

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Pakistan 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, Pakistan 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 in Pakistan is not known. Pakistan remains affected by mines and other explosive ordnance resulting from the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979–89) and three wars with India, as well as from more recent and continuing conflicts in areas bordering Afghanistan, including, in particular, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

In 2018, Pakistan reiterated past statements that it “faces no problem of uncleared mines”. It again acknowledged that the army laid mines on its eastern border with India during an escalation of tensions in 2001–02, but stated those mines were all cleared and that no mines have since been laid.¹

In 2018, Pakistan stated that non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have employed improvised explosive devices (IEDs) including mines during attacks.² In fact, according to media reports across Pakistan in 2018–19, civilian mine casualties were from mines of an improvised nature laid by NSAGs, from mines laid by troops along the Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan, and from mines and other explosive hazards in South Waziristan (in an area that had been cleared and declared safe by the military).³ According to Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), in 2018, of the 1,538 deaths and injuries from explosive violence in Pakistan, 2% were caused by landmines.⁴ In 2017, according to a report from Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Pakistan had the world’s highest number of recorded casualties from anti-vehicle mines, amounting to 28% of the global total.⁵

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Pakistan has no formal civilian mine action programme. Pakistani military engineering units are believed to be responsible for mine clearance in conflict zones, while the Frontier Constabulary has said it conducts mine clearance in contaminated areas of Baluchistan, FATA, and other conflict zones in the North-West Frontier Province.⁶

LAND RELEASE

There are no reports of formal survey or clearance of mined area in 2018. Pakistan reported a total of 232 attacks causing casualties due to improvised explosive devices (IEDs, which include anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, although the figures are not disaggregated) “all over the country”.⁷

According to a media report, on 15 December 2018 an unnamed senior security official said that 22 demining teams were being formed by the Pakistani Army to defuse and remove IEDs and mines in the North Waziristan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in the FATA. These deminers would be in addition to the reported 43 teams already working in the seven former tribal districts.⁸

1 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 2018), Form B; and Statement of Pakistan, 16th Meeting of the States Parties to the APMBC, 18–21 December 2017.

2 CCW Amended Protocol V Article 13 Report (for 2018), Form E.

3 See, e.g., “Two tribal elders killed in Orakzai Agency landmine blast”, *The Express Tribune*, 15 February 2018, at: bit.ly/2KyGTMc; “Summer brings with it landmines in Azad Kashmir”, *Pakistan Today*, 6 July 2018, at: bit.ly/2Z033yN; “Landmines killing people in Pakistan’s South Waziristan”, *Al Jazeera*, 5 February 2018, at: bit.ly/33r8RAG; “Kargil: The forgotten victims of the world’s highest war”, *BBC News*, 26 July 2019, at: bbc.in/2KKibY3; and “Woman loses her leg to a landmine in South Waziristan”, *Samaa Digital*, 5 April 2019.

4 AOAV, “Pakistan”, accessed 10 August 2019, at: bit.ly/2YJMd82

5 “Global Mapping and Analysis of Anti-Vehicle Mine Incidents in 2017”, GICHD and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Geneva, 2018.

6 Interviews with Khalil Ur Rehman, Director, Disarmament Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad, 9 April 2011; with Muhammad Kamran Akhtar, Director, Disarmament Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad, 23 April 2009, and 10 April 2007; with Brig. Azmat Ali, Spokesman, Inter Services Public Relations, Peshawar, 22 March 2010; and with Sifat Ghayur, Inspector General, Frontier Constabulary, Peshawar, 19 March 2010.

7 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 2018), Form B and F.

8 Pakistan: IEDs And Continuous Haemorrhage – Analysis, *Eurasia Review*, 24 July 2019, at: bit.ly/31xt1qW.