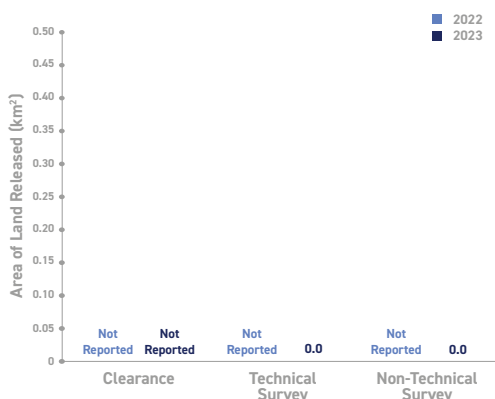


ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2009

NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE NEEDED TO RETURN TO COMPLIANCE

KEY DATA**ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:**UNKNOWN, IMPROVISED MINE
CONTAMINATION IN CONFLICT-
AFFECTED REGIONSAP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2023AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2023**NOT REPORTED****NOT REPORTED****LAND RELEASE OUTPUT****CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET** (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **NONE****KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

The year 2023 was marked by the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), including the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), at the request of the Transition Government. UNMAS was entirely funded through MINUSMA Assessed Budget and its mandate was contingent on it. Its departure after ten years as the lead agency for mine action in Mali caused mine action projects and associated funding to be cancelled. The Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) is no longer in use and the technical support provided by UNMAS ceased. Discussions were, though, held with the Malian authorities about a possible return whereby UNMAS would support the national authorities rather than function as a coordination lead.

In 2024, for the first time since 2005, Mali submitted an Article 7 report to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) covering the period May 2023 to April 2024. It highlighted that Mali is contaminated by improvised explosive devices (IEDs), landmines, and explosive remnants of war (ERW) and indicated that a national mine action authority would be set up to address the problem. National Technical Standards and Guidelines for non-technical survey (NTS) were approved. The ongoing armed conflict is clearly hampering efforts to construct a functioning mine action programme, including the conduct of survey and assessment of mined areas.

FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW

Despite the government agreeing in principle several years past to establish a national mine action authority (NMAA) within the National Commission in charge of fighting against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (CNLPAL – Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre la Prolifération des Armes Légères et de Petits Calibres), this has not happened. The two military *coups d'état* in 2020 and 2021, followed by a reshuffling of Mali's regional and international alliances, resulted in the departure of MINUSMA in 2023. The Malian

authorities have now formally declared their intention to create an NMAA in its recent Article 7 report. Until now, the CNLPAL has lacked clear mandate, resource and capacity.

Over the past five years, Mali has been experiencing multiple armed conflicts, with a gradual expansion of the explosive threat from the centre towards the south and west regions of the country and an increased number of victims of explosive ordnance, many of whom are civilians. Non-State

armed groups (NSAGs) have been using IEDs, especially improvised anti-vehicle (AV) mines placed on roads, targeting the Malian armed forces and allies. Since MINUSMA's withdrawal, clearance is the sole prerogative of the Malian

army explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams. Humanitarian actors are confined to explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and victim assistance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Mali should seek a new Article 5 deadline in order to return to compliance with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).
- Mali should proceed with setting up the NMAA and a national structure to coordinate mine action operations.
- Mali should resume its IMSMA database and ensure systematic collection of data and reporting on explosive ordnance incidents and casualties, disaggregating AP mines of an improvised nature from other types of improvised explosive devices.
- When circumstances allow, Mali should develop a civilian mine clearance capacity in addition to the military counter-IED operations.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority, but the Permanent Secretary of the National Commission to Counter the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (CNLPAL) has been acting as a national focal point for mine action.

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- EOD teams working under the Operations Coordination Centre (CCO-NEDEX) of the Military Engineering Directorate.

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA): mandate terminated on 30 June 2023, with personnel withdrawn by 31 December 2023.
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) was part of MINUSMA and ceased operations on 1 July 2023.

OTHER ACTORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA) (only risk education)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC) (only risk education until 2023)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (only risk education)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG) (only risk education)
- Association d'Appui aux Populations Rurales du Mali (AAPPOR) (risk education)
- Association de Soutien au Développement des Activités des Populations (ASDAP) (only risk education until March 2023)
- Association Jeunesse et Développement du Mali (ADJM)
- Association Malienne pour La Survie au Sahel (AMSS) (only risk education)
- TASSAGHT (only risk education)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

A decade of conflict between multiple armed actors and deepening political turmoil has left Mali facing a rising threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs).¹ The upsurge in conflict since 2012 resulted in use of AV mines by armed groups and later in targeted use of IEDs, including many that are victim-activated and qualify as anti-personnel (AP) mines under the APMBC.

In its Article 7 report submitted in 2024, Mali recalled that no conventional mines have been laid on its territory and claiming that there are no minefields under its jurisdiction or control. Nevertheless, it recognised for the first time that "in the context of Mali, terrorism is rampant in North, South,

West and Central regions, and that while Mali does not have information on the number of mined areas and their size, nor the exact number of mines present, it is aware that explosive devices are located in the areas of Menaka, Bankass, Mopti, Bandiagara, Koro, Nara, and Sikasso".² Contamination is believed to be scattered and sparse, consisting of conventional and improvised mines and other IEDs placed on roads. NTS and community liaison activities, although limited in scale, have not identified any minefields.³ MINUSMA military engineers, who conducted clearance and technical assessment of explosive devices until December 2023, have provided basic details of device types.

1 Presentation of Mali, Regional Conference on Improvised AP Mines, Ghana, 13–15 February 2024.

2 Article 7 Report (covering May 2023–April 2024), Form F, p. 7; and Committee on Article 5 implementation, "Preliminary Observations", Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

3 Email from Benoit Poirier, Country Director, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), 30 July 2021.

In ten years, UNMAS recorded a total of 1,630 IEDs incidents, leaving 1,132 people dead and injuring 2,556 others. In 2022, civilians represented 43% of all "IED/mine" casualties across Mali (in comparison to 25% in 2021) and in 2023 (until the end of June, when recording stopped), 39% of all casualties. The explosive threat was concentrated in the central region of Mopti and the south-central region of Segou, where UNMAS

recorded 67% of casualties in 2022 (see Table 1) and indicated that they remained the largest share of casualties in 2023 until the end of June. With UNMAS ceasing operations on 1 July 2023, the explosive threat overview by region is no longer updated. It reported 110 AP mine incidents from January to July 2023.⁴

Table 1: Incidents involving AP mines, including improvised mines (2017–23)⁵

Region	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Gao (includes Menaka)	19	19	10	11	32	6	1
Kidal	33	32	27	29	51	16	11
Timbuktu	10	4	6	9	15	7	33
Mopti	17	38	72	33	33	35	41
Segou	1	8	6	2	12	21	11
Koulikouro	0	0	1	1	11	7	10
Kayes	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Sikasso	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Totals	80	101	122	85	155	94	110

* UNMAS explosive threat overview stopped on 31 July 2023. Incidents only cover the period January to July.

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) database recorded 157 IED incidents in 2023 and a further 106 in the first six months of 2024. The vast majority involved improvised AV mines planted by the Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims – JNIM) targeting the Malian armed forces and Wagner Group fighters. MINUSMA peacekeepers have also been a repeated target, with 16 incidents recorded in 2023, including seven during the withdrawal process.⁶

Particularly noteworthy was the number of IEDs incidents that affected MINUSMA withdrawal from Kidal base. The 143-vehicle convoy that left Kidal on 31 October and reached Gao on 7 November after travelling almost 350km was the target of six IEDs that injured 37 peacekeepers, all of whom were safely transported to medical facilities, and damaged six armoured vehicles that were abandoned on the way.⁷

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

After more than a decade of armed conflict, Mali is also contaminated by ERW.⁸ Upon departure, MINUSMA took what it described as a difficult decision, albeit in compliance with UN regulations, to destroy weapons and ammunition to prevent them from falling into "the wrong hands".

In addition to the immediate dangers posed by explosive ammunition, the metallic remains of cartridges, even after incineration, represent an environmental and safety challenge. These fragments, often made of brass or steel, can accumulate and contaminate the soil, posing long-term risks

to the local ecosystem and the food chain. These residues can also be recovered and recycled in the manufacture of new ammunition or IEDs, including improvised mines, indirectly fuelling the cycle of violence. To counter this risk, MINUSMA has established protocols for collecting and processing this scrap metal. "After the cartridges have been incinerated, the remains are carefully collected and stored before being recycled in a secure manner, away from the public and under the supervision of the relevant authorities."⁹

4 UNMAS, Mali, accessed 21 June 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3SafRgo>; UNMAS Mali Explosive Threat Overview, 30 July 2023; and Presentation of Mali, Regional Conference on Improvised AP Mines, Ghana, 13–15 February 2024.

5 Email from Marta Farres, Project Manager, UNMAS, 18 April 2024.

6 ACLED, "Filters: 01/01/2023-14/07/2024, Remote explosive/landmine/IED, Mali", accessed 14 July 2024, at: www.acleddata.com.

7 "Note aux correspondants sur le Mali", MINUSMA Actualités, 9 Novembre 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/4cLkFRu>; and "L'odyssée du dernier convoi de la MINUSMA de Kidal vers Gao", MINUSMA Actualités, 9 Novembre 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/4cGofMT>.

8 Article 7 Report (covering May 2023–April 2024), Form J, p. 16.

9 "Que fait la MINUSMA des munitions hors d'usage lors de son retrait du Mali?", MINUSMA Actualités, 18 Octobre 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3SbSoLA>.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Mali does not have a national mine action authority or programme, but as noted above, its 2024 Article 7 report indicated that an NMAA would be set up in the future.¹⁰ Until today, the Secrétariat Permanent de la Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre la Prolifération des Armes Légères et de Petits Calibres (CNLPAL) serves as a focal point for mine action. Its mandate has been evolving in the context of the transition government, the departure of UNMAS, and current discussions about the possibility of resuming a programme with a different mandate.¹¹

According to the Permanent Secretary of the CNLPAL, a mine action “unit” (“Unité en charge de la lutte anti-mine”) will be created as part of the National Commission, with the mandate to define and implement a mine action strategy and work plan, as well as to coordinate operations, taking over the role that UNMAS had been playing for years. He said that a draft amendment formalising its creation was expected to be finalised by the end of 2024. The unit would be composed of personnel for risk education, victim assistance, information management, reporting, and operational accreditations.¹² Mine action observers and UNMAS have questioned whether the CNLPAL has the requisite capacity and mandate given that its role and expertise fall within the framework of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Mali withdrew from ECOWAS in January 2024.¹³

UNMAS operated in Mali from 2013 to 2023, with its mandate contingent on that of MINUSMA.¹⁴ For ten years, in addition to coordinating mine action operations (such as they were) and providing explosive threat mitigation support to MINUSMA peacekeepers, UNMAS supported the national authorities. This was done by developing technical and operational capacity to manage explosive threats, coordinate

the response, and comply with international standards by providing training, specialised equipment and technical support, as well as through mentoring of Malian defence and security forces. UNMAS also provided advisory support to the Malian authorities and advised the CNLPAL on Mali’s international obligations regarding explosive ordnance.¹⁵ On 30 June 2023, the UN Security Council, at the request of the Transitional Government of Mali, decided to terminate MINUSMA’s mandate.¹⁶ With it, UNMAS was required to cease operations as of 1 July 2023 and it withdrew its personnel by the end of the year.

Since then, the CNLPAL has said it has been “working hard to take over UNMAS responsibilities”, but that this will require some time. Malian authorities have been discussing with UNMAS about a return but in a different format, i.e. “in support of the national authorities rather than in the forefront”.¹⁷ At the time of writing, however, nothing had been agreed.

Until July 2023, UNMAS led the Humanitarian Mine Action Working Group (GT-LAMH – Groupe de travail sur la lutte antimines humanitaire) with another organisation elected by members for a term of one year, DanChurchAid (DCA) as co-lead. Since UNMAS ceased operations, DCA has taken over the leadership role. Attendance included 14 members and 8 observers in 2023, among them a representative of the Permanent Secretariat. Eight meetings and one workshop were held in 2023, and seven in 2024 (as at August). Meetings are mainly occurring at national level in Bamako, and on an ad hoc basis in Mopti and Timbuktu. During a meeting in March 2024, the CNLPAL informed the members of GT-LAMH of its intentions to broaden its mandate and over time assume the national lead role for mine action.¹⁸

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Mali, lacking a functioning mine action programme, has not taken up gender in the context of mine action. Its Article 7 report submitted in May 2024 did not mention gender and diversity considerations, even within detailed information provided on risk education and victim assistance. Mali did not mention possible efforts to establish a baseline of contamination through inclusive dialogue with community members. Operators indicated that their teams are gender-balanced and that risk education (EORE) sessions are tailored to the specific audiences.¹⁹

10 Article 7 Report (covering May 2023–April 2024), Form J, p. 16.

11 Emails from Nora Achkar, Project Manager – POCMA, UNMAS, 10 August 2023; and Elisa Benevelli, Mali Country Director, DanChurchAid (DCA), 13 August 2024.

12 Email from Lt.-Col. Adama Diarra, Permanent Secretary, CNLPAL, 11 June 2024; and Presentation of Mali, Regional Conference on Improvised AP Mines, Ghana, 13–15 February 2024.

13 Emails from UNMAS Mali Programme, 12 May 2021 and 27 April 2022; and François Fall, HMA Advisor, MAG, 6 August 2024.

14 UN Security Council Resolution 2100, 25 April 2013.

15 UNMAS Mali Factsheet, July 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/4bJSeSJ>.

16 UN Security Council Resolution 2690, 30 June 2023.

17 Email from Lt.-Col. Adama Diarra, CNLPAL, 11 June 2024.

18 Email from Elisa Benevelli, DCA, 13 May 2024.

19 Email from François Fall, MAG, 6 August 2024.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Mali's earlier Article 7 report (covering 2004–05) had mentioned environmental protection measure during clearance. The destruction method described (in Form F) was by electric explosion. Mali pointed out that: "Despite the crater caused, the environment was preserved by the fact that the explosions were carried out in small quantities of mines and in the same area. This prevented bushfires, and ensured that the clouds of smoke fell back into the same basin."²⁰ The Permanent Secretary of the CNLPAL indicated that EOD operations always take consideration of the environment.²¹

DCA has reported having an environmental policy in mine action, but they do not apply in Mali because the programme does not deal directly with explosives, stockpiling, or clearance.²²

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

For the past ten years, UNMAS has recorded all known explosions and verified mine or IED incidents, providing data for maps that detail the explosive hazard threat and facilitate planning in affected areas. It made available critical information to various strategic fora, such as the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) and the Access Working Group (AWG). UNMAS operated an IMSMA database which was upgraded to IMSMA Core in 2022.²³ UNMAS did not provide operators access to the database, despite requests, but said it shared technical data with all mine partners engaged in explosive threat mitigation.²⁴

With UNMAS ceasing operations, IMSMA Core is no longer in use. It has not been handed over to a Malian counterpart or mine action operator, creating an information vacuum and an additional operational constraint for humanitarian operators. In order to maintain a minimal system, DCA has set up an offline reporting mechanism within the GT-LAMH, using the UNMAS forms. This has been done in coordination with humanitarian operators, in particular the International

NGO Safety Organisation (INSO), which supports data triangulation. This enables a minimum of information management, especially on hazard threats, but it is not a comprehensive reporting system as IMSMA.²⁵

For the first time since July 2005, Mali submitted an APMB Article 7 transparency report in May 2024 covering calendar year 2023. While the report indicated that Mali does not have conventional minefields, it stated that non-State armed groups are using various types of improvised mines in different regions. The Article 7 report mentions specifically "IEDs/mines and ERW".²⁶ For an IED to meet the definition of an AP mine, the device must be victim-activated by a person and not command detonated or set to detonate after a time delay. Mali should seek to identify the extent to which it has mined areas that it cannot clear immediately and publish plans to survey, mark, and clear this contamination. In early 2020, the GT-LAMH had agreed that it would classify and report victim-activated devices as landmines.²⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

Mali does not have a national mine action programme, but the CNLPAL indicated its intention to create a mine action strategy and work plan.²⁸ The process has not begun yet, but the proposed work plan would focus on the following priority actions: i) reducing the impact of mines, ERW and IEDs on the population; ii) setting up awareness-raising activities through mine and ERW risk education in civilian environments;

iii) coordinating victim assistance; iv) setting up a data collection and analysis process; v) mobilising resources to meet the needs of victims and to carry out activities; and vi) monitoring agreements and treaties to which Mali is a party.²⁹ It is not clear if the intended work plan will cover land release as it does not mention survey or clearance.

²⁰ Article 7 Report (covering May 2004–April 2005), p. 8.

²¹ Email from Lt.-Col. Adama Diarra, CNLPAL, 20 August 2024.

²² Email from Tristan Pasco, Country Director, DCA, 7 August 2023.

²³ Email from Nora Achkar, UNMAS, 10 August 2023.

²⁴ Emails from Tristan Pasco, DCA, 7 August 2023; Milena Vara Ruiz, MAG, 1 September 2023.

²⁵ Email from Elisa Benevelli, DCA, 13 May 2024.

²⁶ Article 7 Report (covering May 2023–April 2024), Form F, p. 7.

²⁷ Email from Benoit Poirier, MAG, 11 March 2020.

²⁸ Presentation of Mali, Regional Conference on Improvised AP Mines, Ghana, 13–15 February 2024.

²⁹ Email from Lt.-Col. Adama Diarra, CNLPAL, 11 June 2024.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The ending of UNMAS activities effectively suspended the accreditation process for operators. All accreditations issued by UNMAS expired on 31 December 2023.³⁰ The CNLPAL indicated that it is on hold for now, and that it was coordinating with the GT-LAMH members and DCA as co-lead to ensure the continuation of certain activities.³¹ In May 2023, UNMAS had reported that the National Technical Standards and Guidelines for risk education, victim assistance, quality management, and NTS had been reviewed and endorsed by the members of the GT-LAMH.³²

NGOs and international organisations are not allowed to conduct land release operations. The CNLPAL has decided that NGOs are to focus on risk education and victim assistance.³³ In the current operational environment,

marking of hazardous areas contaminated by IEDs, including improvised mines, is not permitted due to the presence of armed groups who use IEDs as a military tactic and could therefore retaliate against communities reporting such contamination. The only type of marking considered safe concerns ERW. This is, however, less frequently encountered than are IEDs.³⁴

Mali is a member of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)'s Francophone Regional Cooperation Programme and attended its annual workshop that last took place in October 2023 at the "Centre de Perfectionnement aux Actions de Déminage et de Dépollution" (CPADD) in Benin. It covered three topics: IEDs, EORE, and ammunition management.³⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Malian and international security forces serving with MINUSMA were the only entities clearing mines and IEDs. A national EOD response capacity has been developed with the support of UNMAS, through the establishment of an Operations Coordination Centre (CCO-NEDEX) in the Military Engineering Directorate.³⁶ The CCO conducted a number of EOD tasks in 2023 and 2024 in different conflict-affected areas, particularly in the centre and south of the country. The role of the CCO is to advise the Malian command on action against the threat of mines, ERW, and IEDs; to coordinate and lead the use of specialist EOD teams against IEDs; and to coordinate action against IEDs by the Malian armed forces.³⁷

Until 1 July 2023, UNMAS operated with eight staff, including three internationals. Their activities included advocating for and advising on the development of a national mine action framework; leading the Humanitarian Mine Action Working Group; providing risk education and victim assistance; recording incidents and analysing the threats posed by explosive hazards; and training and mentoring civil society organisations in mine action.³⁸ Over the course of ten years, UNMAS trained 1,469 Malian Defence and Security Forces personnel in explosive ordnance and improvised explosive device disposal (EOD/IEDD).³⁹ UNMAS had been working closely with DCA and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) to build the mine action capacity of national NGOs. Two national NGOs, TASSAGHT and Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel (AMSS), received accreditation to conduct mine action activities in 2022, and a third (Association pour l'Appui

aux Populations Rurales du Mali, AAPPOR) in 2023.⁴⁰ In 2024, while UNMAS operations had stopped, a small team remained, to manage "the disposal of almost 10,000 assets across 21 national and international sites, ranging from life preserving equipment such as mine-protected vehicles, explosive detectors and bomb suits, to laptop computers, office buildings and office furniture".⁴¹

DCA had 54 staff in 2023, including two fully dedicated to mine action projects – one national project manager and one international technical advisor, both men. Five other staff from the management and M&E team supported the projects. DCA had been implementing two UNMAS-funded projects since 2021 with two national partners, the Soutien du Développement des Activités de la Population (ASDAP) and AAPPOR, implementing, respectively, risk education and victim assistance projects, covering all of Mopti region and two areas in the region of Ségou. The two projects ended in 2023 and DCA undertook final evaluations jointly with UNMAS. These final reviews showed that both partners had made significant progress in developing their capacities, but that only one had reached the sufficient level of organisational and technical maturity to receive mine action accreditation.

UNMAS's ending of operations resulted in the cancellation of all UN contracts, including a new contract recently awarded to DCA to conduct risk education and NTS.⁴² DCA has been implementing a new project jointly with AAPPOR since July 2023 funded by the US Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance

30 Email from Elisa Benevelli, DCA, 13 May 2024.

31 Email from Lt.-Col. Adama Diarra, CNLPAL, 11 June 2024.

32 Email from Nora Achkar, UNMAS, 10 August 2023.

33 Presentation of Mali, Regional Conference on Improvised AP Mines, Ghana, 13–15 February 2024.

34 Emails from Lt.-Col. Adama Diarra, CNLPAL, 11 June 2024; and Elisa Benevelli, DCA Mali, 13 May 2024.

35 Email from Jérémy Repond, Programme Officer, GICHD, 18 June 2024.

36 UNMAS Mali Factsheet, July 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/4bJSeSJ>.

37 Email from Lt.-Col. Adama Diarra, CNLPAL, 11 June 2024.

38 Email from Nora Achkar, UNMAS, 10 August 2023.

39 UNMAS Mali Factsheet, July 2023.

40 Emails from Milena Vara Ruiz, MAG, 9 August 2023; and Elisa Benevelli, DCA, 13 May 2024.

41 Online interview with Marta Farres, UNMAS, 18 April 2024; and Linked-in post from Susannah Bradley, Operations Liquidation Manager, UNMAS, May 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4bMuLjG>.

42 Email from Elisa Benevelli, DCA Mali, 13 May 2024.

(BHA). The project involves risk education, NTS, and victim assistance. A protection/monitoring component was included to strengthen ties among protection actors, particularly after the departure of UNMAS. DCA also launched a project funded by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) beginning of 2024, and another project, signed in July 2024, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented in collaboration with AAPOR and AVENIR organisations in Mopti and Timbuktu.⁴³

MAG has been supporting the development of national capacities through two Malian NGOs, TASSAGHT and the Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel (AMSS). Supported since 2017 with a focus on EORE, both NGOs received their operational accreditation in 2022 and managed to secure funds from UNMAS in 2023 with MAG as a subrecipient. In addition to funding from MAG to conduct EORE in Tombouctou, AMSS received funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) via the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to conduct EORE and peacebuilding activities.⁴⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

In 2023, no survey of mined area was reported. Clearance was limited to counter-IED operations and largely restricted to areas where Malian and allied forces are operational. In 2023, many of these operations were done in the context of MINUSMA withdrawal. The Nepal EOD Company undertook 62 major missions, covering a range of operations from convoy support and post-blast investigation to IED disposal.⁴⁵ UNMAS indicated that in ten years, 4,391,584m² of land have been released to communities, and 16,691 ERW and 112,127 items of small arms ammunition have been destroyed.⁴⁶

DEMINER SAFETY

ACLED database recorded that, on 18 December 2023, two Malian EOD team members were injured when defusing an improvised explosive device, likely planted by JNIM militants, near Djiguibombo (in Bandiagara in Mopti region).⁴⁷

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR MALI: 1 MARCH 1999
↓
ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2009
NEW ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE REQUEST REQUIRED
LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): NONE

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Mali was required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control no later than 1 March 2009. In its Article 7 transparency report, submitted in May 2024, the first in nine years, Mali declared it had no mined areas containing conventional AP mines, but recognised that it has encountered new AP mine contamination, in particular of an improvised nature, laid by non-State armed groups.⁴⁸

Under the Convention's agreed framework, in the event mined areas are discovered after the expiry of a State Party's Article 5 clearance deadline, it should immediately inform all other States Parties of this discovery and undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all AP mines as soon as possible.

Mali should request a new extended Article 5 deadline, which should include provision for survey and assessment of the extent of AP mined areas, including with AP mines of an improvised nature which is the only type of AP mine suspected to require clearance in Mali. Of course, this aim is made highly challenging by the nature of ongoing armed conflict. Mali must also fulfil its reporting obligations under the APMBC, including by reporting annually on the location of all suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for the destruction of all AP mines therein.⁴⁹

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Mali does not have plans in place to address residual contamination once its Article 5 obligations have been fulfilled.

43 Email from Elisa Benevelli, DCA Mali, 13 August 2024.
44 Email from François Fall, MAG, 6 August 2024.
45 "La compagnie népalaise de neutralisation des explosifs et des munitions de la MINUSMA", MINUSMA Actualités, 22 November 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3WaxsG2>.
46 UNMAS Mali Factsheet, July 2023.
47 ACLED, "Filters: 01/01/2023-14/07/2024, Remote explosive/landmine/IED, Mali", accessed 14 July 2024.
48 Article 7 Report (covering May 2024 to April 2025), Form C, p. 7.
49 Final Report of the APMBC Twelfth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 21 January 2013, p. 10; and Committee on Article 5 implementation, "Preliminary Observations", Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18-20 June 2024.