.
Average Score	4.5	4.9	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Centre for Humanitarian Demining (CENDESMI)
- Army Corps of Engineers (CEE)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- CEE Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI"
- General Command for Demining and EOD (CGDEOD)
- Joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit (Not operational in 2019)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Ecuador reported that, as at December 2019, 40,056m² of anti-personnel mine contamination remained across 27 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and 26 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) across four districts in Zamora Chinchipe province (see Table 1). This is less than half the amount of anti-personnel mine contamination reported at the end of 2018, despite Ecuador releasing only 2,899m² of contaminated land in 2019.¹ This is also wildly different from the contamination figures reported in Ecuador's Article 5 statement at the Fourth APMBC Review Conference at the end of November 2019 when Ecuador had 79,030m² of contamination and 3,233 anti-personnel mines to destroy in four mined areas.²

Ecuador reported that in June 2019 Peru conducted an analysis of the PV_La Media minefield and concluded that it is in Peruvian territory which reduced the amount of anti-personnel mine contaminated area within Ecuador.³ In Peru's Article 7 report covering 2018, the PV_La Media minefield was listed as being an SHA of 68,000m².⁴ The difference between Ecuador's 2018 and 2019 contamination figures is in the number and amount of CHAs: down from 34 CHAs to 27 (an unexplained reduction of 7) and from a total area of 72,717m² to 32,535m² (an unexplained reduction of 40,182m²). Despite these very significant discrepancies, Ecuador considers its current estimate of contamination to be accurate as it is based on evidence from field reports and technical records of mine laying in the border area between Ecuador and Peru. Affected communities, including women, were consulted during survey.⁵

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2019)⁶

Province	District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total CHA/SHA	Total area (m ²)
Zamora Chinchipe	Chinchipe	1	7,009	0	0	1	7,009
	Yanzatza	3	6,565	0	0	3	6,565
	Nangaritzta	14	4,577	0	0	14	4,577
	El Pangui	9	14,384	26	7,521	35	21,905
Totals		27	32,535	26	7,521	53	40,056

Ecuador's contamination results from its 1995 border conflict with Peru. The most heavily mined section of the border is the Condor mountain range (Cordillera del Condor) which was at the centre of the dispute.

NEW CONTAMINATION

Ecuador reported that during 2019 a CHA of previously unregistered anti-personnel mine contamination covering 350m² in the Condor Mirador district of Zamora Chinchipe province was added to the database and then released through clearance. In addition, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were found during 2019 in the border between Ecuador and Colombia, but according to Ecuador, none of these meets the APMBC definition of an anti-personnel mine.⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by the National Centre for Humanitarian Demining (CENDESMI). The Ecuadorian government created CENDESMI by an Executive Decree in 1999.⁸ It is an interministerial body chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and is made up of the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Public Health, and the Army Corps of Engineers (CEE) through the Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI" and the General Command for Demining and EOD (CGDEOD).⁹ CENDESMI is responsible for overseeing compliance with the APMBC, while the CEE is responsible for coordinating the planning of demining and COTOPAXI is tasked with conducting land release operations.¹⁰

Ecuador currently funds all of its demining operations. It has allocated almost US\$21 million for demining personnel, materials, and equipment for 2014–22.¹¹ This amounts to around \$2 million per year from 2019 to 2022. However, only \$821,953 was actually provided to the demining programme in 2019.¹²

Ecuador participated in the APMBC Individualised Approach, in 2019, in the course of which it claimed that it requires just over US\$8 million dollars to complete clearance. This will be used to replace personal protective equipment and other demining tools which are no longer usable, as well as for vehicles, training, food, and shelter for the deminers.¹³

At the Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Ecuador and Peru made a joint statement calling on the international community to support their mine clearance efforts.¹⁴ In response, the Organization of American States (OAS) has called upon its Member States and other international donors and partners to provide technical and financial assistance for both Ecuador and Peru.¹⁵ Ecuador reported that additional support has been offered by the United States of America and Italy in order to strengthen the capacity of its deminers and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel.¹⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, which chairs CENDESMI, has a gender and diversity policy but no similar policy exists that is specific to CENDESMI.¹⁷

Ecuador has stated that it considers all populations affected by mines, without discrimination, in the planning and execution of demining operations.¹⁸ Women, children, and ethnic minorities are targeted during risk education campaigns, which are conducted in Spanish as well as in native languages. Risk education teams are said to include indigenous people. During risk education activities, affected communities are also informed of planned demining operations, the prioritisation of operations, and the different land release activities being conducted.¹⁹

Mine action data is not disaggregated by sex or age.²⁰

Ecuador has trained women in both demining and the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.²¹ Since 2014, Ecuador has employed three female deminers, 3% of the total trained, however none is currently engaged in survey, clearance, managerial or administrative positions.²² Ecuador has reported that it will continue to include and train female personnel "according to their availability" ("de acuerdo a la disponibilidad de dicho personal").²³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Ecuador uses the IMSMA database, which is said to be updated regularly.²⁴

Ecuador submitted its Article 7 report covering 2019 several months after the deadline, however, there is an improvement in the quality of the data with information presented consistently and accurately within the report, something which has been an issue across Ecuador's reports and statements in previous years.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ecuador submitted an updated work plan for implementation of Article 5 in May 2019, as requested by the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties.²⁵ This included planned mine clearance in the last remaining contaminated province of Zamora Chinchipe for 2019 to 2022 (see Table 2). However, this action plan was based on an estimate of anti-personnel mine contamination that is now understood to be out of date.

Table 2: Planned mine clearance in Zamora Chinchipe in 2019–22 (Action Plan)²⁶

Year	District	Mined areas	Area (m ²)
2019	El Pangui	12	23,383
2020	Yanzatza; Centinela del Condor; Nangaritza	12	18,299
2021	Chinchipe; Nangaritza	10	20,688
2022	El Pangui	26	17,868
Totals		60	80,238

Ecuador presented a revised plan for mine clearance for 2020 to 2022 in its latest Article 7 report, based on the updated estimate of contamination as at end 2019.²⁷

Ecuador did not meet its land release targets for 2019 when it planned to clear 23,383m² of contamination from the El Pangui and expected to find and destroy 478 anti-personnel mines. Clearance was expected to take place in August and September with 12 demining teams.²⁸ In its Article 7 report covering 2019 Ecuador stated that due to lack of budget only two days of clearance operations took place in 2019. In 2020, clearance was planned of 11,285m² (with expected discovery of 1,362 mines) in El Oro and Loja in Zamora Chinchipe with seven demining teams working between June and August.²⁹

Ecuador prioritises contaminated areas for clearance according to the proximity of the local population and the impact on socio-economic development.³⁰

Table 3: Planned mine clearance in Zamora Chinchipe in 2020–22 (Article 7)³¹

Year	Mined areas	Area (m ²)
2020	12	11,285
2021	14	12,250
2022	27	16,521
Totals	53	40,056

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The process of humanitarian demining in Ecuador is carried out in accordance with the Binational Manual for Humanitarian Demining (Manual Binacional de Desminado Humanitario), developed under the Binational Cooperation Programme with Peru, and the Manual of Humanitarian Demining Procedures of Ecuador. These are said to be based on the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), but adapted to the Ecuadorian context.³² Ecuador has adopted the national mine action standards (NMAS) for land release, non-technical survey, technical survey, clearance requirements, and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD).³³ No updates were made in 2019 or early 2020.³⁴

In granting Ecuador's 2017 Article 5 deadline extension request, the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties noted that Ecuador should use the most relevant land release standards, policies, and methodologies, in line with IMAS, and encouraged it to continue seeking improved land release and certification techniques, which could lead to Ecuador fulfilling its obligations more quickly.³⁵ Ecuador stated in its 2017 extension request that non-technical and technical survey would be carried out to determine the location, size, and other characteristic of the mined areas before operations begin using records of mined areas.³⁶ No non-technical survey or technical survey was reported to have occurred in 2019.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Demining is conducted by Battalion No. 68 COTOPAXI and, in 2019, only manual clearance took place.³⁷ In the additional information provided alongside its 2017 extension request, Ecuador stated that the remaining clearance will be carried out only by manual deminers, due to the unsuitability of terrain for its machinery.³⁸ Mine detection dogs (MDDs) are used only for quality control (QC) following clearance.³⁹ Ecuador expected to maintain the same number of personnel in 2020.⁴⁰ As at July 2020, it is not known if this has changed due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in the country.

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁴¹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Non-technical survey teams	NTS personnel	Comments
Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI"	10	107	1	5	No change in the number of personnel from 2018 to 2019
Totals	10	107	1	5	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

The joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit is deployed to areas that were at the centre of the conflict between the two nations but did not carry out any demining operations in 2019. In November 2019 in the "Tumbes Declaration" the presidents of Ecuador and Peru agreed to continue their binational cooperation and committed to assign the necessary resources to continue demining operations in both territories, but no further details were provided.⁴²

CENDESMI is responsible for observing and monitoring compliance of the demining, including QC and certification of clearance operations.⁴³ In 2018, QC was carried out in El Oro and Loja provinces.⁴⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 2,899m² of anti-personnel mined area was released in 2019, all of which was cleared.⁴⁵

SURVEY IN 2019

No non-technical or technical survey took place in 2019. In 2018, a total of 2,539m² was reduced through technical survey in the Tiwinza square kilometre by the Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit.⁴⁶

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, only 2,899m² was cleared and 62 anti-personnel mines destroyed. No additional mines were destroyed during spot tasks.⁴⁷ This is a sharp reduction from the already meagre 14,068m² that was cleared in 2018 with 247 anti-personnel mines destroyed.⁴⁸

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019⁴⁹

Province	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Zamora Chinchipe	Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI"	1	2,899	62	0
Totals		1	2,899	62	0

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

Ecuador reported that 350m² of this clearance was of an area of newly discovered contamination that was added to the database in 2019. During this clearance, 20 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.⁵⁰

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

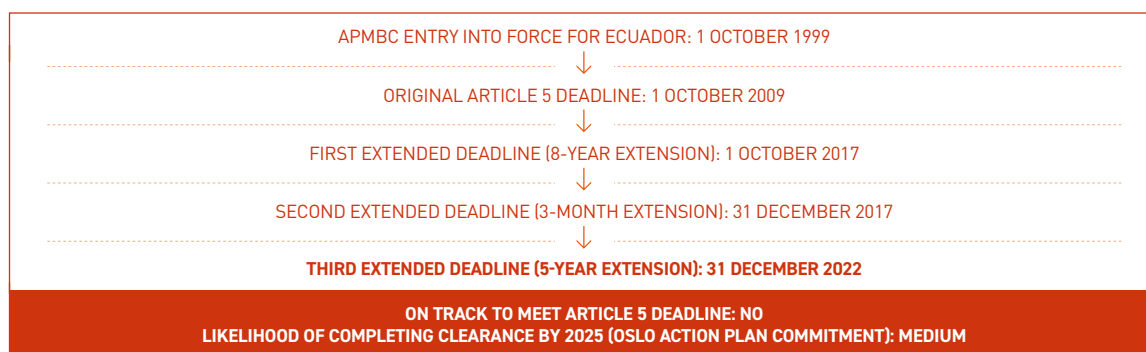


Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	2,899
2018	14,068
2017	15,476
2016	1,410
2015	66,414
Total	100,267

Ecuador has submitted three extension requests since the 2014 Maputo Review Conference. In May 2016, Ecuador announced that, of the remaining 0.13km² of contamination, 0.08km² would be cleared in 2016 and the remaining 0.05km² in 2017 prior to its October 2017 deadline.⁵¹ This did not happen. Instead, on 28 November 2016, Ecuador unexpectedly submitted a request to extend its mine clearance deadline to 31 December 2017. At the time of the request, Ecuador stated that "the technical survey and clearance in the provinces of Zamora Chinchipe and Morona Santiago (Tiwinza square kilometre) is about to conclude, pending the destruction of 5,478 anti-personnel mines in an area of 137,653 square metres." Ecuador explained that the failure to meet the 1 October 2017 deadline was due to a serious earthquake on 16 April 2016, which required the diversion of the armed forces away from demining, as well as to the physical characteristics of the land and climate conditions in the areas requiring clearance.⁵²

In its Article 7 report covering 2016, Ecuador suddenly and without explanation determined that it would need a further five years to fulfil its Article 5 obligations. It submitted another Article 5 deadline extension request in March 2017 and was granted a deadline extension to 31 December 2022.

Survey and clearance outputs fell from 16,607m² in 2018 to just 2,899m² in 2019, with just under half of output in 2018 from the Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit that has now completed operations in the Tiwinza square kilometre. Despite having 107 trained deminers, Ecuador failed to meet its land release target for 2019 as it had planned for only two days of clearance operations.⁵³ If, as has been reported, the amount of remaining anti-personnel mine is now only 40,056m², Ecuador should be able to meet its Article 5 deadline with its existing capacity.

Ecuador maintained that, in order to meet its 2022 deadline, it requires financial support from the international community.⁵⁴ Ecuador has since reported that additional support has been offered by the United States and Italy to strengthen the capacity of its deminers and EOD personnel and it believes it can now meet its Article 5 deadline.⁵⁵ However, this will not be possible without an accurate estimate of remaining contamination, a clear plan for completion, and a significant increase in land release output.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Ecuador does not have a strategy in place for managing residual risk post completion but has stated that it will use its current capacity to address areas of residual contamination.⁵⁶

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- 1 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Commander, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 2 Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 3 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 4 Peru's Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form I.
- 5 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 6 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 7 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 8 Executive Decree No. 1297, issued on 22 September 1999.
- 9 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension request, Annex I.
- 10 Ibid., pp. 39 and 40.
- 11 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 20.
- 12 Ibid.; Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 13 APMBC Individualised Approach Meeting at Intersessionals, "Mine Action Program of Ecuador Status and Challenges in Implementation", Geneva, 23 May 2019; and Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 21.
- 14 APMBC Implementation Support Unit, "Governments adopt global anti-landmine action plan", 29 November 2019, at: bit.ly/3cwROBu
- 15 Statement of the OAS, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 16 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 23.
- 19 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 17.
- 22 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 39 and 41; and email from Lt. Col Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 23 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 20.
- 24 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25; and email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 25 Decisions on the request by Ecuador for an extension of its Article 5 deadline, 16MSP, 21 December 2017.
- 26 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, pp. 19–20.
- 27 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 28 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
- 29 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 30 Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 17.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid., p. 5.
- 33 Ibid., p. 17.
- 34 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 35 Decisions on the request by Ecuador for an extension of its Article 5 deadline, 16MSP, 21 December 2017.
- 36 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 15.
- 37 APMBC Individualised Approach Meeting at Intersessionals, "Mine Action Program of Ecuador Status and Challenges in Implementation", Geneva, 23 May 2019.
- 38 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information provided on 8 September 2017, p. 1.
- 39 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 18.
- 40 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Statement of Peru, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 43 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 39.
- 44 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
- 45 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 46 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
- 47 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020; and Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 48 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
- 49 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020; and Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 50 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 51 Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 19 May 2016.
- 52 Letter from Efraín Baus Palacios, Director of Neighbourhood Relations and Sovereignty for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and President of the National Humanitarian Demining Center of Ecuador, to Amb. Patricia O'Brian, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations in Geneva, and Chair of the Article 5 Committee, Note No. 14839-DRVS/CENDESMI, Quito, 26 November 2016.
- 53 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
- 54 APMBC ISU, "Governments adopt global anti-landmine action plan", 29 November 2019, at: bit.ly/3cwROBu.
- 55 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 56 Ibid.