



IRAN

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Iran should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.
- Iran should report on the threat from cluster munition remnants (CMR) and prepare a plan for their clearance and destruction.

CONTAMINATION

The exact extent of contamination from CMR in Iran is not known. Some contamination is believed to remain from the Iran-Iraq war when cluster munitions were widely used in Khuzestan and to a lesser extent in Kermanshah. Iraqi forces used mostly French- and Russian-made submunitions in attacks on oil facilities at Abadan and Mah-Shahr, and Spanish munitions in attacks on troop positions at Dasht-e-Azadegan. Air Force explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams cleared many unexploded submunitions after attacks but contamination remains around Mah-Shahr and the port of Bandar Imam Khomeini, according to a retired Iranian Air Force colonel.¹

Other ERW and Landmines

Other explosive remnants of war (ERW) continue to inflict casualties, particularly as a result of scavenging for scrap metal, though the extent of the problem is not clear. Unexploded ordnance (UXO) includes grenades, mortar, and artillery shells, and air-dropped bombs. In 2014, Cluster Munition Monitor registered seven ERW incidents that caused 28 casualties. An explosion of UXO that became mixed up with scrap metal killed one man and injured five at a scrap metal factory in Mahmood-Abad (Mazandaran).²

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Taking the place of a Mine Action Committee in the Ministry of Defense, the Iran Mine Action Centre (IRMAC) was established in 2005 and made responsible for planning, data, managing survey, and procurement. It also sets standards, provides training for clearance operators, concludes contracts with demining operators (military or private), and ensures monitoring of their operations. It coordinates mine action with the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Interior, the Management and Planning Organisation of Iran, and other relevant ministries and organisations, and handles international relations.

IRMAC also oversees victim assistance and risk education but has partly delegated these roles to entities such as the Social Welfare Organisation and the Iranian Red Crescent Society.³

IRMAC's future appeared uncertain in 2014 amid debate on institutional reforms. IRMAC's statement that 99% of contaminated lands had been cleared led to proposals to transfer the mandate for remaining work to the Ministry of Interior. At the time of drafting this report, it was not clear if, to what extent, and when these changes would materialise. According to reports from mine action sources, clearance operations had slowed down due to these uncertainties.⁴

LAND RELEASE

No data was available on any CMR clearance in 2015.

ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

Iran is not a state party or signatory to the CCM. Nonetheless, Iran has obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR as soon as possible, in particular by virtue of its duty to protect the right to life of every person under its jurisdiction.⁵

1 Interview with Air Force Colonel (ret.) Ali Alizadeh, Tehran, 8 February 2014.

2 "Mortar shell explosion in Mahmoud-Abad industrial zone: One killed and 5 injured so far", *Blogh News*, 9 March 2014, at: <http://www.bloghnews.com/>.

3 IRMAC PowerPoint Presentation, Tehran, 9 February 2014; and IRMAC, "Presentation of IRMAC", at: <http://www.irmac.ir/sites/default/files/>.

4 Telephone interview with mine action sector operator, provided on condition of anonymity, 5 April 2015.

5 Iran is a state party to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 6(1) of which stipulates that: "Every human being has the inherent right to life."