

# JORDAN

**ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MAY 2012**  
(NEEDS TO REQUEST EXTENSION)

## PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

For 2015

<b>Problem understood</b>	7
<b>Target date for completion of mine clearance</b>	5
<b>Targeted clearance</b>	6
<b>Efficient clearance</b>	6
<b>National funding of programme</b>	5
<b>Timely clearance</b>	5
<b>Land release system in place</b>	6
<b>National mine action standards</b>	7
<b>Reporting on progress</b>	6
<b>Improving performance</b>	6
<b>PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE</b>	5.9

## PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

Jordan doubled its operational capacity from two teams to four in October 2015, a welcome step that should help increase the area of land verified and released. However, this capacity is still not sufficient for Jordan to meet its own pledge to verify, sample, and release remaining areas in the Jordan Valley by the end of 2017. Furthermore, Jordan has yet to acknowledge that it is in violation of Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 until such time that it seeks and is granted by states parties a new deadline.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Jordan should, without further delay, request a new extension to its APMBC Article 5 deadline for the period through to completion of all demining to humanitarian standards.
- Jordan should commit more national resources to its land release programme and increase the number of teams deployed for verification and demining.

## CONTAMINATION

Jordan is contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Contamination is primarily the result of the 1948 partition of Palestine, the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict, the 1970 civil war, and the 1975 confrontation with Syria. Military training ranges and cross-border smuggling have added to the ERW problem.

Jordan declared that it had fulfilled its Article 5 clearance obligations on 24 April 2012, having determined that no areas under its jurisdiction or control remained in which anti-personnel mines were known or suspected.<sup>1</sup>

However, in formally declaring completion of its Article 5 obligations at the Twelfth Meeting of States Parties in December 2012, Jordan noted that: "While all mined areas that Jordan had made every effort to identify were cleared by 24 April 2012, Jordan, as a responsible State Party, has proceeded with verification efforts in two parts of the country, with these verification efforts having resulted in the discovery of additional mined areas."<sup>2</sup> This pertains first to the need for verification in the Jordan Valley, as earlier clearance by the Jordanian Armed Forces' Royal Engineering Corps (REC) did not comply with national and international standards and was not subject to quality control; and second to verification that is needed along Jordan's northern border, due

to a considerable discrepancy (estimated to be more than 10,000 mines<sup>3</sup>) between the recorded number of emplaced mines and the number actually cleared. The difference is said to be due to the migration of mines outside identified areas due to flooding and terrain fluctuations, detonations,<sup>4</sup> and unrecorded clearance operations by the army or by smugglers.<sup>5</sup>

As at the end of 2015, the total area in need of verification for missing mines was just over 7km<sup>2</sup>, across 113 areas. This comprised 4.2km<sup>2</sup> across 95 areas in the Jordan Valley and 2.85km<sup>2</sup> across 18 areas in the northern borders.<sup>6</sup>

With respect to the Jordan Valley, Jordan reported in its December 2012 declaration of Article 5 completion that 5km<sup>2</sup> remained to be verified in an effort expected to take two years.<sup>7</sup> As at May 2013, the estimated area requiring verification had fallen to 4.4km<sup>2</sup>,<sup>8</sup> before rising to 4.6km<sup>2</sup> in June 2014,<sup>9</sup> and to 4.85km<sup>2</sup> as at the end of 2014.<sup>10</sup> In its 2015–20 National Plan, Jordan reported that 5.4km<sup>2</sup> remained to be sampled, verified, and released according to national standards.<sup>11</sup> Most recently, Jordan reported that as at end 2015, 4.2km<sup>2</sup> across 95 areas still needed verification in the Jordan Valley.<sup>12</sup>

1 Declaration by Jordan of completion of implementation of Article 5, APMBC Twelfth Meeting of States Parties, 3–7 December 2012 [hereafter, Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion].

2 Ibid.

3 Email from Mikael Bold, Programme Manager, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 12 February 2012. NPA estimated the number of mines missing from the mine belt at between 9,345 and 10,083.

4 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.

5 Email from Mikael Bold, Programme Manager, NPA, 12 February 2012.

6 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), p. 4; and email from Mohammad Breikat, National Director, NCDR, 4 September 2016. However, there is a discrepancy in Jordan's latest Article 7 report (for 2015), which reports that a total of 113 in the Jordan Valley require clearance/

verification. According to the NCDR, the correct figure is 95 (113 refers to the total number of areas across both the Jordan Valley and the northern borders (18 areas). Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 4 September 2016.

7 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.

8 Statement of Jordan, APMBC Intersessional Meetings (Standing Committee on Mine Action), Geneva, 29 May 2013.

9 Statement of Jordan, APMBC Third Review Conference, Maputo, June 2014.

10 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 22 March 2015.

11 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.

12 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 4 September 2016.

The Jordan Valley is highly fertile, and many affected areas still awaiting verification could be used for agriculture once they are released. Completion of verification and clearance would also help to reduce the threat to local communities, contribute to the government's poverty reduction strategy, and help demilitarise border areas, supporting peacebuilding efforts.<sup>13</sup>

With respect to the northern borders, in its 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion, Jordan reported that some 6.9km<sup>2</sup> remained to be verified, and that the process being undertaken by NPA had been delayed for security reasons.<sup>14</sup> NPA's verification procedure involved a mixture of visual inspection of areas adjacent to the mine belt, ground preparation with mechanical assets and limited involvement of manual deminers, and full technical survey of areas where evidence and experience pointed to a risk of contamination.<sup>15</sup> By May 2013, the estimated area needing verification had been reduced to around 5km<sup>2</sup>, but verification by NPA had been halted as of February 2013 because of the security situation.<sup>16</sup> In its 2015–20 National Plan, Jordan reported that 3.7km<sup>2</sup> remained to be verified and inspected by quality control (QC) teams.<sup>17</sup> Most recently, Jordan reported that, as at the end of 2015, just over 2.8km<sup>2</sup> across 18 areas along the northern borders, still needed verification.<sup>18</sup> Verification operations in the north remained suspended as at August 2016, due to the Syrian crisis.<sup>19</sup>

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Jordan established the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR) under a Royal Decree, which the government subsequently incorporated into law.<sup>20</sup> NCDR's board of directors includes representatives of the Jordanian Armed Forces, the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), landmine survivors, and the media.<sup>21</sup> The NCDR did not, though, become fully operational until 2004, when a new administration, chaired by Prince Mired Raad Zeid al-Hussein, was appointed.<sup>22</sup> The NCDR is responsible for coordinating, accrediting, regulating, and quality-assuring all mine action organisations, as well as for fundraising.<sup>23</sup> It is also responsible for ensuring mine action is integrated into the country's wider development strategies.<sup>24</sup>

### Strategic Planning

The NCDR's 2010–15 National Plan, published in June 2010, aimed to complete clearance of all known mines, including 65,000 mines from the northern border, by May 2012, and to clear all ERW by December 2012.<sup>25</sup> Jordan had planned to complete verification and clearance in the Jordan Valley by the end of 2015, but later said the date of completion would depend on available resources.<sup>26</sup>

The NCDR's current 2015–20 National Plan aims to verify, sample, and release the remaining 5.4km<sup>2</sup> in the Jordan Valley within 36 months (by the end of 2017), by deploying six manual clearance teams and one mechanical

demining team at a projected cost of US\$2 million.<sup>27</sup> Resuming verification and release of the remaining 3.7km<sup>2</sup> along the northern border with Syria will depend on the security situation but, according to the plan, would require one year's work with three manual teams and one mechanical team, at an expected cost of \$1 million.<sup>28</sup> The plan also aims to eliminate all ERW contamination by 2017.<sup>29</sup> The NCDR prioritises populated areas and areas in need of development for verification.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, Jordan's national plan reports that the NCDR will transition from a national institution focusing largely on its own mine clearance, to one that will concentrate on assisting other conflict-affected countries to overcome the challenges of mine action and ERW removal.<sup>31</sup>

### Operators

The verification and demining operations in Jordan are conducted by the NCDR and REC. As at September 2015, there were two operational teams, totalling 17 deminers. In October 2015, this increased to four operational teams, totalling 35 deminers.<sup>32</sup>

In addition, the NCDR has one mechanical asset, but this was not used in 2015, as there were said to be no areas to which the machine could be usefully deployed.<sup>33</sup>

13 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2015–20", Amman, undated.

14 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.

15 Email from Jamal Odibat, Operations Reporting Officer, NCDR, 8 May 2014.

16 Statement of Jordan, APMBC Intersessional Meetings (Standing Committee on Mine Action), Geneva, 29 May 2013; and Third APMBC Review Conference, Maputo, June 2014.

17 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2015–20", Amman, undated.

18 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015).

19 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.

20 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.

21 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2005–2009", Amman, June 2005, pp. 1–2.

22 Ibid.; and Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.

23 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2005–2009", Amman, June 2005, pp. 1–2.

24 Email from Muna Alalul, NCDR, 31 July 2011.

25 NCDR, "2010–2015 NCDR National Plan", undated but June 2010, p. 3.

26 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 22 March 2015.

27 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.

31 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.

32 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.

33 Ibid.

## LAND RELEASE

In 2015, Jordan released 0.65km<sup>2</sup> of land,<sup>34</sup> which is in line with the 0.6km<sup>2</sup> it expected to release during the year.<sup>35</sup> Operations verified and released 30 areas in the Jordan Valley, destroying 170 anti-personnel mines, 4 anti-vehicle mines, and 76 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO).<sup>36</sup>

The land released in 2015 is an increase over the 0.55km<sup>2</sup> released in 2014,<sup>37</sup> progress that was ascribed to increased operational capacity in the last quarter of 2015.<sup>38</sup>

## ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Given Jordan's recognition that mined areas remain, and the continued discovery and clearance of mines in areas it has verified, it is clear that Jordan still has outstanding Article 5 survey and clearance obligations. As Jordan does not currently have an extension period granted by states parties, it is in violation of the APMBC.

Jordan declared completion of its Article 5 obligations on 24 April 2012, just ahead of its 1 May 2012 Convention deadline, in accordance with the three-year extension request granted by states parties in 2008. It submitted its formal declaration of completion to the Twelfth Meeting of States Parties in December 2012.<sup>39</sup> On announcing completion, however, Prince Mired acknowledged that "a residual risk could remain in areas where landmines have been emplaced",<sup>40</sup> and noted that verification efforts had resulted in the discovery of additional mined areas.<sup>41</sup> The verification efforts, which are ongoing in the Jordan Valley, and which are currently suspended along the northern border due to insecurity, continue to result in the discovery and clearance of mined areas.<sup>42</sup>

In August 2016, Jordan informed Mine Action Review that its Article 5 issue "will be discussed during the next APMBC Meeting of States Parties",<sup>43</sup> which is being held in Santiago, Chile, from 28 November to 2 December 2016.

According to its 2015–20 National Plan, Jordan would need three years to finish the verification process, aiming for completion by December 2017.<sup>44</sup> However, the head of the NCDR has acknowledged that it may not reach this target, given that the National Plan assumed a capacity of six national teams from 1 January 2015, which is less than current capacity.<sup>45</sup> The doubling of operational capacity in October 2015, from two teams to four, was a welcome development, and should increase the number of areas verified and released in 2016.<sup>46</sup> However, it is still short of the six teams specified in Jordan's 2015–2020 National Mine Action Plan.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, resumption and completion of verification along the northern borders is also contingent on an improvement in the security situation, and as at August 2016 verification activities remained suspended.<sup>48</sup>

In 2015, the Jordanian government provided US\$300,000 towards to the cost of the NCDR, and US\$100,000 for verification of areas.<sup>49</sup> Jordan received an additional US\$300,000 from South Korea and US\$100,000 from Taiwan in 2015 to continue verification work in the Jordan Valley.<sup>50</sup>

34 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015).

35 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 22 March 2015.

36 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015); and email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.

37 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 22 March 2015.

38 Ibid., 25 August 2016.

39 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.

40 "Jordan becomes the first Middle Eastern country free of all known landmines", Press release, 24 April 2012.

41 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.

42 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015); and CCW Amended Protocol II, Form B (for 2015).

43 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.

44 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.

45 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.

46 Ibid.

47 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated, p. 13.

48 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.

49 Ibid.

50 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), p. 6.