

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028 NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, probably less than **5km²** (ESTIMATED)

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2018

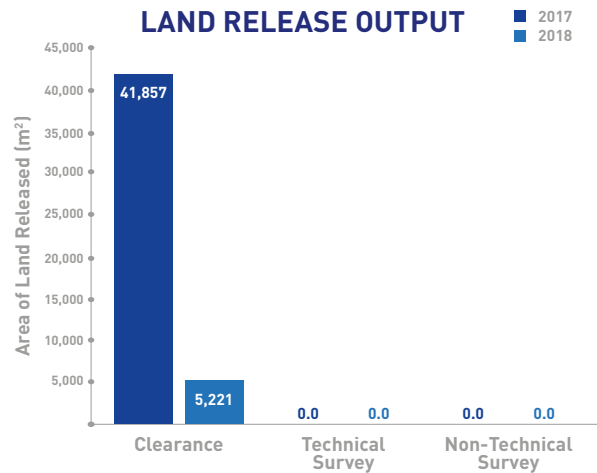
5,221m²*

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2018

12*

*Excludes 2018 clearance output for the Karne Shomron and Jinsafut minefields in the Qalqiliya governorate of the West Bank, which was not reported by Israel

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Palestine acceded to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in December 2017, becoming a state party on 1 June 2018. All mined areas are located in territory under Israeli control. To date, Israel has not authorised demining operations to be conducted by or on behalf of the Palestinian Mine Action Centre (PMAC), but progress is being made in clearance of mine contamination in the West Bank.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- PMAC should report accurately and consistently on the extent of mined area and annual clearance output.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Higher Committee for Mine Action
- Palestine Mine Action Centre (PMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- 4M (clearance now completed)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

In its initial APMBC Article 7 report submitted in November 2018, Palestine reported 69 areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines on the border with Jordan, covering a total area of 18.51km² and all under Israeli control.¹ Palestine also reported that it is not possible for it to know if there are further mined areas in eastern Jerusalem or in other areas under Israeli control, including in the region of Israeli settlements or closed military zones.²

A HALO Trust survey of the West Bank in 2012 identified 90 minefields, 13 of which were laid by the Jordanian military in 1948–67, while the remaining 77 were laid by the Israeli military along the Jordan River after the 1967 war. All minefields, including those laid by the Jordanian military, are under Israeli military control.³ In addition, HALO Trust reported being made aware of three other anti-personnel mined areas in the Jordan Valley, namely at Shademat Mehola (65,000m²) and Sokot (228,000m²), containing mixed anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mine contamination; and at Taysir (5,500m²), which contains only anti-vehicle mines.⁴ Clearance operations must therefore be coordinated with the Israeli authorities,⁵ in addition to PMAC.

According to The HALO Trust, as at July 2019, there was nearly 0.3km² of confirmed mined area (excluding the Jordan Valley) across four minefields in Palestine and two minefields in no-man's-land between the West Bank and Israel (see Table 1).⁶ All six minefields were laid by the Jordanian army.

This is a reduction of two mined areas, compared to mine contamination at the end of 2017, as clearance of Karne Shomron and Jinsafut minefields in Qalqiliya governorate was completed in 2018 by Israeli demining company, 4M, which won an Israeli Ministry of Defence tender.⁷

Mine action is subject to the 1995 Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, commonly known as the Oslo II accord, under which the West Bank is divided into three areas: Area A is under full Palestinian civil and security control; Area B is under full Palestinian civil control and joint Israeli-Palestinian security control; and Area C refers to areas where Israel has full civil and security control.⁸

Most mined areas are located in Area C of the West Bank, along the border with Jordan. Area C covers approximately 60% of the West Bank.⁹

Table 1: Mined area (at July 2019) (excluding the Jordan Valley)*¹⁰

Governorate	Minefield Task	Contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)
Jenin	Araba	AV and AP mines	1	1,257
	Qabatiya	AV and AP mines	1	8,212
	Yabad	AV and AP mines	1	42,829
Tul Kareem	Nur a-Shams	AV and AP mines	1	37,810
Ramallah	No Man's Land Yalo	AV and AP mines	1	104,226
	No Man's Land - Canada Park	AV and AP mines	1	85,708
Totals			6	280,042

CHA = Confirmed hazardous area AV = Anti-vehicle AP=Anti-personnel

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

PMAC was established in accordance with Palestinian Minister of Interior decision on 25 March 2012,¹¹ which appointed a director and created a Higher Committee for Mine Action as an interministerial body, with 27 members representing the ministries of education, foreign affairs, health, intelligence, interior, justice, and military liaison, as well as the police and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. The Higher Committee for Mine Action, which serves as the national mine action authority, is tasked to develop mine action legislation and allocate resources for the sector.¹²

PMAC, which is located in the Ministry of Interior in Ramallah, is mandated to coordinate all aspects of mine action in the West Bank. It receives technical advice from the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS).¹³ The committee has established a number of sub-committees to deal with technical issues, risk education, legal affairs, foreign affairs, and health and safety.¹⁴

In November 2016, Palestine announced that it was seeking to adopt and enact a mine action law. Palestine was hopeful of completing the legal procedures within a year and then presenting the draft law to the legislative council for endorsement, followed by signature by the President.¹⁵ As at February 2019, however, the process was still ongoing.¹⁶

PMAC, which has 12 employees,¹⁷ is staffed with personnel from the Palestinian National Security Forces, Civil Police, and Civil Defence. In 2013, 36 PMAC personnel were trained by UNMAS for demining but were not subsequently authorised by Israel to conduct clearance.¹⁸ The Civil Police have an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) unit with 42 personnel in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, Qalqilya, Ramallah, and Tulkarm, who conduct rapid response to locate and remove items of unexploded ordnance (UXO). The EOD unit is only permitted to work in Area A of the West Bank.¹⁹ A new director of PMAC was appointed in July 2017, following the previous director's retirement.²⁰

PMAC does not have its own budget, and the Palestinian authority only provides funding for the salaries of PMAC employees and the costs of the PMAC office.²¹ Israel does not grant Palestine authorisation to conduct mine clearance operations.²²

Neither PMAC nor the Israeli National Mine Action Authority (the INMAA) provides direct funding for HALO Trust's clearance operations.²³ At the baptism site clearance task in the West Bank, the INMAA contributes ILS2 million (approximately US\$548,000) to quality assurance (QA).²⁴ The HALO Trust's clearance programme in the West Bank is primarily funded by the governments of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as by private donors, and since 2018, by the European Union too.²⁵

GENDER

It is not known whether national mine action programme has a gender policy and implementation plan.

The HALO Trust has a global policy on gender and diversity. HALO Trust's operations team works and lives within the Palestinian communities and is all male. During 2018, The HALO Trust deployed a female finance officer, who also participates in survey work in the field as a native speaker, and a female doctor at the baptism site.²⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

PMAC uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, Level 1.²⁷

The HALO Trust follows the INMAA's national standards and provides daily and weekly reports as well as completion reports for every task. The information is shared with PMAC.²⁸ As a result, all three entities are in possession of HALO Trust survey and clearance data relating to demining operations in the West Bank.

Palestine submitted an initial Article 7 report in November 2018, as required by the APMBC.²⁹ However, Palestine's Article 7 report for 2018 (submitted in 2019), does not contain any further details, including the amount of mined area cleared in 2018.³⁰

PLANNING AND TASKING

PMAC has a Strategic Plan for 2017–20, in which primary objectives are the clearance of the Araba, Deir Abu Daif, Nur a-Shams, Qabatiya, and Yabad minefields.³¹ Clearance of Deir Abu Daif was completed in 2017.

HALO Trust's survey and clearance in the West Bank is prioritised by its international donors, in conjunction with the INMAA and PMAC.³²

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The HALO Trust's standing operating procedures (SoPs), which are based on its international standards and which also comply with national standards, are approved by the INMAA. Once a year, The HALO Trust submits its SoPs, including any necessary amendments, to the INMAA for approval.³³

OPERATORS

To date, Israel has not authorised demining operations to be conducted by or on behalf of PMAC.³⁴ In September 2013, however, the INMAA gave formal authorisation for The HALO Trust to clear two minefields in the West Bank deemed high priority by PMAC. Following INMAA authorisation, HALO Trust began mine clearance in the West Bank in April 2014,³⁵ and continues to conduct clearance operations in the West Bank.

The HALO Trust works under the auspices of both the INMAA and PMAC. Its manual clearance team in the West Bank is composed of deminers from Georgia with capacity varying between 10 and 33 deminers according to the task/work cycle.³⁶ In addition, during 2018, HALO Trust deployed three armoured CASE721 wheeled medium loaders, one armoured CAT320B tracked excavator, and one industrial rock crusher. The machines were operated by a Palestinian team.³⁷ HALO Trust added a second armoured tracked excavator and a screener to its operations in April 2019, with EU funding, to support mechanical clearance of the three minefields in the Jenin governorate.³⁸

The HALO Trust planned to deploy up to 24 deminers at the baptism site and in Jenin governorate in 2019. Since the manual segments of the three minefields in Jenin governorate have been completed, up to six deminers will support the mechanical team.³⁹

The HALO Trust's work in the West Bank complies with the Israeli Standard Institute for Standards, in particular ISO 9001, 14001, and 18001. The HALO Trust carries out its own internal quality control (QC), which is conducted by senior programme staff, and which complies with the ISO standards and HALO Trust's own SoPs.⁴⁰ In addition, as required by the INMAA, 4CI Security, an external INMAA-certified QA/QC company, is contracted to monitor HALO Trust's clearance in accordance with Israeli National Mine Action Standards.⁴¹

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The HALO Trust conducts both manual and mechanical clearance in the West Bank. HALO Trust also uses a drone for survey and mapping purposes, and maps generated are shared with all parties involved for planning and follow up.⁴²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2018

The HALO Trust released 5,221m² through clearance in 2018 and did not release any land through survey.

Under Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II, Israel reported that the INMAA had overseen clearance of approximately 1.2km² in 2018, destroying 1,350 mines and ERW, in addition to cancellation of 0.7km² non-technical survey.⁴³ However, there was no disaggregation on what proportion of this land release was of mined area (as opposed to battle area) or whether it also includes land released in Palestinian territory in the West Bank.

In 2018, clearance of Karne Shomron and Jinsafut minefields, in the Qalqiliya governorate of the West Bank, was completed by Israeli operator, 4M, contracted by the Israeli Ministry of Defence, but clearance output is not known.⁴⁴

SURVEY IN 2018

No land was reduced by The HALO Trust through technical survey in 2018 or cancelled through non-technical survey.⁴⁵ HALO Trust performs survey as part of its clearance operations of the Jordanian-laid minefields in Area C of the West Bank, which includes joint site visits with PMAC and the INMAA, but it is part of pre-clearance task preparation, and is of CHAs already recorded in PMAC's database and on maps.⁴⁶

CLEARANCE IN 2018

In 2018, The HALO Trust cleared 5,221m² of mined area, at the Yabad minefield in Jenin governorate, during which 12 anti-personnel mines were destroyed.⁴⁷ This is a decrease compared to 2017, when HALO Trust cleared 41,857m², and the drop in output is due to the fact that HALO Trust's operations in Jenin district were suspended between April to October 2018, due to a change in US Foreign Policy which led to the cessation of US funding for the external QA.⁴⁸

The HALO Trust also commenced clearance of the West Bank minefield at Qaser al-Yahud (the baptism site), in the Jordan Valley, in March 2018,⁴⁹ with both funding from international donors and Israel.⁵⁰ The project aims to remove mines and explosive ordnance in the area of the baptism site, which covers a total estimated area of 870,000m².⁵¹ Approximately 90,000m² is thought to potentially contain anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature.⁵² IDF minefield records provided to The HALO Trust separate the land for clearance outside of the church compounds into eleven areas, all of which contain a potential UXO threat. Six of the eleven areas are known to contain significant numbers of M15 anti-vehicle mines in multiple lines and more than 2,600 anti-vehicle mines in total. The land and buildings inside the seven church compounds are suspected to contain mines and booby-traps, but no official records exist regarding this contamination.⁵³

In addition, from October 2017 Israel funded clearance of the Karne Shomron and Jinsafut minefields in the Qalqiliya governorate of the West Bank. Israeli operator 4M was awarded the demining tender by the Israeli Ministry of Defence, and clearance of the two minefields was completed in 2018.⁵⁴ The INMAA has not, however, provided details of the area of land cleared in these two minefields or the number of mines destroyed.

PROGRESS IN 2019

The HALO Trust secured funding for external QA from a private foundation, and in May 2019 resumed clearance operations at Araba minefield in Jenin Governorate.⁵⁵

The HALO Trust completed clearance of the seven churchyards and their compound buildings at the baptism site by the end of July 2019.⁵⁶ It was also looking to secure Israeli funding to clear the remainder of the valley floor (anti-vehicle mine lines (some of which are being cleared by the IDF and sub-surface battle area contamination)).⁵⁷

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR PALESTINE: 1 JUNE 2018



ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE.

COMPLETION IS CONTINGENT ON POLITICAL FACTORS AND DEMINING PROGRESS MADE BY ISRAEL AND THE HALO TRUST, AS PALESTINE DOES NOT HAVE CONTROL OF MINED AREAS UNDER ITS JURISDICTION.

**CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025
(MAPUTO +15 POLITICAL DECLARATION ASPIRATION): LOW**

PMAC planned to complete clearance of mined areas by the end of 2020, if there were no obstacles from the other parties.⁵⁸ Clearance in the West Bank is constrained by available funding⁵⁹ and is impacted by political factors, including the lack of authorisation granted by Israel for Palestine to conduct mine clearance operations.⁶⁰

It is, however, a positive development that The HALO Trust was permitted to begin mine clearance operations in April 2014, and, as at July 2019, HALO Trust had completed clearance of five minefields in Area C of the West Bank. Clearance of a sixth minefield, Araba, was planned to be completed by the end of September 2019.⁶¹

As at the end of 2018, four Jordanian-laid minefields in the governorates of Jenin and Tul Kareem, which fall within HALO Trust's donor agreement, remained to be cleared. After completion of the four priority Jordanian-laid minefields, HALO Trust planned to look into clearance of mined areas in the Jordan Valley, the majority of which are Israeli-laid.⁶²

In February 2019, the INMAA hoped that clearance of mined areas in the West Bank would be finished in two years. According to the INMAA, the Yalo and Canada Park minefield will be cleared, but according to humanitarian prioritisation, noting that minefields are fenced and marked, and pose little humanitarian impact.⁶³

Furthermore, the INMAA began survey of the Jordan Valley minefields in the West Bank in 2017, using Israeli national budget and operating with Israeli companies. The INMAA sees significant potential for cancellation and reduction of land in the Jordan Valley, and is using various technologies and scientific tools to assess the likelihood of mine drift. The INMAA planned to invest around ILS 900,000 (approximately US\$250,000) on this project in 2017–19.⁶⁴

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

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2018	5,221
2017	41,857
2016	34,057
2015	63,411
2014	21,832
Total	166,378

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- 1 Palestine Initial Article 7 Report, 26 November 2018, Form D and Annex 2.
- 2 Ibid., Form D.
- 3 Emails from Tom Meredith, then Desk Officer, HALO Trust, 24 June and 23 October 2015; and Sonia Pezier, then Junior Programme Officer, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), 14 April 2015.
- 4 Email from Ronen Shimoni, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 21 September 2019.
- 5 Email from Sonia Pezier, UNMAS, 14 April 2015; UNMAS, "State of Palestine", accessed 29 July 2015; and email from Tom Meredith, HALO Trust, 23 October 2015.
- 6 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 22 April and 3 August 2017, and 14 May 2018.
- 7 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 8 Email from Celine Francois, Programme Officer, UNMAS Jerusalem, 5 July 2012.
- 9 Ibid.; and "UNMAS 2013 Annual Report".
- 10 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019. The two minefields in no-man's land are located west of the separation barrier in an Israeli controlled area. Contamination data in Annex 1 of Palestine's, Initial Article 7 report, Form D and Annex 2, 26 November 2018, reported the size of Araba minefield as 11,123m², Qabatiya as 8,212m², Yabad as 48,402m², and Nur a-Shams as 37,810m².
- 11 Minister of Interior Decision No. 69 (outgoing 1223), 25 March 2012.
- 12 Emails from Celine Francois, UNMAS Jerusalem, 19 July 2012; and Imad Mohareb, Planning Department, PMAC, 31 March 2013.
- 13 Emails from Celine Francois, UNMAS Jerusalem, 5 and 19 July 2012; and UN, "2012 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects", New York, 2013.
- 14 Email from the Planning Department, PMAC, 9 May 2016.
- 15 Statement of Palestine, 15th Meeting of States Parties, Santiago, 29 November 2016.
- 16 Interview with Brigadier Osama Abu Hananeh, Director, PMAC, Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Initial Article 7 Report, Form D, 26 November 2018.
- 19 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 26 June 2018.
- 20 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 30 August 2018.
- 21 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 26 June 2018; and interview with Brigadier Osama Abu Hananeh, PMAC, Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 22 Initial Article 7 report, Form D, 26 November 2018; and interview with Brigadier Osama Abu Hananeh, PMAC, Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 23 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 22 April 2017.
- 24 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly INMAA, 26 May 2018; and interview with Marcel Aviv, INMAA, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 25 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 22 April 2017 and August 21 2019; and telephone interview, 3 August 2017.
- 26 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 27 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 30 August 2018.
- 28 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 3 Sept 2018.
- 29 Initial Article 7 Report, Form D, 26 November 2018.
- 30 Article 7 Report (for 2018).
- 31 PMAC, "Strategic Plan 2017–2020", undated.
- 32 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 22 April 2017.
- 33 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018.
- 34 Email from the Planning Department, PMAC, 26 June 2018.
- 35 Email from Tom Meredith, HALO Trust, 11 May 2015.
- 36 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018.
- 41 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 2018), Form B.
- 44 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 9 May 2016; and telephone interview with Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 3 August 2017.
- 47 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018; and Michael Heiman, formerly INMAA, 26 May 2018; CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 2018), Form B.
- 50 Interview with Marcel Aviv, INMAA, Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 51 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018.
- 52 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly INMAA, 26 May 2018.
- 53 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018; and telephone interview, 23 August 2018.
- 54 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 55 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April and 21 August 2019.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Statement of Palestine, APMBIC 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017; and email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 26 June 2018.
- 59 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 21 August 2019.
- 60 Initial Article 7 Report, Form D, 26 November 2018; and interview with Brigadier Osama Abu Hananeh, PMAC, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 61 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 21 August 2019.
- 62 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 22 April 2017 and 14 May 2018; and telephone interview, 3 August 2017.
- 63 Interview with Marcel Aviv, INMAA, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 64 Interview with Michael Heiman, then INMAA, in Geneva, 15 February 2018; and emails, 23 July and 10 August 2017 and 26 May 2018.