

KEY DATA

APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

1 APRIL 2017 (deadline expired)

New extended deadline required: Algeria declared fulfilment of Article 5 on 10 February 2017

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Unclear

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km ²)	Release in 2023 (km ²)
Clearance	0.30	0.30
Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported
Non-Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023
AP Mines destroyed	600	1,168

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATOR IN 2024:

- Algerian Army and Territorial Security Forces

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2024, the Algerian Army Specialised Units and Security Forces discovered and destroyed 600 anti-personnel (AP) mines during clearance of 0.30km² (30.16 hectares). Since formally completing its national demining programme and declaring fulfilment of Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) on 10 February 2017, Algeria has reported clearing a total of 30.45km² as of the end of 2024. This effort included the destruction of 32,269 AP mines, of which 4,790 were isolated mines believed to be remnants of colonial-era contamination, while 27,479 were found in Tindouf province, near the borders with Mauritania, Morocco, and Western Sahara.

Given the reported extent of contamination and the scale of land cleared annually, the situation exceeds what is purely residual contamination. To date, Algeria has acted in good faith in continuing to clear and report on AP mines on its territory. But while the number of AP mines discovered has steadily decreased since 2020 (when 8,740 AP mines were destroyed), Algeria continues to destroy very significant numbers in identified areas. According to an agreed view of States Parties to the APMBC, if a State Party discovers a mined area under its jurisdiction or control after the expiry of its original or extended Article 5 deadline and is unable to complete destruction before the next Meeting of States Parties, it should submit a request for an extended deadline. In light of this, Algeria should now request a new Article 5 deadline to enable it to complete the work.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Algeria should clarify the extent of contamination along its south-western borders, including the size of suspected and confirmed hazardous areas, and conduct ongoing survey and clearance in line with internationally accepted land release methodology.
- Unless Algeria can clear all of the AP mined areas along its south-western border with Morocco before the Meeting of States Parties in December 2025, it should request a new Article 5 deadline.

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- The Interministerial Committee on the Implementation of the APMBC

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Algerian Army Specialised Unit
- Territorial Security Forces

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Algeria was a country heavily contaminated by AP mines. It is estimated that more than 10 million mines were laid by France during the National Liberation War (1954–62) along the Morice and Challe defensive lines, also known as barriers ("barrages linéaires"), created to prevent the passage of external support along the Tunisian border in the east (wilayas of El Tarf, Souk Ahras, and Tébessa) and the Moroccan border in the west (wilayas of Béchar, Naâma, and Tlemcen). More than 80% were blast mines while most of the remainder were fragmentation mines.¹ Outside these border areas, mines were also scattered throughout the national territory, particularly near military encampments and along certain combat routes.²

Upon independence and for 25 years subsequently (1963–88), Algeria undertook massive clearance operations, clearing some 500km² of mined area and destroying more than 7.8 million AP mines.³ This was done by two specialised army engineering demining battalions who dismantled the Challe and Morice defensive lines and systematically cleared other areas where evidence of mine contamination emerged.⁴ These efforts were halted during counterterrorism operations in the 1990s, when new AP mines were laid, especially in 1994–95 in the north of the country. After ratifying the APMBC in 2002, Algeria launched another large demining programme in 2004, which successfully eliminated all known contamination by December 2016, several months ahead of its extended Article 5 deadline of 1 April 2017. Algeria reported clearing 124km² of AP mined area, destroying 850,000 mines.⁵

Since declaring completion, Algeria has continued to submit annual Article 7 reports confirming that all known areas with confirmed or suspected AP mines have been cleared, and all mines found have been destroyed. The reports also address residual threats in detail, with Algeria emphasising

that "specialised army units and territorially competent security services continue to address any suspected residual threats, particularly along the southwestern border".⁶ These specialised teams have continued to detect and destroy mines in two distinct circumstances.

First, they have been clearing isolated mines outside the areas once crossed by the Morice and Challe defensive lines, dating back to the colonial era. These mines are believed to have migrated due to natural phenomena and are found scattered and in low density. Between 1 December 2016 and 31 December 2024, Algeria reported the discovery and destruction of 4,790 such mines.⁷ Second, Algeria is facing a more recently discovered threat along its south-western border, close to the borders with Mauritania, Morocco, and Western Sahara, particularly in the north of Tindouf province.

This threat came into sharp focus on 16 October 2014, when an anti-vehicle (AV) mine detonated in the Fourn Tangarfa area, just 425 metres from the border. The explosion led to the discovery of a previously unknown minefield in the area.⁸ In its Article 7 report for 2020, Algeria stated that follow-up search operations had identified 22 additional minefields, and three others where operations were conducted in 2020 (See Table 1).⁹ As a precaution, demining capacity in the region has been maintained, and reconnaissance activities ("fouille et recherche") are ongoing.¹⁰

Algeria attributed the presence of these mines to the "ongoing conflict in the area".¹¹ The exact circumstances under which the mines were laid have not been clearly documented. They are located in Algerian territory, and it is possible that they were emplaced during a past conflict such as the Sand War of September–October 1963 that affected the regions of Tindouf and Béchar.

1 2011 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 11 and 63.

2 Ibid., pp. 5 and 8; and Algeria Declaration of Fulfilment of APMBC Article 5, 10 February 2017, pp. 1–2.

3 Algeria Declaration of Fulfilment of Article 5, 10 February 2017, p. 2.

4 2011 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13.

5 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 11.

6 Ibid., p. 25.

7 Ibid., p. 7.

8 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), p. 36.

9 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), pp. 36–37.

10 Ibid.; and Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 5.

11 Ibid.

Table 1: Mined areas discovered between 2014 and 2020¹²

Province	Area	Number of mined areas	Clearance periods
Béchar	Meksem El Dahma	1	2016-19
Tindouf	El Bettina	4	2016-22
Tindouf	El M'Hareth	2	2017-21
Tindouf	Foum Tengarfa	4	2014-19
Tindouf	Foum Alguim	2	2016-22
Tindouf	Hassi Boukhchiba	3	2020-23
Tindouf	Hassi Lehouira	4	2018
Tindouf	Oum Lâachar	4	2016-21
Tindouf	Si Brahim Ben Rezzoug	1	2017
Tindouf	Tafgount	1	2018-21
N/R	Khang Ben Zerhmine*	N/R	2019 to date
N/R	Oued Essmira*	N/R	2016 to date
Total		26	

*The Article 7 report covering 2021 added Khang Ben Zerhmine and Oued Essmira minefields where operations have been ongoing since 2019 and 2016, respectively.

Since the discovery of the Hassi Boukhchiba minefield in 2020, no further mined areas have been identified. Only two minefields remained to be released at the time of writing: Oued Essmira, which was discovered in 2016; and Khang Ben Zerhmine, where considerable clearance has been undertaken, with the destruction of 1,521 AP mines and 428 AV mines. The size and number of minefields in each of the two areas have not been provided.¹³

Between 2014 and 2024, a total of 27,479 AP mines of US (M-2A3), Italian (VS-50), Belgian (M-35), and Portuguese manufacture—distinct from those dating back to the colonial period—were destroyed in these areas, along with 5,646 AV mines (see Table 2 below). This includes 466 AP mines destroyed in 2024.¹⁴ In the first half of 2025, Algeria reported destroying 282 AP mines and 41 AV mines.¹⁵

Table 2: AP mines destroyed along the border with Morocco since 16 October 2014¹⁶

Year	AP mines destroyed
2014	306
2015	0
2016	6,905
2017	794
2018	1,922
2019	5,568
2020	8,740
2021	1,177
2022	1,010
2023	591
2024	466
Total	27,479

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Algeria is massively contaminated by explosive remnants of war (ERW) left from the colonial era.¹⁷ It found and destroyed 67 devices in 2024, bringing the total discovered since December 2016 to 32,698.¹⁸

12 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), pp. 36 and 37; and Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Table 4, p. 10.

13 Email from Serine Zidouri, Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN in Geneva, 5 September 2025.

14 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), pp. 8-10; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), pp. 19 and 21.

15 Email from Serine Zidouri, Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN in Geneva, 5 September 2025.

16 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Table 2, p. 8.

17 Ibid., p. 5.

18 Ibid., p. 7.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Interministerial Committee for the Implementation of the APMBC, set up by presidential decree in 2003, is the national focal point for all mine action activities. Chaired by the Ministry of National Defence, the committee was formally inaugurated by the head of the government on 5 September 2004. It brings together representatives from key ministries directly involved in mine-related issues, including the Ministries of National Defence, Health, and Veterans (Moudjahidine), as well as those responsible for the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Communication, and National Solidarity.¹⁹ The Committee meets regularly to exchange updated information related to the APMBC. In addition to its official members, it may invite experts and representatives from civil society organisation, in order to broaden the scope of consultation and enhance coordination.²⁰

Since its independence, Algeria has made its mine action programme a national priority. It has taken full responsibility for mine clearance and victim assistance. Algeria has not received any financial or other forms of assistance in carrying out its demining programme, which has been fully funded by the State's own resources. The State also funds social and economic support for victims through annual budget allocations distributed among the relevant ministries.²¹

As part of its commitment to international cooperation and technical assistance, Algeria conducted training in 2023 for several African countries involved in mine action, including Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Palestine, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, and Tunisia. Algerian experts also

participated in regional meetings and exercises to share experience and best practices in demining.²² In the context of South to South cooperation, an Algerian delegation visited Guinea-Bissau in late May 2024. A similar visit to Senegal was scheduled twice, once in 2023 and again in October 2024, but did not take place.²³

Algeria has held various positions within the APMBC committees over the years. In September 2024, Algeria delivered a joint statement at the Human Rights Council on behalf of a group of States Parties to the APMBC – all members of the Convention's Coordination Committee. The statement advocated for the universalisation of the APMBC and underscored the negative impact of AP mines on the enjoyment of fundamental human rights. In 2025, Algeria, on behalf of the same group, presented a draft resolution which was adopted in April on the human rights implications of AP mines.²⁴

On 30–31 May 2023, Algeria hosted an African international seminar on AP mine action in Algiers under the theme "For a Safe and Mine-Free Africa: Algeria's Pioneering Experience." Held with the participation of the APMBC Implementation Support Unit (ISU), the event marked the 60th anniversary of Algeria's independence and was funded by the Algerian government. It brought together over 50 representatives from African and Arab States Parties, along with key mine action stakeholders, international organisations, civil society actors, and mine victims and survivors.²⁵

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In accordance with its Constitution and relevant legislation, Algeria said it was fully committed to addressing the diverse needs and perspectives of its population without discrimination based on gender or age.²⁶ Women currently represent two thirds of the members of the Interministerial Committee tasked with implementing the APMBC. Additionally, almost one third of the civil society associations active in this field are led by women. Algeria also ensures

the inclusion of women in its official delegations to meetings related to the APMBC. Since 2020, female representatives have participated regularly, both as members and as heads of the country's delegation, underscoring the commitment to gender-inclusive engagement.²⁷ There is no available information indicating whether women participate in demining operations in an operational capacity.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Environmental considerations are not addressed in Algeria's official mine action reports. The national demining programme, concluded in 2016, and the latest deadline extension request submitted in 2011, as well as subsequent Article 7 reports, make no reference to national environmental legislation or to mine action policies and

standards related to environmental protection. However, an environmental initiative is presented in Algeria's Article 7 report submitted in 2024. The report highlights national reforestation campaigns on land previously released, under the initiative "one mine destroyed = one tree planted".²⁸

19 2011 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 14.

20 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 21.

21 Ibid., p. 20.

22 Ibid., p. 21.

23 Ibid., p. 22.

24 Statement of Algeria on Universalization, APMBC Fifth Review Conference, Siem Reap, 25–29 November 2024; and Resolution on "The impact of AP mines on the full enjoyment of all human rights", adopted by the Human Rights Council on 4 April 2025, available at: <http://bit.ly/4gdcfoy>.

25 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 21; and Statement of Algeria on Universalisation, APMBC Fifth Review Conference, Siem Reap, 25–29 November 2024.

26 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 20.

27 Ibid.

28 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 27.

Environmental and climatic conditions affected mine action operations in Algeria. Many contaminated areas were located in difficult terrain, such as mountainous regions or internationally protected wetlands, where the nature of the soil, which ranges from sand to rock, added to operational complexity. Mines were sometimes found embedded in rock or displaced from their original positions, prompting Algeria to expand minefield boundaries as a precaution. Harsh weather conditions further slowed the pace of clearance.²⁹

Mine action has yielded positive environmental and developmental impacts. Clearance has taken place in areas of ecological importance, such as El Kala National Park and the oases of Moghrar and Tiout, contributing to habitat restoration and the protection of endangered species like the Barbary deer and the Houbara bustard. Clearance has also supported national infrastructure projects, including the development of a standard-gauge railway in the south-west of the country.³⁰

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The Interministerial Committee maintains a database that is regularly updated by its member ministries, each contributing information within their respective areas of expertise.³¹ It is not known if it is an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.

Algeria has attended most meetings of States Parties, including the Fifth Review Conference in Siem Reap in November 2024. It has diligently submitted its Article 7 transparency report every year, most recently in May 2025.

PLANNING AND TASKING

The means by which Algeria is planning and tasking clearance along its south-west border with Morocco is not known. Algeria has indicated to Mine Action Review that two AP mined areas remain open: Oued Essmira and Khang Ben Zerhmine,³² but has not provided further information on the size of remaining areas, or a timeline showing annual clearance outputs.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Operations were reported to be conducted in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), but official reports make no mention of any national mine action standards (NMAS), except in relation to victim assistance.³³ In its 2011 Article 5 deadline extension request, Algeria stated that, while its clearance forces possessed knowledge of conventional military demining procedures and had accumulated 25 years of field experience, they would be introduced to international standards from the outset of

resumed operations. This was intended to support a gradual alignment with United Nations norms as they were adopted.³⁴

Algeria opted exclusively for manual demining due to its reliability, despite being slower and less productive. The decision was driven by the limited effectiveness of mechanical methods—evidenced by the continued presence of mines in previously cleared areas—and the difficult terrain in many operational zones, including mountainous regions, wetlands, and varied soil types such as sand and rock.³⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

All demining in Algeria has been carried out manually by the Algerian army.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2024

In 2024, specialised units of the Algerian Army discovered and destroyed a total of 600 AP mines from 30.16 hectares of clearance.³⁶ The total destroyed includes 234 isolated mines believed to be remnants of colonial-era contamination, along with

29 2011 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 18.

30 Ibid., p. 21.

31 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 15.

32 Email from Serine Zidouri, Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN in Geneva, 5 September 2025.

33 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 18.

34 2011 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10.

35 Ibid., p. 18.

36 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 12.

466 mines found during clearance along the south-western border with Morocco.³⁷ The number of mines destroyed in 2024 is down from the 1,168 cleared in 2023, although the area reported as cleared was identical.³⁸ Algeria noted that along its south-western borders two minefields remained open at the end of 2024.³⁹

Table 3: Summary of land release outputs in 2024

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km ²)	Comments
Clearance	0.3	30.16 hectares
Technical survey		N/R
Non-technical survey		N/R
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	
AP mines destroyed	600	466 mines found along the south-west border with Morocco and 234 mines from the colonial era.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC and in accordance with the five-year extension granted by States Parties at the Eleventh Meeting of State Parties, Algeria was required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 April 2017. Algeria completed demining in late 2016, several months in advance of its extended Article 5 deadline. Algeria submitted a Declaration of Fulfilment of Article 5 on 10 February 2017.⁴⁰ In order to remain in compliance with the Convention it needs to request a new deadline.

Between 1 December 2016, when Algeria officially finalised its clearance programme, and the end of 2024, Algeria reported the destruction of 32,269 AP mines. This total includes 4,790 isolated mines considered legacy contamination from the colonial era, as well as 27,479 AP mines found in Tindouf province, near the borders with Mauritania, Morocco, and Western Sahara.⁴¹ Algeria also reported that 30.45km² of mined area have been cleared during this period.⁴² Algeria reported to Mine Action Review that only two minefields remained open at the end of 2024, but did not provide further details on the size of remaining areas, or a timeline showing annual clearance outputs.

Given the reported extent of contamination and the scale of land cleared annually since Algeria declared completion, the situation has for some time exceeded what is purely residual contamination. According to an agreed approach by

States Parties to the Convention, if a State Party discovers a mined area under its jurisdiction or control after the expiry of its original or extended Article 5 deadline that is known or suspected to contain AP mines, it must immediately inform all States Parties and undertake to destroy the mines as soon as possible. If the State believes it will be unable to complete destruction before the next Meeting of States Parties or Review Conference (whichever falls sooner), it should submit a request for an extended deadline. The deadline should be as short as possible and no more than ten years.⁴³ In light of this, and unless it is able to complete clearance before the Meeting of States Parties in December 2025, Algeria should request a new Article 5 deadline.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Algeria has developed and implemented action plans to ensure a sustainable national capacity is in place for addressing areas suspected of containing AP mines, in accordance with its obligations under the APMBC. The national capacity responsible for managing residual contamination consists of specialised army units, as well as territorial security services. These entities are equipped to respond promptly to any suspected presence of mines, particularly in neutralising residual threats along the south-western border with Morocco.⁴⁴

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 7 and 8.

³⁸ Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 11.

³⁹ Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 8.

⁴⁰ Algeria Declaration of Fulfilment of Article 5, 10 February 2017.

⁴¹ Article 7 Report (covering 2024), pp. 7 and 8.

⁴² Ibid., p. 12.

⁴³ "Proposed rational response to States Parties discovering previously unknown mined areas after deadlines have passed", Twelfth Meeting of State Parties, Geneva, 3-7 December 2012; and Final Report of the APMBC Twelfth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 21 January 2013, p. 10.

⁴⁴ Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 6.