

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2020
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

LIGHT,
BUT PRECISE EXTENT UNCLEAR

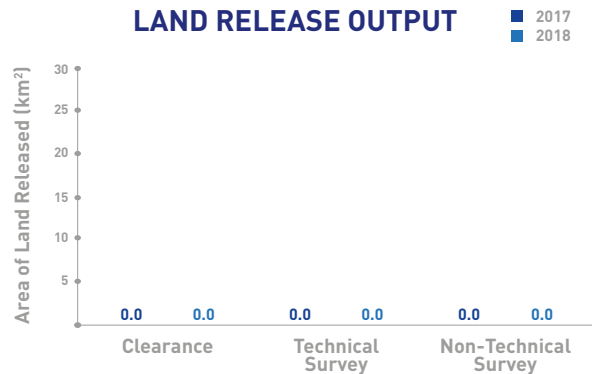
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2018

0 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2018

0

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Maputo +15 Political Declaration aspiration): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Niger experienced a surge in attacks by non-state armed groups employing mines and other explosive devices of an improvised nature in 2018. Niger pledged to resume mine clearance from the end of 2018 but has not recorded any survey or clearance since that date.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Niger should submit a comprehensive Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline extension request, including details of past survey and clearance, an updated list of mined areas requiring clearance, and a detailed workplan for meeting its international legal obligations.
- Niger should submit annual Article 7 reports detailing the progress of mine action as the APMBC requires.
- Niger should develop and implement a fundraising strategy to ensure it fulfils commitments made in its earlier Article 5 deadline extension request.
- Niger should seek and facilitate engagement of international demining organisations.
- Niger should ensure its national mine action standards are in accordance with international standards and that there is a quality management system in place to safeguard the quality of demining operations.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	Niger has identified limited anti-personnel mine contamination in the Agadez region but it lacks clarity on the extent. It also now faces escalating attacks by non-state armed groups and new contamination from mines of an improvised nature.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	The limited mine action in the past five years was funded by Niger's limited resources but while stipulating the need for international funding and for further progress has not availed itself of support offered by humanitarian organisations.
GENDER (10% of overall score)	2	Niger's limited statements on mine action make no reference to gender.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & REPORTING (10% of overall score)	3	Inconsistent reporting of mine clearance points to weak information management. Niger has submitted only one Article 7 transparency report since 2012 (in 2018).
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	3	Niger lacks a strategic plan for mine action or detailed workplans.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	4	Niger has reported that it has national standards that are compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) but it is not known if they have been formally adopted.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	2	Niger did not release any mined area in the last two years and there is a lack of clarity about the extent of clearance since 2014.
Average Score	3.7	Overall Programme Performance: VERY POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites (CNCCAI)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- CNCCAI

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Niger reported in 2018 that it had two mined areas totalling 235,557m² near Madama, a military base in the north-east of the country: a confirmed hazardous area (CHA) of 39,304m² and a suspected hazardous area (SHA) of 196,253m².¹ Three hazardous areas visited by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) in Madama in 2017 were believed to contain mostly French M51 minimum-metal anti-personnel mines. Nigerien army engineers, conducting earlier clearance operations, had found the mines buried in sand at depths of up to one metre.² Niger's varying statements on clearance activities leave some uncertainty about the extent of the CHA remaining to be cleared (see Article 5 compliance section below).³

Niger also identified five additional SHAs in the Agadez region (in Achouloulouma, Blaka, Enneri, Orida, and Zouzoudinga) but said non-technical and technical survey in 2014 had determined they were not contaminated by anti-personnel mines and that communities in the area had reported accidents only involving anti-vehicle mines.⁴ A PRB M3 anti-vehicle mine was also discovered in March 2019 near the central town of Intikane.⁵ The areas are all located in Niger's Agadez region, in the north in a remote desert area, 450km from the rural community of Dirkou in Bilma department and reported to contain mines that date back to the French colonial era.⁶

Table 1: Anti-personnel mine contamination by region (at 2016)⁷

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHA/CHA	Total area (m ²)
Agadez	1	39,304	1	196,253	2	235,557

NEW CONTAMINATION

The growing use of mines of an improvised nature in western Niger over the past year has added another dimension of uncertainty over the scale of Niger's challenge. Starting in the second half of 2018, Niger experienced a surge in attacks by groups affiliated with Islamic State or al-Qaida. Attacks were concentrated in the western Tillabery and Tahoua regions, employing a range of artisanal explosive devices, including anti-vehicle mines; victim-activated, pressure plate devices that appear to meet the APMBC definition of anti-personnel mines; and command-detonated devices.⁸

A mine or improvised explosive device (IED) detonation in January 2019 injured four Niger soldiers near Titahoune (Tillabery)⁹ and an improvised device detonated under a convoy of vehicles in an ambush by heavily-armed insurgents in Tillabery in May 2019 during which 28 soldiers were killed.¹⁰ A 12-ton armoured US Army vehicle was disabled in June 2019 by an improvised mine on the outskirts of Ouallem town (Tillabery). The device was activated by a weather-proofed pressure plate linked to an 81mm mortar. Its explosion detonated a main charge consisting of nearly a dozen 60mm mortar shells.¹¹ A car bomb attack on a Nigerien army base near the border with Mali in July started an assault in which insurgents killed 18 Nigerien soldiers.¹²

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by the National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Weapons (Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites, CNCCAI), which reports directly to the President.

All demining has been carried out by the Nigerien army. In 2015, Niger said it had 60 deminers but lacked sufficient equipment for them to be able to work at the same time.¹³

NPA conducted evaluation missions to Niger in May 2015 and December 2017 to assess the possibility of assisting Niger to meet its Article 5 deadline. Contacts continued in 2019, exploring the possibility of NPA setting up a programme to support CNCCAI clearance operations.¹⁴

GENDER

Niger's latest (third) Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in 2016, made no reference to gender.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Niger submitted an Article 7 report in 2018, the first report since 2012. It also delivered statements to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings and Meeting of States Parties in 2018.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Niger does not have a strategic plan for mine action. Its third Article 5 deadline extension request in 2016 did not set out a workplan or benchmarks for survey or clearance as requested by the APMBC Committee on Article 5 Implementation.

Niger's Article 7 Report for 2013–18 set out a rudimentary operational timeline providing for clearance of 196,253m² by 2020, including 56,000m² in 2018, 100,253m² in 2019, and 40,000m² in 2020.¹⁵

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In its Third Article 5 Extension Request Niger reported that, it had drafted national mine action standards (NMAS) in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and standard operating procedures.¹⁶ No information has been provided on whether Niger's NMAS have been finalised and adopted.

A Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) team's visit to Adama in December 2017 noted manual clearance was the main tool of demining by Niger's army engineers but highlighted the operational challenges. The M-51 mines mostly found in the area contained no components and were largely undetectable

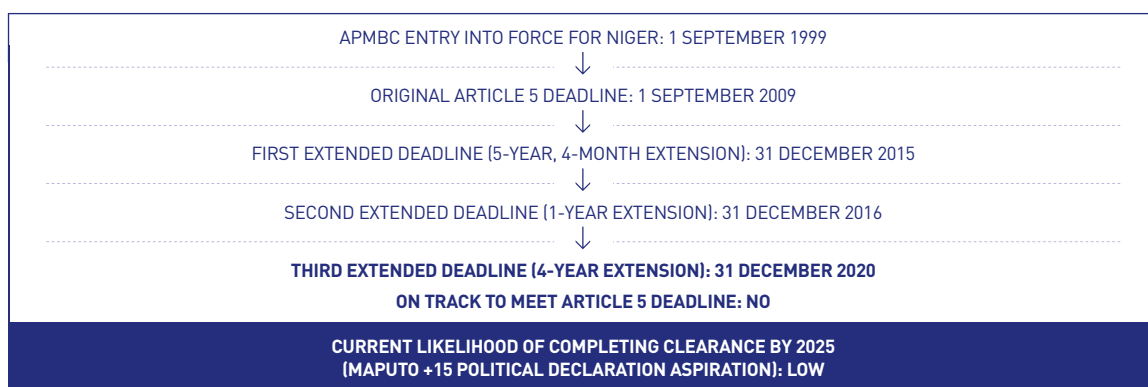
by conventional metal detectors and sufficiently small as to make detection by GPR-based detectors unreliable calling for full manual excavation. The process was slow and the sandy environment, prone to subsidence and back-filling, made it difficult to maintain consistent excavation depths. Mechanical excavation using sifting and screening equipment would dramatically improve the speed of technical survey and clearance but faced severe logistical challenges because of the long distances, absence of roads, limited provisions for maintenance and cost. Mine Detection Dogs were also deemed unsuitable because of the extreme climate and the potential for deep-buried mines.¹⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

CLEARANCE IN 2018

Niger claimed it was unable to conduct any clearance in 2018 because of the lack of financial resources, the higher priority given to counterterrorism activities, and the "failure" of unspecified international organisations to respect their commitments. It pledged to resume demining activities at the start of 2019.¹⁸ CNCCA reported deployed 30 deminers in mid-June 2019 to conduct mine clearance in Madama. The operation was reportedly funded by Niger from national resources.¹⁹

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the four-year extension request granted by states parties in 2016), Niger is 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 is not on track to meet this deadline.

It is unclear what progress Niger has made since the Maputo Review Conference in 2014. The amount of clearance reported by Niger from 2014 to 2016 in Madama has varied from 17,000m² and 750 mines to 39,304m² and 1,075 mines.²⁰ NPA's assessment mission in December 2017 received reports of clearance ranging from 29,000m² to 39,304m².²¹

Niger submitted a second request for an extension to its Article 5 deadline on 12 November 2015, less than two months before the expiry of its first extended deadline. States Parties observed this did not conform to procedure and left insufficient time for analysis and discussion. The decision also observed that the plan presented by Niger in the request was "workable but lacks ambition". States parties agreed to give Niger a one-year extension and requested that it provide, in its revised submission, information on the areas already released disaggregated by the method of release and an updated workplan listing all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines and annual clearance projections during the period covered by the request.²²

The third extension request Niger submitted in 2016 did not include such a workplan and a request from the Committee on Article 5 Implementation for additional information received no reply.²³

Niger's third extension request said it needed more than US\$3.2 million in funding to fulfil its remaining Article 5 obligations, including \$1 million for the CNCCAI from the national budget over the five-year period, and \$2.2 million to be mobilised from external donors.²⁴ At the June 2018 APBMC Intersessional Meetings, Niger stated that without the support of partners it was unlikely that Niger would be able to complete clearance by its Article 5 deadline and reserved the right to submit another extension request by the end of December 2019.²⁵

Niger has made repeated appeals for international assistance for mine action and claimed receiving no external support for its activities, save for assistance from France for medical evacuation in the case of demining accidents.²⁶ NPA and DDG have made offers of assistance to Niger but received no reply.²⁷

Table 2: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance (2014–18)

Year	Area cleared (verified) (km ²)
2018	0
2017	0
2016	0.01
2015	0.01
2014	0
Total	0.02

- 1 Article 7 Report (for 2013 to April 2018), Annex 1, p. 19.
- 2 NPA, "End of Mission Report: CTA-HMA Inputs", undated but 2018.
- 3 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8; Analysis of Niger's 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.
- 4 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 6–8.
- 5 "Explosive developments: The growing threat of IEDs in Western Niger", The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) Project, 19 June 2019, p. 3.
- 6 Executive Summary of Niger's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 27 November 2015; and Statement of Niger, Third APBMC Review Conference, Maputo, 24 June 2014.
- 7 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 6.
- 8 "Explosive Developments: The Growing Threat of IEDs in Western Niger", ACLED Project, 19 June 2019, pp. 2–5.
- 9 "Niger: military convoy hit by IED attack in Tillaberi region Jan. 31", GardaWorld, 1 February 2019, at: bit.ly/32lb5Lw.
- 10 "Niger: Attaque meurtrière contre l'armée à la frontière malienne", Jeune Afrique, 16 May 2019, at: bit.ly/32EZsvg.
- 11 T. Gibbons-Neff, "Roadside blast in Niger that hit Americans shows growing threat", New York Times, 14 June 2019, at: nyti.ms/2M2mZKA.
- 12 "Niger: 18 soldiers killed in attack on military outpost near Inates", TheDefensePost, 2 July 2019, at: bit.ly/2M4lETt.
- 13 Statement of Niger, APBMC Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), Geneva, 25 June 2015.
- 14 Emails from Jean-Denis Larsen, DRC Country Director, NPA, 19 July 2017, 3 October 2018, and 15 August 2019.
- 15 Article 7 Report (for 2013 to April 2018), Annex 1, p. 23.
- 16 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8–9.
- 17 NPA, "End of Mission Report: CTA-HMA Inputs", undated but 2018.
- 18 Statements of Niger, Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), 7 June 2018; and 17th Meeting of States Parties, 27 November 2018.
- 19 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 15 August 2019.
- 20 Analysis of Niger's 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3; and Article 7 Report (for 2013 to April 2018).
- 21 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 19 July 2017.
- 22 "Decision on the request submitted by Niger for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention", APBMC 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 4 December 2015.
- 23 Analysis of Niger's 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 2.
- 24 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 11–13; and Executive Summary of Niger's 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.
- 25 Statement of Niger, Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), Geneva, 7–8 June 2018.
- 26 Statements of Niger, Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), Geneva, 19–20 May 2016; and 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015; 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13; and Executive Summary of Niger's 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.
- 27 Email from Chris Natale, Mine Action Advisor, NPA, 29 July 2016; Statement of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, 15th Meeting of States Parties, Santiago, 28 November 2016.