EGYPT

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Unknown, but medium

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (m²)	Release in 2024 (m²)
Clearance	Unknown	Unknown
Technical Survey	Unknown	Unknown
Non-Technical Survey	Unknown	Unknown

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	Unknown	Unknown

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATOR IN 2025:

- Corps of Military Engineers

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

While the extent of anti-personnel (AP) mined area in Egypt is thought to be considerable, precise details about contamination or progress in survey and clearance are not known. Much of the information that is available is out of date and likely inaccurate. Information posted on the State Information Service website in April 2026 suggested that there were "ongoing demining efforts". No details about AP mine survey and clearance in 2025 were, however, provided.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Egypt should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.**
- **In the meantime, Egypt should clear AP mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, consonant with its obligations under international human rights law.**
- **Egypt should not use AP mines under any circumstances.**
- **Egypt should report publicly and accurately on land release, disaggregating clearance from release through survey.**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Committee for the Supervision of Mine Clearance and the Development of the North West Coast*
- Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the North West Coast (ESDD)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Corps of Military Engineers

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- Not known

* No recent reports mentioning the Committee were identified, which may indicate that it is no longer functioning and that its responsibilities have been transferred to another body, such as the ESDD.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The precise extent of AP mine contamination in Egypt remains unknown, and past estimates have been wholly unreliable. Mines in the Western Desert date back to the Second World War, while mines in the Sinai Peninsula and Eastern Desert are a legacy of wars with Israel between 1956 and 1973.

In August 2016, reports indicated that Islamic State had been harvesting explosives from Second World War mines still uncleared in Egypt. Ambassador Fathy el-Shazly, former head of Egypt's Mine Clearance Secretariat, noted at least ten reports from the military about terrorists using old mines.[1] This was reiterated in June 2017 at a United Nations (UN) Security Council briefing by Egypt's permanent representative to the UN.[2] In January 2018, it was reported that Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, a group aligned with Islamic State since 2014, had been using old mines and caches of explosives left in Sinai to produce improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Egypt faced five major terrorist attacks using such devices in 2017.[3] This underscored the urgency for Egypt to intensify mine clearance.

Landmine Monitor has also reported intermittent and more recent use of improvised AP mines by non-State armed groups (NSAGs), including Islamic State militants in the Sinai, between 2020 and 2022. These include pressure-plate IEDs found by the Egyptian Army in houses and arms caches in early 2022.[4] Tarabin tribesmen have reportedly been killed by mines laid by a group associated with Islamic State in May 2020 and March 2022.[5] A photograph shared on social media in April 2022 reportedly depicts IEDs left by Islamic State militants in the Sinai region, which were cleared by Egyptian soldiers.[6]

Furthermore, the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) database and the Fenix Insight database both contain details of numerous incidents involving IEDs in 2022. These included mines laid by Islamic State targeting the Egyptian military and what are likely to be incidents involving the Union of Sinai Tribes and/or the Union of Sinai Mujahideen.[7] A few reports of possible landmine and IED explosions in North Sinai continued in 2023 and 2024,[8] with the Landmine Monitor identifying a total of three casualties in Egypt in each year.[9] In 2024, the Landmine Monitor reported a total of eight casualties from improvised mines in Egypt.[10]

In April 2026, Egypt's Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Center referenced the delivery of 100 prosthetic limbs to Matrou governorate for mine victims, and a grant of 1.52 million Chinese yuan signed in July 2025 to develop prosthetic systems, but this is likely to refer to support for historic casualties.[11] For more information on casualties, please see the country profile of Egypt on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[12]

Previously, there was evidence that the Egyptian army had also used mines in Sinai. In May 2015, the military told an Egyptian newspaper that it had begun placing landmines around military outposts in Sinai, which resulted in the reported deaths of two militants.[13] There is, however, no indication that Egypt's armed forces have used AP mines in recent years.[14] For more information on use, please see the country profile on Egypt on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[15]

Most of the Western Desert contamination occurred around the location of Second World War battles that took place between the Qattara depression and Alamein on the Mediterranean coast. Other affected areas are around the city of Marsa Matrouh and at Sallum near the Libyan border.[16] In 2016, during a ceremony to mark the opening of a new prosthetic limb centre, the United Kingdom's Ambassador to Egypt announced that all the maps of minefields laid by British and Allied forces during World War II had been handed over.[17] According to the head of the military engineering department, though, the British minefield maps were "sketch maps" and most of the mines were buried randomly.[18] Major General Mahrous Kilani, Head of the General Secretariat for Mine Clearance, reported that while the mine maps are an indication of possible mined areas many mines have been found in areas unmarked on the maps.[19]

Reports of AP mine contamination and release since 2010 include the Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the North West Coast (ESDD) reporting to donors in 2010 that the army had destroyed 2.9 million "mines" while clearing 38km^2 in five areas, leaving "more than 16 million mines" covering an estimated area of 248km^2.[20] In 2013, the army handed over to the Ministries of Housing and of Planning and International Cooperation

1 P. Schwartzstein, "ISIS Is Digging Up Nazi Landmines From World War 2 As Explosives", *Newsweek*, 10 August 2016.
2 UN Security Council meeting, UN doc. SC/12866, 13 June 2017, http://bit.ly/2YSmjPl.
3 "How Egyptian security dealt with IEDs threat?", *Egypt Today*, 1 January 2018, http://bit.ly/2HbRwCe.
4 Landmine Monitor, "Egypt", accessed 30 August 2026, http://bit.ly/3Vtepa4.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
7 ACLED, "Filters: 01/01/2022-31/12/2022, Remote explosive/landmine/IED, Egypt", accessed 20 August 2023, www.acleddata.com; and Fenix Insight database, https://fenix-insight.online/.
8 ACLED, "Filters: 01/01/2023-31/12/2023, Remote explosive/landmine/IED, Egypt", accessed 22 July 2024, www.acleddata.com; and "Landmine explosion kills two children in Egypt's North Sinai", *The New Arab*, 2 June 2024, https://bit.ly/3yaoBwa.
9 Landmine Monitor, "Egypt – Impact", Last updated 18 December 2025, https://bit.ly/3JINKn6.
10 Ibid.
11 "IDSC publishes infographic on Egypt's efforts in landmine clearance", *State Information Service*, 4 April 2026, https://tinyurl.com/y854n7fb.
12 https://the-monitor.org.
13 Landmine Monitor, "Egypt Mine Ban Policy", 15 October 2020.
14 Landmine Monitor, "Egypt", accessed 30 August 2026.
15 https://the-monitor.org.
16 Landmine Monitor, "Egypt – Impact", Last updated 23 April 2025.
17 A. Nayder, "Helping Landmine Victims in Marsa Matrouh – and Preventing More", *Because*, 3 November 2016.
18 UK Parliament website, "Egypt and Libya: Land Mines", written question – 122961, 16 January 2018, http://bit.ly/2Z4gJsB.
19 "MG: We cleared 130,000 acres of mines in El Alamein and there was no single incident", *Times of Egypt*, 26 February 2018, Unofficial translation.
20 "Egypt Mine Action Project Northwest Coast: Phase I Accomplishments", Presentation by Amb. Fathy El Shazly, Director, Executive Secretariat, Cairo, August 2010.

an area of some 105km^2 in the Western Desert, which it had reportedly cleared of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). Further details of clearance were not reported. Minister of Housing Tarek Wafiq was quoted as saying that, with the completion of the project, one-fifth of the Western Desert had been cleared.[21]

A joint project between the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and Egypt entitled "ESDD and Mine Action Programme: Mine Action" was initially conducted in two phases from 2007 to 2014 and from 2015 to 2017.[22] The EU provided €4.7 million and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is also reported to have provided funding for the second phase.[23] Between 2014 and 2018, 1,674km^2 of the 1,950km^2 total released in the two phases was reportedly released, far exceeding the target of 902km^2.[24] In August 2017, it was reported that negotiations had begun on a third phase of the project to allocate $5 million to clear the rest of the northern coast and the Sinai peninsula.[25] As at July 2020, an area of 2,182km^2 is said to have been released from the reported 5,100km^2 of mined area since the beginning of the project in 2009.[26]

In 2014, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had reported that, in terms of the number of items of explosive ordnance (EO), Egypt was one of the most heavily contaminated countries in the world. According to NATO, AP mines and explosive remnants of war can be found at depths of more than 1.5 metres, and are in areas contaminated with fragments of metal.[27]

Available data on contamination and clearance are, however, generally unreliable (see section below, "Land Release Outputs and Progress towards Completion" for the most recent information identified on clearance). The Egyptian government claimed in 2009, for instance, that 17 million mines remain in the Western Desert and another 5.5 million are in Sinai and the Eastern Desert.[28] In an April 2009 assessment, though, the UN Mine Action Team cautioned that data needed careful analysis to avoid reporting areas that had already been cleared and thereby misrepresenting the problem.[29]

More than a decade later, the Egyptian authorities were still citing similarly high contamination figures. In a statement to the UN General Assembly in 2021, Egypt claimed, incorrectly, that it was contaminated with 22 million AP mines. The figure had not changed despite the European Union (EU)-funded clearance and land release by the Egyptian authorities of around one fifth of the suspected area of contamination.[30]

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Egypt has not acceded to the APMBC. It reiterated its reservations regarding the Convention at the UN General Assembly in November 2023 and again in November 2024, arguing, among other factors, that it lacks balance between humanitarian concerns and possible legitimate military uses. It also criticised the APMBC for not assigning responsibility for clearance to those who laid mines.[31]

Egypt's mine action programme has been developing extremely slowly since 2007 and includes only the basic structures and institutions to regulate, coordinate, and implement mine action activities. As at 2015, the programme consisted of a three-tier structure that comprised the National Committee for the Supervision of Mine Clearance and the Development of the North West Coast; the ESDD; and the Army Corps of Military Engineers, which has overall responsibility for demining operations in Egypt.[32] It is unclear whether the National Committee continues to function. Landmine Monitor has reported that coordination of mine action continues to be limited.[33]

In 2017, Egypt's Minister of International Cooperation alongside a representative of the Ministry of Defence announced the establishment of the National Centre for Landmine Action and Sustainable Development (which was reported to have replaced the ESDD).[34] The centre set out to release 600km^2 of mined area in the North West Coast.[35] However, no references to this body have since been identified, and the ESDD continued to be referenced after 2017. The third phase of the EU-funded UNDP project with Egypt (referred to above), is reported to have supported the expansion of the organisational structure of the ESDD, which was mandated with coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the development plan and humanitarian

21 N. al Behairy, "20% of the Sahara in West Egypt cleared of landmines", *Daily News*, 20 March 2013.

22 UNDP, "Support to the North West Coast Development and Mine Action Plan", undated.

23 "UNDP, USAID provide EGP 13.8m for WWII landmines clearance programme", *Daily News Egypt*, 30 May 2015, https://bit.ly/4naWa59.

24 UNDP, "MoIC, EU and UNDP Egypt Joint Statement: International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action", 4 April 2023, https://tinyurl.com/47p5he5c; and UNDP, "EU-UNDP Partnership: From Mines to Milestones", 9 May 2024, https://bit.ly/41ycp3W.

25 "Egypt to invest $17.5M in Anti-Mines Action Project", *APA News*, 11 August 2017.

26 Executive Secretariat website, accessed 5 July 2020.

27 NATO/OTAN, "Egyptian desert: new technologies for landmine detection", 3 April 2014 (last updated 17 September 2014), https://bit.ly/4fgUsMf.

28 State Information Services, "Landmines in Egypt", 20 July 2009; M. Abdel Salam, "First phase of demining in Egypt complete", Bikyamasr (blog), 18 April 2010.

29 UN Mine Action Team, "Egypt Mine Action Inter-agency Assessment", 14–18 April 2009, p. 11.

30 Landmine Monitor, "Egypt", accessed 23 July 2024, https://bit.ly/4fcKawO.

31 UN, "First Committee Approves New Resolution on Lethal Autonomous Weapons, as Speaker Warns 'An Algorithm Must Not Be in Full Control of Decisions Involving Killing'", Press release, UN doc. GA/DIS/3731, 1 November 2023, https://bit.ly/4dbYUu5; and Statement of Egypt, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, video record, 6 November 2024, 00:31:59, https://tinyurl.com/2vhufvhr; see also "Landmines in Egypt", *State Information Service*, 18 January 2022; Landmine Monitor, "Egypt", accessed 30 August 2026; and *Landmine Monitor Report 2025*, https://tinyurl.com/muz3zy54, p. 16.

32 UNDP Project Document, p. 6, January 2025.

33 Landmine Monitor, "Egypt – Impact", Last updated 23 April 2025.

34 Egypt continues to suffer from WWII landmines", *Mada*, 4 April 2017, https://tinyurl.com/538ft7pd.

35 "Establishment of National Center for Mines Action and Sustainable Development completed: Nasr", *Daily News Egypt*, 23 January 2017, http://bit.ly/3dqbcmu.

mine action activities in the North West Coast.[36] The EU-Egypt Innovation Fund is also reported to have funded research into the digital mapping of minefields.[37]

Trained deminers from the Corps of Military Engineers conduct manual and mechanical demining. In 2020, the ESDD was said to have procured 461 mine detectors, 355 demining suits and protective helmets, a Casspir armoured vehicle with the "Mine Lab" detecting device, and five Amtrak vehicles.[38] NATO has provided training to the Egyptian armed forces on IEDs, alongside its wider efforts to support Egypt in mine and UXO detection.[39] Funding was also used for capacity building, establishing a quality management unit, and supporting the creation of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.[40]

In 2019, Egypt's Minister of Investment and International Cooperation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) on mine clearance and development of Egypt's North West coast. The MoU provides a cooperation framework to enhance capacity building for the Egyptian mine action programme, but according to the GICHD in early 2022, there had been no activity since the signing of the MoU.[41] In March 2022, the ESDD did participate in an Arab Regional Cooperation Programme (ARCP) IMSMA Core Workshop organised by the GICHD in Beirut,[42] and the same year, the GICHD listed Egypt as one of the countries where it had supported the regional exchange and dissemination of good practice.[43] In addition, Egypt attended at least one regional GICHD event in Jordan in 2024.[44]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

It is not known whether Egypt takes into consideration gender and diversity during any planning and tasking of survey and clearance of mines. In its annual report for 2022, however, the GICHD reported that the ESDD had adopted approaches developed, promoted or shared by the GICHD to reduce the risks from EO in a "gender and diversity sensitive and responsive manner".[45]

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

It is not known how, if at all, the environment is taken into consideration during planning and tasking of survey and clearance of mines in Egypt in order to minimise potential harm from clearance.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Egypt has not reported in detail on its release of mined areas in recent years. The most up-to-date information identified comes from limited data published in 2022 and 2026. In August 2022, a spokesperson for the Egyptian Armed Forces said that the army had destroyed "more than 25 million mines, explosive objects and ammunition over the past years", including in areas around El Alamein, and the Hammam canal, although no detailed information was provided on the timeframe, number of mines or amount of area cleared.[46]

Very similar information was provided by the Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Center in April 2026, when it published an infographic indicating that Egypt "cleared more than 25 million landmines, explosive devices, and wartime remnants from World War II, primarily located in the Western Desert, which accounts for about 22% of the country's total area".[47] The source indicates that clearance is continuing, noting that "ongoing demining efforts have enabled the implementation of several development projects, including the construction of the Hammam canal, the clearance and development of the El Alamein area and land preparation for the Nuclear Power Plants Authority at Dabaa", allowing for "economic and investment projects, supporting sustainable development".[48]

As a State not party to the APMBC, Egypt does not have a treaty deadline and it has not set a target date for the completion of AP mine clearance.

36 The Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the North West Coast website, accessed 5 July 2020.

37 MineProbe, "EU-Egypt Innovation Fund – Grant Scheme 1 – EuropeAid/132-715/M/ACT/EG", undated, accessed 23 July 2024, https://tinyurl.com/mvw78jak.

38 Executive Secretariat website, accessed 5 July 2020.

39 NATO/OTAN, "NATO trains Egyptian experts in improvised explosive devices investigation", Last updated 4 December 2017, https://bit.ly/3SfQIRh.

40 Executive Secretariat website, accessed 5 July 2020.

41 Egypt, Switzerland sign agreement on demining North West Coast", State Information Service, 14 November 2019; "Egypt, Switzerland sign agreement on demining North West Coast", Egypt Independent, 16 November 2019; and email from Boris Ohanyan, Junior Programme Officer, GICHD, 22 March 2022.

42 Email from Boris Ohanyan, GICHD, 22 March 2022.

43 GICHD, "Annual Report 2022", https://bit.ly/3I2yK2S, p. 13.

44 GICHD, Performance Report 2024, https://tinyurl.com/mvsts367, p. 12.

45 GICHD, "Annual Report 2022".

46 "Egyptian army has cleared 25 million WWII landmines, explosives from Western Desert: Spox", *Ahram Online,* 31 August 2022, https://bit.ly/47R1gfQ; and "Egypt removes 25 million mines planted during World War II", *Daily News Egypt,* 1 September 2022, https://bit.ly/3Pd4MKp.

47 "IDSC publishes infographic on Egypt's efforts in landmine clearance", *State Information Service,* 4 April 2026.

48 Ibid.