

# AZERBAIJAN

## PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

	2016	2015
Problem understood	4	4
Target date for completion of cluster munition clearance	3	3
Targeted clearance	6	6
Efficient clearance	5	5
National funding of programme	8	8
Timely clearance	5	5
Land-release system in place	6	6
National mine action standards	5	5
Reporting on progress	4	4
Improving performance	4	4
<b>PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>

## RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

→ Azerbaijan should accede to, and abide by, the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.

## CONTAMINATION

The precise extent of contamination from cluster munition remnants (CMR) in Azerbaijan is unknown, as Armenian forces currently occupy a significant area of the country, where the contamination exists. There may also be some residual contamination in territory under government control.

On 1 April 2016, intense fighting broke out in Nagorno-Karabakh along the front line pitting Armenian and Nagorno-Karabakh forces against those of Azerbaijan. While ground fighting was confined to areas close to the Line of Contact (LOC), artillery fire penetrated more than 10km into Nagorno-Karabakh, and included the use of cluster munitions, which resulted in an estimated 2km<sup>2</sup> of new CMR contamination in Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>1</sup> No CMR contamination has been reported on the Azerbaijan-controlled side of the LOC. A ceasefire was agreed on 5 April 2016 (see the separate report on Nagorno-Karabakh).

In 1988, a decision by the parliament of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province to secede from Azerbaijan and join Armenia led to hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan from 1988 to 1994. Large quantities of cluster munitions were dropped

from the air during the conflict. Armenia continues to occupy around one-fifth of Azerbaijani territory.

In 2007, the Azerbaijan Campaign to Ban Landmines (AzCBL) surveyed CMR contamination in the non-occupied border regions of Azerbaijan. It concluded that cluster munitions (among other ordnance) had been used in the Aghdam and Fizuli regions.<sup>2</sup> In addition, significant CMR have been identified in and around Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>3</sup> In 2006 and 2007, remnants were found in and around warehouses at a former Soviet ammunition storage area located at Saloglu in Agstafa district, where clearance was completed in July 2011.<sup>4</sup>

### Other Explosive Remnants of War and Landmines

Other areas are confirmed or suspected to contain explosive remnants of war (ERW), which include both unexploded ordnance (UXO) and abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO). These include former military testing areas, including the former Soviet firing and training ranges at Jeyranchel in the Agstafa region and in Kirdagh; and a former shooting range in Ganja.<sup>5</sup>

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

A 1998 presidential decree established the Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA), which reports to the Deputy Prime Minister as head of the State Commission for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation.<sup>6</sup> In April 1999, ANAMA established the Azerbaijan Mine Action Programme, a joint project of the Government of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).<sup>7</sup> A joint working group, established in December 1999 and consisting of representatives from various ministries, provides regular guidance to ANAMA.<sup>8</sup>

ANAMA is tasked with planning, coordinating, managing, and monitoring mine action in the country. It also conducts demining operations, along with two national operators it contracts: Dayag-Relief Azerbaijan (RA) and the International Eurasia Press Fund (IEPF).<sup>9</sup> No commercial company is active in mine action in Azerbaijan.

ANAMA manages the mine action programme via its headquarters based in Baku, a regional office in Fizuli, a regional training centre in Goygol, and three operational centres, located in Aghjabedi, Agstafa, and Terter.<sup>10</sup>

UNDP provides support to ANAMA, and will continue to do so until 2019, as part of a project to support the institutional capacity of ANAMA for mine/UXO clearance, risk education, victim assistance, international networking, and support to other mine-affected countries.<sup>11</sup>

### Strategic Planning

ANAMA is integrated into the State Social and Economic Development programme. The current mine action strategy is for 2013–18.<sup>12</sup> ANAMA's long-term strategy is to clear the occupied territories as and when they become released.<sup>13</sup>

### Legislation and Standards

As at June 2017, Azerbaijan was still in the process of adopting a mine action law, with draft legislation under review by the Cabinet of Ministers.<sup>14</sup> Once adopted, it will regulate mine action in Azerbaijan, governing issues such as licensing, accreditation, quality assurance (QA), and tender procedures.<sup>15</sup>

Azerbaijan also has its own National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), which were adopted in 2001 and subsequently revised in 2003, 2004, and 2010.<sup>16</sup>

### Operators

As at the end of 2016, ANAMA employed 619 operational and administrative staff and had 44 mine detection dogs (MDDs) and 6 demining machines.<sup>17</sup> Included in this capacity are two national demining non-governmental organisations (NGOs), IEPF and RA, which are contracted for mine clearance. Together they employ 172 operational and administrative staff. ANAMA also has an MDD breeding and training centre, which was built in 2011.<sup>18</sup>

### Quality Management

ANAMA established a National Training Quality Assurance Team in 2004. In 2011, this transitioned into ANAMA's training, survey, and QA division (TSQAD), which is responsible for training and QA. The TSQAD also conducts quality control (QC).<sup>19</sup>

In 2016, 90 QA monitoring visits were undertaken.<sup>20</sup> In addition, external QC inspections were conducted at 89 sites in 2016, with more than 3.46km<sup>2</sup> of land physically checked. One battle area site required re-clearance (83,125m<sup>2</sup>), with 29 items of UXO and 87 related components found to have been missed by the original clearance.<sup>21</sup>

## Information Management

ANAMA uses an older version of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.<sup>22</sup>

## LAND RELEASE

No land containing CMR was reported to have been released by clearance or survey in territory under government control in 2016.<sup>23</sup>

### Battle Area Clearance in 2016

In 2016, ANAMA completed the second phase of the three-phase Azerbaijan National Action Plan (NAP)/NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust fund project, at the former Soviet artillery shooting range in Jeyranchel, in the Agstafa region, on the border with Georgia.<sup>24</sup> In addition, ANAMA continued to implement the Ganja and Kirdagh UXO clearance projects.

During ERW clearance in 2016, ANAMA cleared 100 sites, totalling 50.5km<sup>2</sup>, during which it destroyed 30,201 items of ERW as well as 17 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti-vehicle mine, and 30,201 items of ERW; IEPF cleared 22 sites, totalling nearly 12km<sup>2</sup>, during which it destroyed 2,237 items of ERW; and RA cleared 24 sites, totalling nearly 3.2km<sup>2</sup> during which it destroyed 665 items of ERW.<sup>25</sup> No submunitions were reported to have been destroyed.

## ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

Azerbaijan is neither a state party nor a signatory to the CCM and therefore does not have a specific clearance deadline under Article 4. Nonetheless, it has obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR as soon as possible.

Currently, 90% of mine action in Azerbaijan is nationally funded.<sup>26</sup> ANAMA's long-term strategy is to be ready to start clearance of the occupied territories as and when this is possible.<sup>27</sup>

1 Email from Andrew Moore, then Caucasus and Balkans Desk Officer, HALO Trust, 26 May 2016; and The HALO Trust, "HALO Trust begins emergency clearance in Karabakh", 19 April 2016, at: <https://www.halotrust.org/media-centre/news/halo-begins-emergency-clearance-in-karabakh/>.

2 AzCBL, "Information Bulletin", January 2008.

3 Interview with Nazim Ismayilov, Director, ANAMA, Baku, 2 April 2010; see also Human Rights Watch and Landmine Action, *Banning Cluster Munitions: Government Policy and Practice*, Mines Action Canada, Ottawa, 2009, p. 188.

4 ANAMA, "Saloglu Project", undated, at: [www.anama.gov.az](http://www.anama.gov.az).

5 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 16.

6 Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, Executive Summary.

7 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 11.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 UNDP, "UNDP Mine Action Programme: Azerbaijan", April 2016.

12 Email from Parviz Gidayev, Planning & Development Manager, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 10.

13 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014", p. 5; and GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, Executive Summary.

14 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, Public Relations Officer, ANAMA, 5 June 2017.

15 Email from Parviz Gidayev, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014".

16 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

17 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 11.

18 Ibid., pp. 12 and 14.

19 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", pp. 28 and 30.

20 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 24.

21 Ibid., p. 25.

22 Ibid., p. 32.

23 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017"; and email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 5 June 2017.

24 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 16.

25 Ibid.

26 G. Ahmadov, "Advocating Mine Action to Government of Azerbaijan", Geneva, 19 February 2016, at: <http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gazanfar%20Ahmadov%20Azerbaijan.pdf>.

27 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014"; and GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, Executive Summary.