# SUDAN

**ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 APRIL 2019**
(NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE)

| PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE | For 2015 | For 2014 |
|---|---|---|
| Problem understood | 5 | 5 |
| Target date for completion of mine clearance | 3 | 5 |
| Targeted clearance | 5 | 5 |
| Efficient clearance | 5 | 5 |
| National funding of programme | 6 | 5 |
| Timely clearance | 5 | 5 |
| Land release system in place | 5 | 5 |
| National mine action standards | 5 | 5 |
| Reporting on progress | 6 | 5 |
| Improving performance | 3 | 5 |
| **PERFORMANCE SCORE: POOR** | **4.8** | **5** |

## PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

Sudan's mine action programme performance output declined in 2015, with a significant decrease in the amount of mined area released compared to 2014, said to be mainly due to funding constraints.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Sudan should regularly update states parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) on access to, and progress in, clearing Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, as security conditions permit.**
- **Sudan should re-establish conditions that allow international mine action organisations to conduct land release in Sudan.**
- **Continued efforts should be made to ensure reporting and recording of mine action data according to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) land-release terminology.**
- **Sudan should develop a resource-mobilisation strategy for its mine action programme.**

## CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2015, Sudan had 112 areas containing anti-personnel mines covering a total of just under 21km$^2$. According to the Sudanese National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), of this total 2.8km$^2$ is confirmed to contain anti-personnel mines, while 18.1km$^2$ is suspected to contain anti-personnel mines.[1] A further 39 areas suspected to contain anti-vehicle mines cover a total size of nearly 6km$^2$, as set out in Table 1.[2]

Sudan's mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination results from decades-long conflict since its independence in 1956. Twenty years of civil war, during which mines and other explosive weapons were used heavily by all parties to the conflicts, resulted in widespread contamination that has since claimed thousands of victims.[3] In January 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed, ending the civil war and ultimately leading to the independence of the south in July 2011. However, since South Sudan's independence, conflicts have again broken out in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states and in the Abyei region, leading to new contamination from unexploded ordnance (UXO).

**Table 1: Mine contamination as at end 2015**[4]

| Type of contamination | Confirmed hazardous areas | Area (m$^2$) | Suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) | Area (m$^2$) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anti-personnel mines | 63 | 2,799,054 | 49 | 18,115,237 |
| Anti-vehicle mines | 0 | 0 | 39 | 5,951,369 |
| **Totals** | **63** | **2,799,054** | **88** | **24,066,606** |

1 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, Chief of Operations, NMAC, 9 May 2016; APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form C, p. 8.

2 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

3 United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), "About UNMAS in Sudan", updated May 2016, at: http://www.mineaction.org/programmes/sudan.

4 Emails from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016; and Ghasan Ibrahim Mohamed, Operations Assistant, NMAC, 8 September 2016.

As at the end of 2015, Sudan's total estimated remaining mine and ERW contamination affected ten of its eighteen states: Blue Nile; Central, East, North, South, and West Darfur; Gadaref; Kassala; Red Sea; and South Kordofan.[5] Of these, five were affected by anti-personnel mines: South Kordofan, Kassala, Blue Nile, Red Sea, and Gadaref, as set out in Table 2. Contamination was largely concentrated in South Kordofan, followed by Kassala, and Blue Nile states, with Red Sea and Gadaref states each containing 10,000m$^2$ or less anti-personnel mine contamination remaining at the end of the year. No mine contamination has been reported in Darfur, where the main threat is from UXO.[6]

**Table 2: Anti-personnel mine contamination by province as at end 2015[7]**

| Province | CHAs | Area (m$^2$) | SHAs | Area (m$^2$) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blue Nile | 4 | 219,663 | 5 | 905,583 |
| South Kordofan | 48 | 2,182,548 | 36 | 15,615,710 |
| Kassala | 4 | 203,970 | 6 | 1,576,744 |
| Red Sea | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7,200 |
| Gadaref | 7 | 192,873 | 1 | 10,000 |
| **Totals** | **63** | **2,799,054** | **49** | **18,115,237** |

A Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) was conducted in 2007–09 covering Blue Nile, Gadaref, Kassala, Red Sea, and South Kordofan states. Since then, "ad hoc" reports of additional mine-/ERW-contaminated areas have been registered as dangerous areas in the database, causing the LIS baseline of 221 hazards to expand significantly, including in areas not originally surveyed.[8] At the end of 2015, a total of 2,631 hazardous areas had been registered in the IMSMA database since 2002, of which the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) reported 2,398 had been released through various clearance methods, leaving a total of 233 hazardous areas with a size of just over 32.1km$^2$ remaining to be addressed. In 2015, 97 new hazardous areas were registered and 87 areas cleared, with an additional 540km of roads assessed.[9]

Mine Action Review is unaware of any confirmed reports of new use of anti-personnel mines in Blue Nile or South Kordofan states since conflict began in 2012. However, in 2013, non-state armed groups were alleged to have laid new mines on the border between Sudan's White Nile state and South Sudan's Upper Nile region, with reports of civilian and livestock casualties.[10]

In 2002–May 2016, at least 2,013 mine and ERW victims were registered in Sudan's Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. UNMAS reported in 2016 that over the past three years, the number of mine and ERW victims has risen considerably, increasing by 20% in 2013–14 with 36 casualties reported, and up 77% in 2014–15 with 53 casualties recorded, including 19 persons killed and 34 injured.[11] Of the total casualties, more than 23% were children.[12]

Mine and ERW contamination continues to pose a daily threat to the lives of civilians in Sudan and also has a significant detrimental impact on the socio-economic development of local communities. NMAC reported that, in 2015, nomads and farmers were particularly at risk from the threat of mines and ERW, along with returning internally displaced persons.[13] In the Abyei area, the UN has on repeated occasions expressed concern over the threat of mines and ERW and the impact of contamination in obstructing the safe return of displaced persons and preventing safe migration.[14] The presence of mines and ERW also hinders provision of humanitarian assistance and access to the conflict-affected states.[15]

While no mine contamination is reported in Darfur, contamination from ERW continues to pose a serious threat to civilians, to peacekeepers from the UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), and to the delivery of humanitarian aid. ERW in Darfur includes unexploded air-delivered bombs, rockets, artillery and mortar shells, and grenades.[16]

Since South Sudan's independence, new conflicts in Abyei, and in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, have resulted in increased UXO contamination in Sudan.[17] The IMSMA database does not hold data on contamination in Abyei due to armed conflict and restricted access to the area.[18]

5 Later, in May 2016, Gadaref state was announced free of known mine and ERW contamination. Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

6 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Forms C and F.

7 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

8 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request Executive Summary, 25 November 2013, pp. 2–3.

9 NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report – December 2015".

10 "Landmines kill and maim civilians on Sudan – South Sudan border", *Radio Tamazuj*, 19 June 2013, at: https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/landmines-kill-and-maim-civilians-sudan-south-sudan-border-source.

11 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Sudan", updated May 2016; and NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report", December 2015.

12 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Sudan", updated May 2016.

13 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

14 UN Security Council Resolutions 2104 (2013), and 2205 (2015).

15 UNMAS, "2016 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan", at: http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/print/country_portfolio6621-1530-96521.pdf.

16 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Darfur", updated February 2016, at: http://www.mineaction.org/programmes/darfur.

17 Human Rights Watch, "Under Siege: Indiscriminate Bombing and Abuses in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States", 6 December 2012; "Unexploded Ordnance Kill 13 People in South Kordofan", *All Africa*, 10 August 2013; and UN, "UNMAS Annual Report 2012", New York, August 2013, p. 10.

18 Email from Javed Habibulhaq, UNDP, 11 May 2015.

# PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) and NMAC manage Sudan's mine action programme. In 2005, UN Security Council Resolution 1590 and the signing of the CPA established the legal framework for the UN Mine Action Office (UNMAO) in Sudan to manage quality assurance (QA) of all mine action activities in Sudan in the framework of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).[19] That same year, NMAC started working in partnership with UNMAO, NMAA was set up, and a National Mine Action Policy Framework was developed, revised, and then approved by August 2006.[20]

Following UNMIS and UNMAO's closure in July 2011 upon the independence of South Sudan, NMAC assumed full ownership of national mine action with responsibility for coordinating all mine clearance, including accreditation and certification of mine clearance agencies.[21] In January 2015, UNMAS, which had opened an emergency programme in Sudan in 2002, reassumed its lead in UN mine action efforts in Sudan and its role in providing assistance and technical support to NMAC, after a one-year handover to the UN Development Programme in 2014.[22]

In 2016, the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) continued to monitor the activities of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Abyei, which it has done since the 2011 outbreak of heavy conflict in the area.[23] As UNISFA does not have a mandate to conduct mine clearance, UNMAS continued its UN Security Council-mandated role in Abyei, which includes the identification and clearance of mines in the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone around Abyei and facilitating access by assessing and clearing priority areas and routes.[24]

In the Darfur region, under the umbrella of UNAMID, the Ordnance Disposal Office (ODO) works in direct support of UNAMID priorities.[25] In 2012, UNAMID contracted The Development Initiative (TDI), a commercial company, to assess, survey, mark, identify, and clear contamination in all five Darfur states.[26] In 2015, TDI's contract ended and it was replaced by Dynasafe MineTech Limited (DML) (formerly MineTech International, MTI) for 2015/2016.[27] Mine action in Darfur is funded through assessed peacekeeping funds for UNAMID.[28]

## Strategic Planning

Sudan has a multi-year National Mine Action Plan for 2013–19. According to NMAC, the plan was designed in light of the overall security situation in Sudan and the capacity for mine action and types of assets available. The plan includes details of operations for addressing contamination in all affected states by year, with a focus on the eastern states of Kassala, Red Sea, and parts of Blue Nile. When security permits, work will start according to the plan in South Kordofan and the remaining parts of Blue Nile states.[29]

NMAC reported an annual operational plan for 2015 was developed, which included clear objectives, inputs and outputs, timeframes, and budgets, in accordance with the multi-year National Mine Action Plan and in consultation with relevant stakeholders. In May 2016, however, NMAC said it was not possible to implement the activities according to the plan, primarily due to lack of funding and the security situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile.[30]

## Operators

In 2015, no international non-governmental organisation (NGOs) was demining in Sudan. One international NGO, Association for Aid and Relief Japan (AAR Japan), carried out risk education, along with national NGOs Friends of Peace and Development Organization (FPDO) and JASMAR for Human Security. The only international operator to carry out clearance activities in 2015 was TDI, which carried out explosive ordnance destruction (EOD) tasks in Darfur in support of UNAMID, and deployed four multi-task teams (MTTs) totalling 66 people.[31] In 2015, TDI reported continuing efforts to train national demining teams. TDI's MTT contract, which was up for re-tender in 2015, was won by DML for 2015/2016.[32]

In 2015, NMAC called for other international NGO operators to undertake mine action in Sudan.[33] Previously, two international mine clearance NGOs with programmes in Sudan closed down operations owing to government restrictions that impeded their operations.[34] DanChurchAid (DCA) ended its operations in 2012.[35] In June 2012, the Sudanese government's Humanitarian

19 Revised APMBC Article 5 Extension Request, 30 July 2013, p. 6.

20 Ibid.

21 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2013), p. 4.

22 Email from Javed Habibulhaq, UNMAS, 13 June 2016.

23 UN Interim Security Force for Abyei, "UNISFA Mandate", undated but accessed at: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unisfa/mandate.shtml.

24 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Abyei", updated May 2016, at: http://www.mineaction.org/programmes/abyei; UN Interim Security Force for Abyei, "UNISFA Mandate", undated but accessed at: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unisfa/ mandate.shtml; and UNMAS, "UNMAS Annual Report 2012", New York, August 2013, p. 10. UN Security Council Resolution 2287 (2016) renewed the mandate of UNISFA again in May 2016 (until 15 November 2016), repeating the obligation for the governments of Sudan and South Sudan to continue to facilitate UNMAS's deployment to ensure the freedom of movement of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, and the identification and clearance of mines in the Abyei area and the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone.

25 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Sudan", updated August 2014.

26 Ibid.

27 Email from Stephen Saffin, Chief Operating Officer, TDI, 30 May 2016.

28 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Sudan", updated January 2016.

29 Revised APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 30 July 2013, pp. 28–33.

30 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

31 Email from Javed Habibulhaq, UNDP, 6 April 2015; APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2014), Form A, p. 16; and email from Stephen Saffin, TDI, 30 May 2016.

32 Email from Stephen Saffin, TDI, 30 May 2016.

33 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2014), Form A, p. 16.

34 ICBL, "ICBL Comments on Sudan's Article 5 Extension Request", May 2013.

35 DCA, "Previous Programmes: Sudan", undated, at: http://www.danchurchaid.org/what-we-do/mine-action/previous-programmes.

Aid Commission (HAC) ordered Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and six other NGOs that provided humanitarian aid to leave Gadaref, Kassala, and Red Sea states in eastern Sudan.[36] Following months of negotiations with HAC and donors, MAG ended its operations in Sudan, leaving in early 2013.[37]

National demining operators are JASMAR for Human Security, the National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD), and FPDO.[38] In 2015, a total of six manual clearance teams and one mine detection dog (MDD) team were deployed for mine action operations. This was a reduction in capacity from 2014, when NMAC reported that in addition to the six manual clearance teams, three MDD teams, and a mechanical team were also operational.[39]

## Standards

In May 2015, NMAC stated that a review of National Technical Standards and Guidelines was ongoing and that a new version would be published on its website after their approval.[40] A year later, in May 2016, NMAC reported that the NMAS had been finalised but were awaiting final approval. According to NMAC, draft standards are shared with all partners and mine action operators during their accreditation process.[41]

## Quality Management

According to NMAC, a QA programme became operational in 2006 with three regionally based teams of one or two persons each. The teams are based in Damazeen, Kassala, and Kadugli, as well as in Khartoum, with each team responsible for one to three states.[42] In May 2016, NMAC reported that its quality management section regularly monitors all field operations and conducted eight quality management visits to the field in 2015.[43] TDI confirmed that an internal QA process was in place, and that its teams also received QA visits from UNMAS and NMAC during the year.[44]

## Information Management

NMAC reported that database clean-up began in January 2013 as part of preparations to transfer to an upgraded version of IMSMA. It expected the process to have no effect on areas reported as cleared in the database but believed that it would affect the amount of cancelled areas recorded, which it said "will be incorporated into the database and in turn will minimise the difference reflected between areas cleared and the size of total hazards closed". As noted above, Sudan's IMSMA database does not contain information on the disputed Abyei area.[45]

In 2014, discussions were underway with an international donor to provide in-kind support for information management and for an updated version of IMSMA to be installed – a priority for NMAC. The updated version could not be imported, however, due to its geographic information system (GIS) function, which is subject to United States (US) import restrictions.[46] In June 2016, UNMAS reported that the new version of IMSMA will finally be imported to Sudan and that the embargo issue had been resolved with the support of the US Embassy in Khartoum and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. It stated that Sudan should receive the new IMSMA version and complete the data clean-up process by the end of 2016.[47] NMAC confirmed that a committee had been formed with UNMAS to finalise the clean-up and that work was ongoing.[48]

36 "Sudan causes frustration among NGOs", *News 24,* 13 June 2012.

37 MAG, "MAG departs Sudan after six years of work to remove remnants of conflict", 7 March 2013.

38 Email from Javed Habibulhaq, UNDP, 2 June 2016.

39 Emails from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016; and Javed Habibulhaq, UNDP, 11 May 2015.

40 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2014), Form F, p. 12.

41 Emails from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May and 8 June 2016.

42 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 30 July 2013, p. 21.

43 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

44 Email from Stephen Saffin, TDI, 30 May 2016.

45 Email from Javed Habibulhaq, UNDP, 11 May 2015.

46 Interview with Javed Habibulhaq, UNDP, in London, 25 February 2015.

47 Email from Javed Habibulhaq, UNMAS, 2 June 2016.

48 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 8 June 2016.

# LAND RELEASE

According to NMAC, overall land release in Sudan significantly decreased in 2015 compared to 2014, with only 1.67km$^2$ of mined and battle area released in 2015, compared to 4.22km$^2$ in 2014. The decrease was ascribed to reduced funding for mine action and a corresponding reduction in the number of teams deployed.[49] NMAC does not publicly disaggregate clearance by operator.

The total of 1.67km$^2$ released in 2015, all by clearance, included only 0.4km$^2$ of mined area containing anti-personnel mines; the remainder was battle area was cleared. Thus, no land was released by survey. This is compared to the release of 3.7km$^2$ of anti-personnel mine contamination in 2014, including 2.8km$^2$ by clearance and technical survey, and a further 0.9km$^2$ cancelled by non-technical survey.[50]

According to UNMAS and NMAC, as of December 2015, a total of 95.3km$^2$ of dangerous areas had been released and 37,898km of roads verified and cleared. A total of 10,026 anti-personnel mines, 3,154 anti-vehicle mines, and 62,327 items of UXO were destroyed in the process.[51]

## Survey in 2015

As noted above, no land was released in Sudan by survey in 2015. However, NMAC reported that the national demining units confirmed that 12 suspected hazardous areas with a total size of 210,691m$^2$ were contaminated with anti-personnel mines.[52] In 2014, 1.2km$^2$ was released through survey, including nearly 0.9km$^2$ through non-technical survey and 0.3km$^2$ by technical survey.[53]

## Clearance in 2015

According to NMAC, 423,158m$^2$ was released by clearance in 2015, including just over 278,000m$^2$ by manual clearance, 30,000m$^2$ by mechanical clearance, and a further 115,000m$^2$ by MDDs. The majority of clearance (nearly 253,000m$^2$) occurred in Kassala state, while an average of approx. 57,000m$^2$ cleared in Blue Nile, Gadaref, and Red Sea states. A total of 28 anti-personnel mines were destroyed (all in Gadaref state), along with 23 anti-vehicle mines, and 61,329 items of UXO.[54]

In 2015, NMAC reported a total of nearly 1.25km$^2$ of battle area clearance (BAC): 65,250m$^2$ of sub-surface clearance and 1.18km$^2$ of surface clearance. This was an increase from 2014, when NMAC reported total BAC of 0.57km$^2$.[55]

While NMAC's records do not disaggregate land-release figures between different operators, TDI reported that its "output remained steady" in 2015 and productivity continued to be enhanced by greater independence of TDI teams from UNAMID escorts and a switch to escorts from the Sudanese Armed Forces and local police, which allowed teams more freedom of movement and a greater ability to reach suspected hazardous areas. It stated that the SAF and police escorts provided excellent support for its teams during the year.[56]

From June 2011 through the first half of 2015, ongoing conflict prevented mine action activities from being carried out in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. In Darfur, which is heavily affected by UXO, EOD tasks could only be carried out in certain accessible areas due to ongoing instability.[57] Land-release operations were only possible in Kassala and the eastern states, where the security situation remained stable. Demining operations resumed in Gadaref state in December 2015, with the objective of declaring Gadaref state free of mines and ERW.[58]

In accordance with Sudan's national mine action strategic plan, as soon as the security situation improves mine clearance is scheduled to restart in the conflict-affected areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.[59] Positively, in June 2015, FPDO was deployed to conduct land release in South Kordofan, while JASMAR and the NDU also commenced land release in Blue Nile state, with Swiss funding.[60] Sudan reported, however, that access for clearance and survey operations remained limited in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states due to insecurity.[61]

## Deminer Safety

There were no reported accidents involving mine action personnel in 2015. However, one national demining NGO was attacked in 2015, resulting in the loss of a vehicle but no personnel were harmed.[62]

49 Ibid., 9 May 2016.

50 NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report – June 2015". Sudan's IMSMA database reports list land released through technical survey as "cancelled" and land released through non-technical survey as "cancelled GMAA (General Mine Action Assessment)". According to NMAC, a total of 122,341m$^2$ was also processed as 'overlap' as part of area confirmation of clearance in 2015. Email from Ghasan Ibrahim Mohamed, NMAC, 8 September 2016

51 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Sudan", updated January 2016; and APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form F, p. 16. Database clean-up in 2015 identified that four items of UXO destroyed had mistakenly been reported as anti-personnel mines. Thus the figures reported for anti-personnel mines destroyed as at end 2014 and end 2015 are correct: 10,002 mines were reported as destroyed at the end of 2014: in 2015, a further 28 were destroyed, and 4 were subtracted from the total as misreported UXO, bringing the total to 10,026. Email from Ghasan Ibrahim Mohamed, Assistant of Operations, NMAC, 8 September 2016

52 Email from Ghasan Ibrahim Mohamed, NMAC, 8 September 2016.

53 NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report – June 2015".

54 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016; and APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form F, p. 12. According to NMAC, a total of 122,341m$^2$ was processed as 'overlap' as part of area confirmation of clearance in 2015. Email from Ghasan Ibrahim Mohamed, NMAC, 8 September 2016.

55 NMAC, "ISMSA Monthly Report", December 2015.

56 Email from Stephen Saffin, TDI, 30 May 2016.

57 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2014), Form F.

58 NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report – December 2015".

59 Ibid; and NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report – December 2015".

60 Email from Javed Habibulhaq, UNMAS, 7 October 2015.

61 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form F, p. 15.

62 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

## ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the five-year extension granted by states parties in 2013), Sudan is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 April 2019. Sudan is not on track to meet this extended deadline.

Despite hopeful prospects in June 2011 for completion of Sudan's Article 5 clearance obligations by its original deadline of 1 April 2014,[63] a combination of factors was asserted for the failure to do so: funding shortfalls; ongoing instability; lack of access in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states; (formerly) prioritisation of clearance in areas now within South Sudan; discovery of new hazardous areas; and the departure of international NGOs. In 2013, Sudan requested and was granted a five-year extension to its Article 5 deadline.[64] Table 3 summarises progress in clearance over the past five years.

**Table 3: Land release in 2011–15 (km²)[65]**

| Year | Area cleared | Release by NTS and TS | Total area released |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2015 | 0.42 | 0 | 0.42 |
| 2014 | 2.47 | 1.18 | 3.65 |
| 2013 | 0.77 | 9.61 | 10.38 |
| 2012 | 0.55 | 0 | 0.55 |
| 2011 | 1.49 | 0.15 | 1.64 |
| **Totals** | **5.7** | **10.94** | **16.64** |

Under its extension request plan, Sudan planned to clear all contaminated areas in the states of Darfur, Gadaref, Kassala, and Red Sea by 2016, when clearance is due to begin in Blue Nile and Kordofan states.[66] In addition, Sudan is scheduled to continue the general mine action assessment (GMAA) in areas requiring survey or re-survey. Sudan indicated that GMAA would be completed in Blue Nile and South Kordofan within six months of the survey beginning (dependent on an improved security situation).[67]

After demining operations resumed in December 2015, in May 2016, Gadaref state was announced as being free of all known mine and ERW contamination.[68]

In 2016, NMAC stated that a number of international NGOs had expressed an interest in working in Sudan, which it said would further strengthen national capacity and deliver standardised quality of survey and clearance activities. With more qualified mine action operators and higher output, NMAC said it believed that Sudan could meet its Article 5 deadline for clearance of anti-personnel mine contamination of 1 April 2019 in a "timely manner".[69]

63 Statement of Sudan, APMBC Intersessional Meetings (Standing Committee on Mine Action), Geneva, 22 May 2012.

64 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Executive Summary, 25 November 2013, p. 3.

65 NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report – December 2015".

66 APMBC Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 30 July 2013, p. 61.

67 Ibid, p. 31.

68 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Sudan", updated May 2016.

69 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

Sudan has also indicated that it expected to fill the gap created by the departure of international mine action operators by: maintaining and increasing the capacity of the National Demining Units (NDUs) through further training; engagement of FPDO and JASMAR in survey and clearance operations: and more QA visits to the field.[70] In 2013, NMAC accredited FPDO and JASMAR to conduct land release.[71]

According to its extension request plan, in 2015, Sudan expected to cancel a total of 1km$^2$ through non-technical survey and release a further 5km$^2$ through technical survey and clearance.[72] It did not meet these targets, releasing only 0.4km$^2$ through clearance.[73] Under the plan, Sudan expected to cancel a further 0.7km$^2$ of contamination through non-technical survey and release 3.3km$^2$ through technical survey and clearance in 2016.[74]

Sudan's ability to meet its Article 5 extension request milestones remains heavily dependent upon improvement in the security situation of the heavily affected states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan, where access remains restricted and UXO contamination continues to increase.[75] In 2015, Sudan also cited the frequent movement of internally displaced persons, continued finding of additional hazards, the high metallic content in mined areas, and the rainy season as additional hindrances to meeting its extension request targets.[76] Other significant factors which continue to impede Sudan's progress include a lack of funding and the lack of clearance capacity formerly provided by international mine clearance operators.

Similarly, in Abyei and the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, UNMAS reported significant challenges, including: commitment from the governments of Sudan and South Sudan to implementing UN Security Council resolutions on Abyei; ongoing conflict and increased contamination; regional insecurity and curtailed freedom of movement; and the rainy season from June to the end of September, during which demining operations are not possible.[77]

Due to the challenges it faced to implement mine action activities planned under its extension request for 2015, NMAC again recommended revisions to its extension request plan and the amount of suspected or confirmed mined areas to be released in 2016–19. In its latest Article 7 transparency report submitted in 2016, NMAC revised upward the planned number of mined areas to be released per year: from 12 to 43 in 2016; from 15 to 35 in 2017; from 17 to 24 in 2018; and from 3 to 10 in 2019, due to its failure to meet its ambitious target of 61 areas in 2015.[78]

According to NMAC, in 2015, the Government of Sudan provided the equivalent of US$1 million for mine action in the country by paying all NMAC staff salaries, and covering the operational cost of NMAC, and some of the deployment costs of the NDUs. This is a significant increase from 2014, when the government reportedly contributed a total of SDG3 million (equivalent to almost US$0.5 million).[79] In May 2016, NMAC reported funding for the mine action programme had become a key item within the Sudanese national budget.[80]

In May 2016, UNMAS reported that if the necessary funding were secured by mid-2016, all remaining known mine and ERW contamination could be addressed and allow Sudan's eastern states to be declared as clear of landmines by the end of 2017.[81]

According to NMAC, in total in 2015, Sudan's mine action programme received a total of US$1.6 million, compared to its total funding requirements of $22 million.[82] UNMAS stated that Sudan received a total of only $300,000 out of $7 million requested for mine action under the Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan budget during the year.[83] In May 2016, NMAC informed states parties to the APMBC that though it had a total of US$4.4 million in funding for mine action activities during the year, it was still US$8 million short of its budget.[84]

70 APMBC Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 30 July 2013, p. 32.

71 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2014), Form A, p. 4.

72 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form F, p. 15. NMAC noted significant progress in the number of minefields closed and land released through technical survey and non-technical survey compared with the number of SHAs addressed, demonstrating "the positive impact of using land release policy".

73 NMAC, "IMSMA Monthly Report – December 2015".

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75 ICBL-CMC, "ICBL Comments on Sudan's Article 5 Extension Request", May 2013; and Human Rights Watch, "Under Siege: Indiscriminate Bombing and Abuses in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States", 6 December 2012; "Unexploded Ordnance Kill 13 People in South Kordofan", *All Africa*, 10 August 2013; and UNMAS, "UNMAS Annual Report 2012", New York, August 2013, p.10.

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77 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Abyei", updated May 2016.

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