

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2020
IN SERIOUS VIOLATION OF THE CONVENTION
(NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE AND RENEWED DEMINING NEEDED TO RETURN TO COMPLIANCE)

KEY DATA

**ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
 MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM**

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

10_{KM²}

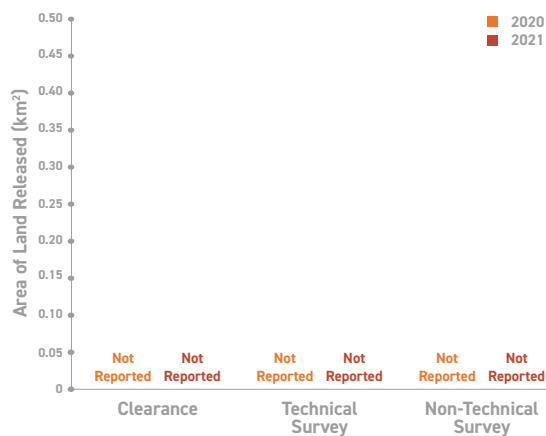
AP MINE
 CLEARANCE IN 2021

NOT REPORTED

AP MINES
 DESTROYED IN 2021

NOT REPORTED

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Eritrea's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline expired on 31 December 2020 after it was granted an interim extension in November 2019. Eritrea was expected to submit a more detailed extension request by 31 March 2020 but, as at September 2022, had neither done so nor sought a further extension. It remains in serious violation of the Convention. Eritrea has also not submitted an Article 7 transparency report since 2014.

Eritrea is wilfully failing to comply with its obligation under Article 5 of the APMBC to complete clearance as soon as possible. There is no indication of any demining since the end of 2013, which, without exceptional justification, would itself amount to a serious violation of the Convention. At the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties it was suggested, in accordance with Article 8(2) of the Convention, that States Parties should seek clarification on compliance by Eritrea through the good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Eritrea needs immediately to take action with a view to returning to compliance with the APMBC. Failing this, the States Parties should initiate the procedure under Article 8 of the Convention to seek clarification through the United Nations Secretary-General and then, if none is forthcoming, mandate an obligatory fact-finding mission.
- The authorities in Asmara should ensure that release of mined areas confirmed or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines are undertaken as a matter of urgency.
- Eritrea should urgently submit an Article 5 deadline extension request with an up-to-date list of all confirmed or suspected mined areas and a detailed timeline of activities planned for the period sought.
- Eritrea must urgently submit its outstanding annual Article 7 reports, the latest of which was due by 30 April 2022.
- Eritrea should reconsider its policy of excluding international technical assistance in mine action, which would support efficient land release and re-open international funding paths.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	4	The last estimate of mine contamination in Eritrea dates back to the end of 2013, when Eritrea reported that 434 mined areas remained with a size of 33.4km ² . All area is reportedly suspected hazardous area (SHA). Mine Action Review is unaware of any indication of progress in land release or updated information on the extent of contamination since this time.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	3	3	Eritrea's mine action programme is entirely nationally managed. The Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA) is believed to be still responsible for mine clearance.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	3	It is not known if Eritrea has policies in place relating to gender and mine action.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	0	1	Details on Eritrea's current information management system are not known. However, its lack of submissions of Article 7 reports over the past seven years is a violation of the Convention. It has failed to provide any updates on the status of its mine action obligations in recent years.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	1	1	Recent details on Eritrea's planning and tasking system are not available.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	3	3	Eritrea is reported to have national mine action standards dating back to 2012. The EDA was responsible for the implementation of quality management activities.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	0	1	Eritrea seemingly made no progress in land release to meet its obligations under its second Article 5 extension period. In 2014, Eritrea reported it would need a third extension. Eritrea submitted an interim request for a third extension in November 2019 with the apparent intention of making a more detailed request by 31 March 2020. As at September 2022, no such request was forthcoming and Eritrea remains in violation of the Convention both for failing to work towards the completion of mine survey and clearance as soon as possible, and for not respecting the procedural provisions of the Article 5 of the Convention.
Average Score	2.1	2.4	Overall Programme Performance: VERY POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Eritrea Demining Agency (EDA)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Engineering units of the Eritrean Armed Forces

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Eritrea is affected by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) dating back to the Second World War, but largely as the result of the struggle for independence in 1962–91 and its armed conflict with Ethiopia in 1998–2000.

In May 2015, in response to Mine Action Review's request for updated information on the state of contamination and mine action activities in Eritrea, the Deputy General Manager of the Eritrea Demining Agency reported "no significant progress registered by the EDA currently". He claimed, though, that the EDA was being reorganised in an effort to make "better progress".¹ Since then, the EDA has not responded to repeated requests from Mine Action Review for further information, most recently in the first half of 2022.

¹ Email from Habtom Seghid, Deputy General Manager, Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA), 6 May 2015.

The last estimate of mine contamination in Eritrea dates back to the end of 2013, when Eritrea reported 434 mined areas covering an estimated 33.4km².² This was a two-thirds reduction on the earlier estimate of 99km² of June 2011,³ and significantly lower than the 129km² identified by the 2004 landmine impact survey.⁴

Table 1: Mined area by region (at end 2013)⁵

Zoba (region)	SHAs	Estimated area (m ²)
Semienawi Keih Bahri	166	9,462,537
Anseba	144	10,230,940
Gash Barka	63	6,252,951
Debub	29	3,894,036
Maakel	24	2,423,325
Debubawi Keih Bahri	8	1,169,029
Totals	434	33,432,818

SHA = Suspected hazardous area

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Eritrea mine action programme is entirely nationally managed. The EDA, established in July 2002, is responsible for policy development, regulation of mine action, and the conduct of mine clearance operations. The EDA is believed to report directly to the Office of the President.

Eritrea projected that costs during its Article 5 extension period to 1 February 2020 would amount to more than US\$7 million, all to be raised nationally.⁶ In 2011–13, Eritrea had managed to raise only \$257,000 annually. Eritrea acknowledged at the time that its progress in clearing mines would be slow due to its lack of resources, but it has never been clear how Eritrea intended to secure the funding for its survey and clearance activities, particularly in light of its policy of not accepting international technical assistance.⁷

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 Eritrea in order to minimise potential harm from clearance.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Eritrea did not respond to Mine Action Review's inquiries in 2022 about the national mine action programme's policies relating to gender and diversity.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Details on Eritrea's current information management system are not known. However, its failure to submit Article 7 reports over the past seven years is a violation of the Convention. As at September 2022, Eritrea had yet to submit its latest Article 7 report covering 2021. It has also failed to provide an updated Article 5 work plan or detailed extension request.

2 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7. This was despite finding 49 previously unrecorded suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in five regions across an estimated area of 9km² during non-technical survey in 2013. Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted by the President of the 13th Meeting of the States Parties on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extensions, 20 June 2014, p. 2.

3 Eritrea's reply to questions from the Article 5 Analysing Group about its Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 7 June 2011, p. 2.

4 Survey Action Center (SAC), "Landmine Impact Survey, Eritrea, Final Report", May 2005, p. 7.

5 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

6 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 11.

7 Statement of Eritrea, Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 6 December 2013.

PLANNING AND TASKING

There is no recent information on how Eritrea plans its demining operations. Re-survey during the second extension period was planned to involve both technical and non-technical survey of all remaining mined areas across six regions, and to run concurrently with clearance in priority areas in the Anseba, Maakel, and Semienawi Keih Bahri regions.⁸

Eritrea submitted an interim Article 5 deadline extension request on 11 November 2019, which was granted at the Fourth Review Conference in November 2019. The request did not contain any updated information on the extent of remaining mined area or on Eritrea's plans to address it. Eritrea committed to submit a detailed follow-on extension request by 31 March 2020, but as at September 2022 had still to do so.⁹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Eritrea reportedly has national mine action standards (NMAS) that date back at least to 2012. It is not known if any updates to the standards have been made in the ten years since. It was reported that the EDA was responsible for the implementation of quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) activities.¹⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In the past, demining has been primarily conducted by the engineering units of the Eritrean defence forces under the supervision of the EDA.¹¹ According to its 2014 Article 5 deadline extension request, Eritrea planned to deploy "at least" five demining teams during its second extension period.¹²

Since the expulsion of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in 2005, the authorities have not allowed international operators to conduct survey or clearance in Eritrea.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Under its 2014 extension request, Eritrea projected that up to 15.4km² of mined area could be cleared within five years. It reported that 67.3km² of contaminated area had been cancelled through non-technical survey and that 5.7km² was cleared over 38 mined areas in 2011–13.¹³

Eritrea has not provided any updates to States Parties to the APMB, nor responded to Mine Action Review requests for information on any mine action activities (including survey) undertaken since 2014. In 2013, Eritrea had reported release of 157 SHAs totalling 33.5km², leaving 385 mined areas of close to 24.5km² to be surveyed.¹⁴ Forty-nine new mined areas with a total size of 9km² were discovered in five of the country's six regions during non-technical survey in 2013: Anseba, Dehub, Gash Barka, Maakel, and Semienawi Keih Bahri.¹⁵

Likewise, Eritrea has not made public any information on any mine clearance undertaken in 2021 or earlier years. In 2013, Eritrea seemingly cleared approx. 2.26km² of mined area, almost twice the amount cleared in 2012 (1.2km²).¹⁶ The number of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines destroyed in 2013 was not reported.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

As stated, no land release output, whether through survey or clearance, was reported in 2021.

8 Statement of Eritrea, Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Geneva, 9 April 2014.

9 Interim Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 11 November 2019, pp. 2–3.

10 Article 7 Report (covering 2012), Form F, p. 5.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., p. 10.

13 Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 20 June 2014, p. 2.

14 Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 23 January 2014, p. 7.

15 Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 20 June 2014, p. 2.

16 Article 7 Report (covering 2012), Form F, p. 10.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

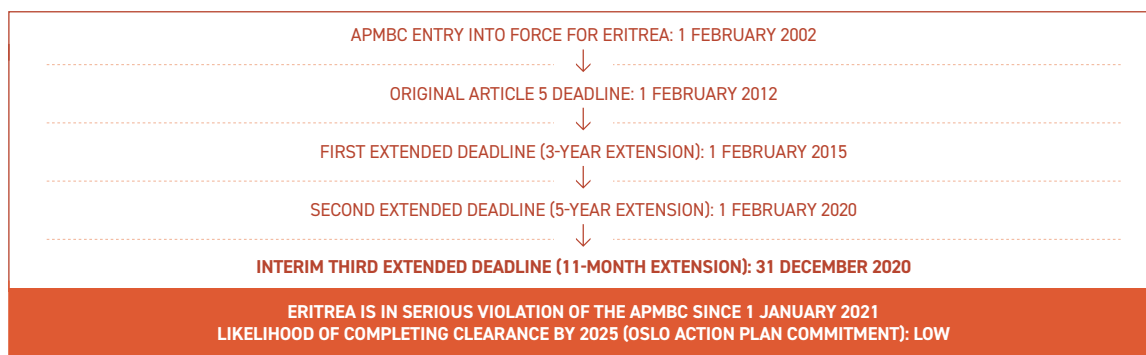


Table 2: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2021	N/R
2020	N/R
2019	N/R
2018	N/R
2017	N/R
Total	N/R

N/R = Not reported

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the three-year extension granted by States Parties in 2011, a five-year extension granted in 2014, and an interim 11-month extension in 2019), Eritrea was required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2020. It did not do so and continues to be in serious violation of the Convention.

Eritrea submitted its last extension request in November 2019, just before the Fourth APMBC Review Conference. In January 2014, Eritrea had previously secured a second Article 5 deadline extension to continue clearance and to complete re-survey of SHAs. The States Parties granted Eritrea its extension request, but noted that five additional years beyond Eritrea's previous February 2015 deadline "appeared to be a long period of time to meet this objective".¹⁷

In the interim extension request submitted on 11 November 2019, just two weeks before the start of the Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Eritrea reported that it had not gained any clarity on the remaining anti-personnel mine contamination during the second extension period as Eritrea's demining capacity had been diverted to

other government development programmes, such as construction and agriculture, and that mine action had faced financial and resource shortfalls and required external assistance to continue operations. Eritrea believes that it has the necessary experience and expertise to address the challenges but will require international support.

As at November 2019, the EDA was said to be in the process of restructuring and an interim request was submitted as no information could be provided on outstanding contamination, survey or clearance. Eritrea claimed it was planning to submit a more detailed extension request by 31 March 2020 with information on remaining mine contamination, progress made and a detailed work plan for implementation.¹⁸ As at September 2022, however, no further extension request had been submitted.

At the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2021, the States Parties collectively expressed grave concern that Eritrea has not engaged in a cooperative dialogue and remains in a situation of non-compliance. The Meeting noted that if a cooperative dialogue is not established and the current status of non-compliance resolved then States Parties should consider seeking clarification and resolving questions relating to compliance by Eritrea through the Secretary-General of the United Nations in accordance with Article 8.2 of the Convention.¹⁹

In their national statements on mine clearance at the Meeting, Germany had strongly urged Eritrea to reengage with the Convention while Austria, Canada, and Norway supported the idea to collectively consider invoking Article 8(2). Canada urged Eritrea to submit an extension request as soon as possible, which it said "would be good not only for the achievement of the Convention's objectives, but also for the recognition of the norm it establishes". Norway regretted that the "situation of non-compliance and lack of meaningful dialogue [from Eritrea] hurts the credibility of the Convention."

17 Decision on Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Third APMBC Review Conference, Maputo, 26 June 2014.

18 Interim Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 11 November 2019, pp. 2-3.

19 Draft Final Report of the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC, 18 November 2021.

The Committee on Article 5 Implementation reports that, in April 2022, one of the Convention's Special Envoys, His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al Hussein, met with Amanuel Giorgio, Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations in New York to discuss the situation of non-compliance by Eritrea. During the meeting, the Special Envoy and the Implementation Support Unit recalled the decision of the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties and highlighted the support available to Eritrea to overcome the current impasse.²⁰

Serious concern over Eritrea's continued non-compliance was voiced again by numerous states and civil society organisations at the APMBC Intersessional Meetings in Geneva in June 2022. States again urged Eritrea to re-engage and several put forward the suggestion to collectively consider invoking Article 8(2).

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

As at September 2022, Eritrea had not provided any information on whether it has made any provision for a sustainable capacity to address previously unknown mined areas following completion.

20 Preliminary Observations of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20-22 June 2022, p. 2.