

JORDAN

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MAY 2012
(IN VIOLATION OF THE DEADLINE)

MINE ACTION PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

For 2016

For 2015

Problem understood	7	7
Target date for completion of mine clearance	5	5
Targeted clearance	6	6
Efficient clearance	6	6
National funding of programme	5	5
Timely clearance	6	5
Land release system in place	6	6
National mine action standards	7	7
Reporting on progress	6	6
Improving performance	7	6
PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE	6.1	5.9

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

Jordan doubled the area of land verified and released in 2016, thanks to a doubling of its operational capacity from two teams to four in October 2015 and throughout 2016. 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 will remain in violation of Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 until such time as it seeks and is granted by states parties a new clearance deadline.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Jordan should, without further delay, request a new extension to its 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 to six, as foreseen in its current strategic mine action plan.**
- **Jordan should revise its strategic plan to reflect the fact that it is not on target to complete verification and release of remaining mined areas in the Jordan Valley by the end of 2017.**

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.¹

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."² 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 mines³) 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,⁴ and unrecorded clearance operations by the army or by smugglers.⁵

As at the end of 2016, the total area in need of verification for missing mines was just over 5.68km², across a total of 92 areas. This comprised 2.8km² across 74 areas in the Jordan valley and 2.8km² across 18 areas in the northern borders.⁶

With respect to the Jordan Valley, Jordan reported in its December 2012 declaration of Article 5 completion that 5km² remained to be verified in an effort expected to take two years.⁷ As at May 2013, the estimated area requiring verification had fallen to 4.4km²,⁸ before rising to 4.6km² in June 2014,⁹ and to 4.85km² as at the end of 2014.¹⁰ In its 2015–20 National Plan, Jordan reported that 5.4km² remained to be sampled, verified, and released according to national standards.¹¹ As at end-2015, 4.2km² across 95 areas remained in need of verification in the Jordan Valley.¹² Most recently, Jordan reported that, as at the end of 2016, 2.8km² across 74 areas still needed verification in the Jordan Valley.¹³

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.¹⁴

With respect to the northern borders, in its 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion, Jordan reported that some 6.9km² remained to be verified, and that the process being undertaken by NPA had been delayed for security reasons.¹⁵ 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, with full technical survey of areas where evidence and experience pointed to a risk of contamination.¹⁶ By May 2013, the estimated area needing verification had been reduced to around 5km², but operations by NPA were halted in February 2013 because of the security situation.¹⁷ In its 2015–20 National Plan, Jordan reported that 3.7km² remained to be verified and inspected by quality control (QC) teams.¹⁸

Most recently, Jordan reported that, as at the end of 2016, just over 2.8km² across 18 areas along the northern borders still needed verification;¹⁹ this is the same area reported for the end of 2015.²⁰ Verification operations in the north remained suspended as at April 2017, due to the ongoing Syrian crisis.²¹

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Jordan established the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR) under a Royal Decree, which the government subsequently incorporated into law.²² NCDR's board of directors includes representatives of the Jordanian Armed Forces, the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), landmine survivors, and the media.²³ The NCDR did not, though, become fully operational until 2004, when a new administration, chaired by Prince Mired Raad Zeid al-Hussein, was appointed.²⁴ The NCDR is responsible for coordinating, accrediting, regulating, and quality-assuring all mine action organisations, as well as for fundraising.²⁵ It is also responsible for ensuring mine action is integrated into the country's wider development strategies.²⁶

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 2012.²⁷ 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.²⁸

The NCDR's current 2015–20 National Plan aims to verify, sample, and release the remaining 5.4km² 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.²⁹ In April 2017, the NCDR reported that it was not on target to complete verification of the Jordan Valley by the end of 2017, and that it would update its workplan in 2018.³⁰ Resuming verification and release of the remaining 3.7km² 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.³¹ The plan also aims to eliminate all ERW contamination by 2017.³² The NCDR prioritises areas in need of development for verification.³³

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.³⁴

Operators

The verification and demining operations in Jordan are conducted by the NCDR and REC. Since October 2015, Jordan has deployed four operational teams, totalling 35 deminers. This represents a doubling of capacity compared to the two operational teams, totalling 17 deminers, deployed previously.³⁵

LAND RELEASE

In 2016, Jordan released just under 1.36km² of land. Manual operations verified and released 21 areas in the Jordan Valley, destroying 100 anti-personnel mines, 3 anti-vehicle mines, and 49 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO).³⁶

The land released in 2016 was double the 0.65km² released in 2015, progress that was attributed to the significant increase in operational capacity in 2016.³⁷

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 2012.³⁸ On announcing completion, however, Prince Mired acknowledged that "a residual risk could remain in areas where landmines have been emplaced",³⁹ and noted that verification efforts had resulted in the discovery of additional mined areas.⁴⁰ 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.⁴¹

In August 2016, Jordan informed Mine Action Review that its Article 5 issue would be discussed during the next APMBC Meeting of States Parties,⁴² which was held in Santiago, Chile, from 28 November to 2 December 2016.

This did not occur, however, and most recently in April 2017, Jordan reported that it was not planning to submit an Article 5 extension request.⁴³

According to its 2015–20 National Plan, Jordan would need three years to finish the verification process, aiming for completion by December 2017.⁴⁴ However, the head of the NCDR has reported that Jordan is not on target to meet this completion date, given that the National Plan assumed a capacity of six national teams from 1 January 2015, which is less than current capacity.⁴⁵ The doubling of operational capacity in October 2015, from two teams to four, was a welcome development, and resulted in a doubling of the area of land verified and released in 2016, compared to 2015.⁴⁶ However, it is still short of the six teams specified in Jordan's 2015–2020 National Mine Action Plan.⁴⁷ Furthermore, resumption and completion of verification along the northern borders is also contingent on an improvement in the security situation, and as at April 2017 verification activities remained suspended.⁴⁸ The NCDR plans to issue an updated workplan in 2018.⁴⁹

In 2016, the Jordanian government provided US\$311,000 towards the cost of the NCDR, and US\$70,000 for verification of areas.⁵⁰

- 1 Declaration by Jordan of completion of implementation of Article 5, 12th Meeting of States Parties, 3–7 December 2012 (hereafter, Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion).
- 2 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.
- 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 Article 7 Report (for 2016), p. 4; and email from Mohammad Breikat, National Director, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 7 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.
- 8 Statement of Jordan, Intersessional meetings (Standing Committee on Mine Action), Geneva, 29 May 2013.
- 9 Statement of Jordan, 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.
- 13 Article 7 Report (for 2016), p. 4; and email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 14 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2015–20", Amman, undated.
- 15 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.
- 16 Email from Jamal Odibat, Operations Reporting Officer, NCDR, 8 May 2014.
- 17 Statement of Jordan, Intersessional meetings (Standing Committee on Mine Action), Geneva, 29 May 2013; Third Review Conference, Maputo, June 2014; and email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 18 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2015–20", Amman, undated.
- 19 Article 7 Report (for 2016), p. 4; and email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 20 Article 7 Report (for 2015).
- 21 Article 7 Report (for 2016), p. 4; and email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 22 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.
- 23 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2005–2009", Amman, June 2005, pp. 1–2.
- 24 Ibid.; and Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.
- 25 NCDR, "Jordan's National Mine Action Plan 2005–2009", Amman, June 2005, pp. 1–2.
- 26 Email from Muna Alalul, NCDR, 31 July 2011.
- 27 NCDR, "2010–2015 NCDR National Plan", undated but June 2010, p. 3.
- 28 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 22 March 2015.
- 29 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.
- 30 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 31 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 34 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.
- 35 Emails from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016 and 10 April 2017.
- 36 Article 7 Report (for 2016), p. 4; and email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.
- 39 "Jordan becomes the first Middle Eastern country free of all known landmines", Press release, 24 April 2012.
- 40 Jordan 2012 Article 5 Declaration of Completion.
- 41 Article 7 Report (for 2015); and CCW Amended Protocol II, Form B (for 2015).
- 42 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 25 August 2016.
- 43 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 44 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated.
- 45 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 NCDR, "2015–2020 NCDR National Plan", Amman, undated, p. 13.
- 48 Email from Mohammad Breikat, NCDR, 10 April 2017.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Ibid.