CUBA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2026

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Unknown

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (m²)	Release in 2024 (m²)
Clearance	Not reported	Not reported
Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported
Non-Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	Not reported	Not reported

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2025:

- None

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Cuba should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.**
- **Cuba should clear anti-personnel (AP) mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, consonant with its obligations under international human rights law.**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority
- No national mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of AP mine contamination in Cuba is unknown but is believed to have remained unchanged for many years. Contamination is concentrated around the United States (US) naval base at Guantánamo Bay, where Cuba maintains minefields on its side of the perimeter. The 117km^2 base is separated from Cuban territory by a heavily fortified perimeter comprising several electrified fences, Cuban AP and anti-tank (AT) minefields, and surveillance systems. The border has been described as one of the most heavily monitored and sealed in the world.[1] No current estimate is available of either the area contaminated or the number of mines remaining on the Cuban side.

Cuba continues to regard these minefields as necessary for national defence. In June 2026, Cuba reiterated that mines emplaced around the Guantánamo Bay perimeter would be maintained for as long as considered necessary and that it could not renounce the use of AP mines while it perceived a continuing threat from the United States.[2] Cuba has also stated that it implements a strict policy to ensure responsible use of AP mines exclusively for defensive purposes and to safeguard national security.[3] It has previously stated that its minefields are marked, fenced, and guarded,[4] although the US Navy reported that the Cuban minefields were laid without precise mapping, which could complicate their eventual clearance.[5]

There is no evidence of recent operational use of AP mines by Cuba elsewhere. However, Cuban state media reporting in 2026 indicates that mine emplacement remains part of military and territorial defence training. In February 2026, *Granma* reported that troops participating in a territorial defence exercise in Mayabeque trained in the installation of AP and AT mines.[6] Other official Cuban media reports in January and April 2026 documented training in the use or emplacement of mines during national defence exercises, including in Guantánamo, although they did not specify the types of mines involved.[7]

The minefields around Guantánamo date from the Cold War. The United States first laid mines around the base in 1961, amid concerns about a possible advance by Cuban forces. It has occupied the base under a lease signed in 1903, which Cuba continues to consider a violation of its national sovereignty. Cuba laid its own minefields outside the base perimeter in 1983, following the US invasion of Grenada, reportedly to deter a possible US incursion.[8]

The US minefields have since been removed. Following a 1996 presidential decision requiring the removal of non-self-destructing AP mines, except those used for training or along the Korean Demilitarized Zone,[9] US Marines removed approximately 50,000 AP and AT mines from the Guantánamo perimeter by 1999 and replaced them with motion and sound sensors.[10] Quality assurance was completed in 2000.[11] Clearance was facilitated by detailed records and the systematic layout and maintenance of the US minefields. Thirteen US Marines were reportedly killed while maintaining the minefields between 1962 and 1990.[12] The clearance did not extend to the Cuban minefields outside the US-controlled perimeter.

Little recent information is available on the humanitarian impact of the remaining Cuban minefields. Older media reports indicate that the minefields have also restricted access by Cubans attempting to reach the US base, with occasional reports of casualties, particularly near Boquerón and Caimanera.[13] A 2008 publication claimed that mines around the base detonated at least monthly, although this has not been independently verified.[14] In February 2018, a wildfire in the approximately 17-mile strip separating the base from Cuban territory reportedly triggered around 1,000 mine explosions and burned approximately 1,700 acres.[15] No more recent reports of mine-related casualties or similar incidents were identified.

1 "Cuba/United States – Guantánamo: a US base of geostrategic importance in the heart of the 'American Mediterranean'", French National Centre for Space Studies (CNES), images taken on 12 October 2019 by the Sentinel-2B satellite, http://bit.ly/4mGY25F; "People of Guantanamo live under the danger of anti-personnel mines", *Martí Noticias*, 4 December 2014, https://bit.ly/3x4vCZD; and "Barbed wire and anti-personnel mines", *Martí Noticias*, 26 January 2012, http://bit.ly/464JExj.

2 Statement of Cuba, UN Human Rights Council, 62nd session, 26 June 2026, https://bit.ly/3Th60ZR.

3 APMBC, "Cuba", accessed 5 September 2026, https://bit.ly/4xhk2st.

4 Statement of the Directorate of Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba, 19 June 2000; and "Cuba's observations on the question of AP landmines" issued as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 71", 14 November 1997, http://bit.ly/4g3plof.

5 "Guantánamo 'minesweepers' perform a delicate task: Deadly devices disabled one by one", *Miami Herald*, 6 March 2018 (original published on 18 March 1999), http://bit.ly/46gAAGH.

6 "Constatan avances en polo productivo de Mayabeque durante Ejercicio Defensivo Territorial", *Granma*, 13 February 2026, https://bit.ly/4yISDB1.

7 "Cuando nos hemos unido, la historia ha demostrado que siempre hemos logrado victoria", *Granma*, 24 January 2026, https://bit.ly/3SPC1YI; and "Universitarios de Cuba; 'cuando el criminal nos apunta...'", *Granma*, 4 April 2026, https://bit.ly/4cuF1k7.

8 "Guantánamo 'minesweepers' perform a delicate task: Deadly devices disabled one by one", *Miami Herald*, 6 March 2018 (original published on 18 March 1999), http://bit.ly/46gAAGH; and "Guantanamo base now free of land mines but US official fear waves of defectors", *Miami Herald*, 6 March 2018, http://bit.ly/45JPlll.

9 Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-48, White House, 26 June 1996, http://bit.ly/45JYPwT; and "US Announces AP Mine Policy", US Department of State archives, 16 May 1996, http://bit.ly/3UV1w8E.

10 "Marines unload deactivated land mines for destruction at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba", US Department of Defence archives, https://bit.ly/3x3BBOf; and "Anti-tank mines are stacked for destruction at Guantanamo Bay", US Department of Defense archives, http://bit.ly/3VfqqA5; and http://bit.ly/4n3OrFW.

11 "Detritus of Conflict: The US Approach to the Humanitarian Problem Posed by Landmines and other Hazardous Remnants of War", US Department of State archives, 18 April 2003, http://bit.ly/4mLdRbI.

12 "Guantánamo 'minesweepers' perform a delicate task: Deadly devices disabled one by one", *Miami Herald*, 6 March 2018 (original published on 18 March 1999), http://bit.ly/46gAAGH.

13 "Informe situa a Cuba como productor de mines AP", *Martí Noticias*, 4 December 2014, http://bit.ly/47W1e93; and "People of Guantanamo live under the danger of AP mines", *Martí Noticias*, 4 December 2014, https://bit.ly/3x4vCZD.

14 "The Cuban mines detonate at least once a month, sometimes starting fires that sweep across the fence line. [Staff Sergeant Kaveh Wooley of the US Marines]... described a fire that started the previous summer and turned into a giant cook-off, with about 30 mines exploding...." D. P. Erikson, *Cuba Wars: Fidel Castro, the United States, and the Next Revolution*, New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008, pp. 196–97.

15 "U.S. and Cuban forces unite to fight a common foe: wildfire at Guantanamo", *USA Today,* 1 March 2018, http://bit.ly/2KytDH9.

Cuba is the only Latin American State that has not adhered to the APMBC.[16] Cuba is party to the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW), including the 1980 Protocol II on landmines, but has not ratified the Amended Protocol II.[17] Consistent with its previous voting, Cuba abstained from voting on UN General Assembly Resolution 80/35 on 1 December 2025, which called for universal adherence to and effective implementation of the APMBC. The resolution was adopted by 159 votes in favour, with only Russia voting against and 19 States abstaining, including Cuba and the United States.[18] Landmine Monitor lists Cuba among 12 States that may still develop, produce, or acquire AP mines. While Cuba is not known to be actively producing AP mines, it has yet to commit to never do so.[19]

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no mine action programme in Cuba.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Cuba has not conducted clearance in its minefields around the US naval base at Guantánamo since it emplaced them in 1983.

16 APMBC, "Universalization", accessed 5 September 2026, https://bit.ly/4xdXEjJ.

17 UN Treaty Collection, status of CCW Protocol II and Amended Protocol II.

18 UN General Assembly, voting record on Resolution 80/35, 1 December 2025.

19 Landmine Monitor 2025, "Production of Antipersonnel Mines".