MOROCCO

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2026

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Massive (no credible figure)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (km²)	Release in 2024 (km²)
Clearance	No credible figure	No credible figure
Technical Survey	Unknown	Unknown
Non-Technical Survey	Unknown	Unknown

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	62	40

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATOR IN 2025:

- Royal Moroccan Army (RMA)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Morocco should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.**
- **Morocco should clear anti-personnel (AP) mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, consonant with its obligations under international human rights law.**
- **Morocco should establish a timeline for completing clearance of all mined areas on territory under its jurisdiction or control.**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority
- No national mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Royal Moroccan Army (RMA)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The exact extent of contamination from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in Morocco, including the area under its control in Western Sahara on the west side of the Berm,[1] is not known. In the past, Morocco declared, highly improbably, that a total area of 120,000km^2 was contaminated,[2] although the extent of the threat is undoubtedly massive. According to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), of the 2,700km-long Berm, both sides on east and west of the Berm are significantly contaminated with landmines and ERW along 1,465km.[3]

Demining west of the Berm is undertaken by the Royal Moroccan Army (RMA), while east of the Berm, it is led by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). UNMAS operates within MINURSO, providing the mission with training and mine action expertise. Under Military Agreement No. 1 between the RMA and MINURSO, the RMA submits regular reports on its mine and ERW clearance operations west of the Berm to MINURSO's military observers.[4]

Morocco's contamination is mostly a result of the conflict of 1975–91 between the RMA and Polisario Front forces over Western Sahara. Morocco acknowledges that it had laid mine belts during the construction of the Berm, with the mines being laid before the APMBC entered into force, and states that mined areas are surveyed and mapped. Morocco has pledged to clear the mines it laid as soon as the conflict over Western Sahara is "definitely settled".[5]

Morocco reported in its voluntary APMBC Article 7 report covering 2022 that the following provinces were mined: Akka, Aousserd, Assa-Zag, Boujdour, Dakhla, Laayoune, Smara, Tantan, and Tata.[6] In its voluntary Article 7 report covering 2018, Morocco had reported that 10 localities within these provinces contained mines: Bir Anzarane, Douiek, Gerret Auchfaght, Gor Lbard, Gor Zalagat, Hagounia, Idiriya, Imlili, Itgui, and Tarf Mhkinza. It claimed that these were contaminated through "haphazard" mine-laying across the south of Morocco by the Polisario Front in 1975–91.[7] In its Article 7 reports covering 2020 and 2021, Morocco also reported suspected mined areas in its far eastern corner bordering Algeria in the El-Melias corridor in Figuig province.[8] It is not clear when these mines were emplaced or by whom, but media reports indicate they were laid in the 1990s as a result of border tensions between the two neighbouring States.[9]

Since 1975, Morocco has registered 2,781 mine and ERW victims, of whom 826 were killed. In 2025, 10 people were injured as a result of mine and ERW-related accidents.[10] For more information on casualties, please see the country profile of Morocco on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[11]

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Morocco does not have a national mine action authority or a mine action centre. Demining in areas west of the Berm is conducted by the RMA, in coordination with MINURSO and UNMAS.

In 2025, RMA officers participated in a training of trainers (ToT) on explosive hazards awareness, and an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) Level 2 training, among others.[12]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

It is not known whether Morocco has a gender policy in place for its demining operations. Risk education beneficiary data are disaggregated by gender and age.[13]

1 The Berm refers to the defensive wall built by Morocco in 1982–87 to secure the north-western corner of Western Sahara. It is constituted of earthen walls some 2,700 kilometres long and three metres in height. Morocco controls the area located on the west side of the Berm.

2 Statement of Morocco, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 25 May 2009.

3 MINURSO, Mine Action, accessed 27 August 2026, https://bit.ly/3BmYLnM; and UNMAS, "Territory of Western Sahara" page, accessed 27 August 2026, https://shorturl.at/AerW7.

4 MINURSO, Mine Action, accessed 27 August 2026; UNMAS, "Territory of Western Sahara", accessed 27 August 2026; and publication on UNMAS's Linked-In page, 13 November 2025, https://shorturl.at/4RRfF.

5 Statement of Morocco, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023.

6 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form D.

7 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D. Idiriya is spelled "Jdiriya" in the 2018 report. From 2015, the area of Glibat Jadiane, which had been listed as contaminated in earlier years, was no longer included on the list of mined areas.

8 Voluntary Article 7 Reports (covering 2020 and 2021), Form D.

9 "Fguig, mine disposal leads to rumours of conflict on the eastern borders", *Chouf TV* (Arabic), 20 February 2021, https://bit.ly/3rIWGvO.

10 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form G.

11 https://The-monitor.org.

12 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form H.

13 Ibid., Form G.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

It is not known which environmental policies and practices Morocco adheres to, if any, but it has reported that "normal safety and environmental protection standards have been followed" in clearing mines and ERW.[14]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

It is not known which information management system is used in Morocco for recording mine action data. The RMA reports regularly to UNMAS on its mine action activities in the territory west of the Berm.[15]

PLANNING AND TASKING

It is not known how Morocco plans and prioritises its demining operations.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Morocco has not adopted national mine action legislation or standards, but has reported that demining by the RMA conforms to international rules and techniques.[16]

Morocco appears to use only manual demining, which is not efficient given the size and type of terrain being released. Mines and ERW identified are destroyed in situ.[17]

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

All mine clearance in Morocco is conducted by the RMA. In 2022, Morocco indicated that 13 demining units were deployed every year from 2007 to March 2023, and that 1,258 limited interventions had been undertaken from 2014 through to end-March 2023.[18] By "limited interventions" it is understood that Morocco refers to EOD spot tasks.

In 2010, Morocco declared it had employed 10,000 deminers, despite having only 400 detectors available at the time.[19] This raised serious questions both about the procedures being used and the accuracy and credibility of clearance figures being reported. Morocco reported that demining takes place in the framework of a vast annual programme that aims to release suspected areas of contamination.[20]

DEMINER SAFETY

On 12 December 2024, two members of the RMA died and a third was injured in an anti-vehicle (AV) mine incident during clearance in Touizgui, north of MINURSO's area of responsibility.[21]

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Morocco initiated major demining efforts in 2007, following an increase in the number of deaths and injuries. In April 2016, Morocco reported that it planned to clear mines from along the Berm.[22] But it has not reported in detail on its release of mined areas in recent years, nor given any indication of implementing land release methodology. The figures it does provide are not credible with respect to physical clearance and should be taken as an indication of land released or declared as clear of contamination rather than land actually released through clearance.

14 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D.

15 Publication on UNMAS LinkedIn page, 13 November 2025.

16 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2021), Form B.

17 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form D.

18 Statement of Morocco, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, June 2022; and Morocco, "Strong Commitment for Population's Safety – All Against Antipersonnel Mines and Remnants of War", Leaflet, undated.

19 Statement of Morocco, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 23 June 2010.

20 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2021), Form B.

21 United Nations, "Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General", Press release, 18 December 2024, https://shorturl.at/w22fq; and "Two Moroccan soldiers died during a demining operation in Assa-Zag" (in French), *le360*, 12 December 2024, https://shorturl.at/Jxl97.

22 "Morocco to Deploy Highly Qualified Team to Remove Sahara Landmines", *Sahara Question*, 25 March 2016.

In its voluntary Article 7 report covering 2025, Morocco reported "clearance" of a total area of 184.27km^2 with the destruction of 62 AP mines, 18 AV mines, and 4,342 items of ERW.[23] In 2024, Morocco reported it had "cleared" 158.48km^2 with the destruction of 40 AP mines, 63 AV mines, and 142 items of ERW.[24] Neither claim for the extent of physical clearance is credible. A nine-year review of Morocco's reporting on its clearance outputs reveals big fluctuations in the number of AP mines destroyed per year, from more than 1,000 AP mines destroyed in 2021 to a low of 22 AP mines in 2020.

Table 1: Nine-year summary of reported AP mine clearance

Year	Area released* (km^2)	AP mines destroyed
2025	184	62
2024	158	40
2023	N/R	N/R
2022	95	34
2021	217	1,289
2020	171	22
2019	301	23
2018	313	232
2017	232	69
Totals	**1,671**	**1,771**

N/R = Not reported. * The figures provided are not credible with respect to physical clearance and should be taken as an indication of land released or declared as clear of contamination rather than land actually released through clearance.

In his October 2025 report to the UN Security Council on the situation in Western Sahara, the UN Secretary-General indicated that the RMA had reported clearing nearly 129km^2 of land west of the Berm from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025, with the destruction of 34 AP mines, 60 AV mines, and 475 items of ERW.[25] This compares with the 189km^2 of land west of the Berm reported by the RMA as released between 1 September 2023 and 31 July 2024, with the destruction of 35 AP mines, 15 AV mines, and 549 items of ERW.[26] No further details were provided.

In his October 2025 report to the UN Security Council on the situation in Western Sahara, the UN Secretary-General reported that MINURSO's lack of access to local interlocutors west of the Berm "continued to severely limit its ability to collect reliable situational-awareness information and assess developments across its area of responsibility".[27] MINURSO continues to seek to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the RMA.[28]

Morocco has stated on numerous occasions its determination to comply voluntarily with the provisions of the APMBC, including completion of stockpile destruction of AP mines and demining. It has submitted voluntary Article 7 reports annually since 2006, with the exception of the report covering 2023; and attends APMBC meetings as an observer. It has not, however, indicated when it might complete mine clearance. In a statement at the APMBC intersessional meetings in 2023, Morocco repeated its commitment to the Convention.[29] It earlier indicated that accession to the APMBC is a "strategic objective", which has been "momentarily delayed" pending "the resolution of the regional dispute over the Moroccan Sahara".[30] Morocco attended the Fifth Review Conference of the APMBC in Siem Reap in November 2024.

23 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form D.
24 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D.
25 Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara, UN doc. S/2025/612, para. 50.
26 Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara, UN doc. S/2024/707, 1 October 2024, para. 49.
27 Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara, UN doc. S/2025/612, para. 59.
28 Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara, UN doc. S/2025/612, para. 42.
29 Statement of Morocco, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 June 2023.
30 Statement of Morocco, APMBC Intersessional Meeting, Geneva, 23 June 2010.