

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- India should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a state party to the APMBC, India has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of anti-personnel mine contamination is not known. Large-scale mine-laying was conducted by government forces on and near the Line of Control (LoC) separating India and Pakistan during the 1971 war and the 2001–02 stand-off between the two states. Anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines were laid on cultivated land and pasture, as well as around infrastructure and a number of villages.

Despite occasional official claims that all the mines laid were subsequently cleared, reports of contamination and casualties have persisted. A media report in 2013 cited a government statement that about 20km² of irrigated land was still mined in the Akhnoor sector of the LoC alone.¹ In June 2016, India's *NDTV* news reported that the Indian army was demining areas of the LoC in Rajouri district, Kashmir, in order to return land to communities for agricultural use as it vacated fields near the border that were reportedly taken over and mined during the Kargil Conflict in 1999 and Operation Parakaram in 2001.²

Landmine incidents continue to be reported, primarily involving Indian army personnel, but also civilians. According to a list compiled from media reports and police sources, from January to December 2018, 25 military personnel were injured by anti-personnel mines near the LoC. During the same period, nine civilians were injured by mines and one man was killed when he stepped on an anti-personnel mine near the LoC in the Poonch district.³

Security forces have also reported extensive use of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by Maoist fighters in the north-eastern states of Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand causing civilian and military casualties. In July 2018, it was reported that 15 anti-vehicle mines placed by Maoist rebels were neutralised by security forces in Garhwa district, Jharkhand state.⁴ However, mine types are usually not specified and may include command-detonated explosive devices as well as mines (i.e. victim-activated explosive devices).⁵

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

India has no civilian mine action programme. The Director-General of Military Operations decides on mine clearance after receiving assessment reports from the command headquarters of the respective districts where mine clearance is needed.

LAND RELEASE

There is no publicly available official information on land release in 2018. The Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for clearing mines placed by non-state armed groups.⁶ In July 2017, for instance, according to a media account, the Indian Army was manually clearing mines in the border districts of Jammu and Kashmir and was procuring more advanced demining equipment with a view to improving safety and decreasing the number of deminer casualties.⁷ Media reports have indicated the police also play an active part in clearing mines and other explosive hazards on an ad hoc basis in states dealing with insurgency.⁸

India has not reported that any mine clearance has occurred in its Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 transparency reports since 2006.⁹ In August 2016, India stated that "mines used for military operations were laid within fenced and marked perimeters and were cleared after operations".¹⁰

