

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2022 NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

HEAVY, **50** km²
(ESTIMATED)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2018

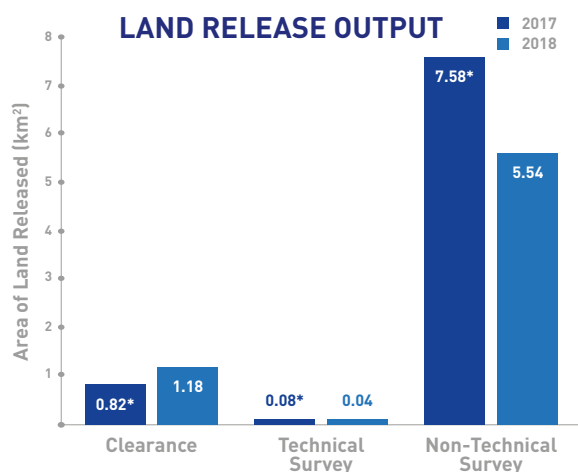
1.18 km²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2018

22,220

*Included land release output for 2016 and 2017

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Turkey's mine action programme continued to make progress in 2018, releasing significantly more mined area than in previous years. This included demining on its Eastern border with Iran as part of the European Union (EU) Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project, managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); survey and clearance by Turkish armed forces demining personnel on the Syrian border, in support of the project to build a Border Security Surveillance System; and clearance of a former military base in the non-border region.

The Turkish Mine Action Centre (TURMAC) continued to strengthen its structure and capacity during the year, through recruitment and training of personnel, and enhanced coordination with other state institutions. It received support for capacity building from UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). An Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, created during 2017, became operational at the start of the 2018 demining season.

Turkey continued to expand its national military demining capacity in 2018 with approval being granted for five armed forces demining companies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- TURMAC should approve and publish its national strategic mine action plan for 2019–21 as soon as possible.
- Turkey should move forward, without delay, to expand survey and clearance of its non-border areas; continue and expand systematic survey and clearance on the Syria border; and start survey and clearance of its south-eastern/Iraqi border.
- TURMAC should provide additional details of ongoing survey of eastern border areas, as well as confirming how and when it will address the huge contamination in this region that is not specified in the workplan it included in its Article 7 transparency report submitted in 2015.
- Turkey should comply with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) by including all victim-activated improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine in its clearance under Article 5 of the APMBC and its reporting under Article 7.

- Turkey should minimise the turnover of personnel at senior management level within TURMAC.
- Turkey should report on any survey or clearance of mined areas under its control in Northern Cyprus, or planned land release, in order to meet all of its APMBC Article 5 obligations.
- Turkey should heed the United Nations (UN) Security Council's renewed call for access to all remaining mined areas inside and outside the buffer zone on Cyprus.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	Turkey has a good understanding of the extent of CHA contamination, and the number of mines contained in the CHAs, but it has yet to qualify the amount of SHA contamination.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	TURMAC, which is entirely nationally funded, is now fully operational, with ongoing capacity development support from UNDP and the GICHD. However, TURMAC reports solely to the Ministry of Defence and suffers from a high level of turnaround in senior level positions, including the directorship.
GENDER (10% of overall score)	4	TURMAC is making efforts to take gender considerations into account in its mine action programme, including having mixed community and survey teams. However, while women make up 40% of TURMAC non-operations staff, regulations of the armed forces prevent women from serving in military demining units. Civilian operators are, however, encouraged to deploy female personnel.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	IMSMA, which became operational in Turkey from the start of the 2018 demining season, is being used by both military demining teams and for Phase 2 of the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project. Turkey submits comprehensive, accurate, and timely annual Article 7 transparency reports.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	5	TURMAC has yet to adopt and make public the draft national strategic mine action plan for 2019–21. The workplan published by Turkey in 2015 only includes plans for a relatively small proportion of Turkey's overall mined area.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	With support from UNDP and the GICHD, Turkey elaborated national mine action standards, which were issued in 2019.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	Turkey increased its clearance output in 2018, and also cancelled a significant amount of mined area on the Syrian border. Furthermore, Turkey approved expansion of its armed forces demining units in 2018, to become fully operational in 2019.
Average Score	6.2	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Ministry of Defence
- Turkish Mine Action Centre (TURMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Altay (national sub-contractor under MECHEM)
- Turkish Armed Forces

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Denel MECHEM
- RPS-Explosive Engineering Services (QA and QC of the EU project)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Turkey is contaminated with anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, as well as command-detonated IEDs. There is more than 157km² of confirmed mined area across 3,020 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), as summarised in Table 1. A further 701 areas are suspected to be mined, but the area they cover and the number of mines that may lie within them remain to be qualified,¹ therefore the total contaminated area is likely to be larger, but according to Turkey not significantly so.²

This is a reduction in the size of baseline contamination compared to the end of 2017, when more than 164km² of mine contamination was reported across 3,061 CHAs,³ the result of land release in 2018. The suspected mined area at the end of 2018 was unchanged from a year earlier.

According to TURMAC, the suspected mined areas are “relatively small”, their location and perimeters are mostly known, and some of them are believed to be mapping duplications or mistakes. TURMAC is planning to conduct non-technical survey of all mined areas in 2020, with a budget of €2.1 million.⁴

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2018)

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	AP mines in CHAs	AV mines in CHAs	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Syrian border	1,294	133,970,046	412,027	194,635	84	N/K
Iraqi border	596	2,862,835	79,017	0	373	N/K
Iranian border*	423	16,566,718	150,714	0	38	N/K
Armenian border	42	1,097,077	20,275	0	0	0
Non-border areas	665	2,830,422	34,410	0	206	N/K
Totals	3,020	157,327,098	696,443	194,635	701	N/K

SHA = Suspected hazardous area AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle N/K = Not known

* A section of mined area also intersects with the Azerbaijan border.

The great majority of anti-personnel mines in Turkey are found along its borders. The mines were laid in 1955–59 all along the border with Syria, as well as on some sections of the border with Armenia, Iran, and Iraq in 1992–95,⁵ and also with Azerbaijan.⁶ According to Turkey, its western borders with Bulgaria and Greece, as well as the border with Georgia, are mine-free.⁷ Mines were also laid around military installations within the country.⁸

Government forces emplaced landmines around military bases during the 1984–99 conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, PKK) in the south-east of the country. According to Turkey, these mines were marked, fenced, and have been progressively cleared since 1998.⁹ In addition to mines laid by Turkish security forces, non-state armed groups have also emplaced mines and IEDs, rendering clearance more challenging.¹⁰

The number of mined areas along the Iraqi border, as well as part of the Iranian border, is an estimate, as, according to Turkey, precise calculation is hampered by terrorist activities and the presence of unconfirmed mined areas. In addition, fewer mines are expected along the Syrian border than indicated because of detonations by smugglers and as a result of wildfires.¹¹

NORTHERN CYPRUS

Turkey's original Article 5 clearance deadline was 1 March 2014. In 2013, states parties granted Turkey an eight-year extension until 1 March 2022, for clearance of mines in Turkey, but Turkey did not request additional time for clearance of the areas it controls in northern Cyprus¹² (see the report on Cyprus in this work for further information). This puts into question its compliance with Article 5 of the APMBBC.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Law No. 6586 on the “Establishment of a National Mine Action Centre and Amendment of Some Other Laws” was adopted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in January 2015, entering into force on 3 February 2015. The law defines the modalities and identifies the functions, jurisdictions, and responsibilities of the NMAC, which has responsibility for the clearance of mines and/or unexploded ordnance (UXO) to humanitarian standards in Turkey.¹³ The law entitles the Turkish mine action centre (now known as TURMAC), which was established under the Ministry of National Defence, to elaborate policies for clearance; to plan and steer related activities and monitor their implementation; and to carry out the necessary coordination and cooperation with domestic and foreign institutions.¹⁴

TURMAC was established on 3 February 2015,¹⁵ with a director appointed in August of that year.¹⁶ The director of TURMAC reports directly to the Undersecretary of the Ministry of National Defence.¹⁷

TURMAC is now fully operational but there has been a high level of turnaround in senior level positions, including the directorship, which negatively affects the management of the national mine action programme. Colonel Mehmet Zeki Eren was appointed as the Director of TURMAC in June 2018, but left his post in November after being appointed to a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission. Colonel Mesut Ekren, Chief of TURMAC's Quality Management Department, served as acting Director,¹⁸ and in July 2019 a new Director, Colonel Yıldırım Özerkan, was appointed by presidential decree.¹⁹

TURMAC's capacity-development efforts are being implemented in partnership with UNDP and the GICHD, as well as national partners.²⁰ A needs assessment by UNDP and the GICHD in October 2016 highlighted several capacity gaps in TURMAC.²¹ Responding to the findings of the assessment, Turkey subsequently claimed significant progress in improving the structure of TURMAC, taking steps to better coordinate with other state institutions, and conducting recruitment of qualified personnel and intensive training to strengthen capacity.²² TURMAC organised various trainings in 2018 to improve the capacity of its own personnel and that of the Military Demining Unit.²³

TURMAC is entirely funded by national funding,²⁴ as are the Turkish Armed Forces demining units.²⁵ Turkey reported investing around 50 million Turkish Lira (approx. US\$8.6 million) to procure new equipment to establish additional demining companies, and pledged that support for personnel, training, deployment, maintenance of equipment and other costs will be increased.²⁶

In addition, Turkey reported providing some €10 million (approx. US\$11.4 million) to the Eastern Borders Mine Clearance Project, which is implemented by UNDP and funded by the EU and the UN.²⁷

GENDER

According to TURMAC, the importance of gender diversity is included in Turkey's (draft) national mine action strategy while its national standards closely follow the international mine action standards (IMAS) on gender. Survey and community liaison teams include female personnel to facilitate access and participation by all groups, including women and children. Gender is not, however, taken into consideration in strategic planning and prioritisation.²⁸

Women are reported to have equal access to survey and QA/QC positions and make up 40% of TURMAC personnel in non-operations positions, including holding the position of department chiefs within TURMAC. However, due to the regulations of the Turkish Armed Forces, no women are in the military demining units. However, civilian contractors are encouraged and advised to deploy female personnel.²⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Since TURMAC's establishment in 2015, UNDP and the GICHD have supported it to establish a functioning information management (IM) system, IMSMA.³⁰ IMSMA was established in 2017³¹ and has been fully operational since the beginning of the demining season in 2018. Personnel from both TURMAC and the military have been trained on IMSMA, and it has been used by the military demining teams and in Phase 2 of the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project since the beginning of 2018.³²

Prior to the creation of the IMSMA database, UNDP maintained a project database to record all operational data related to Phase 1 of the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project.³³

Turkey has been submitting comprehensive, accurate, and timely annual Article 7 transparency reports.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Turkey has still to publish a national mine action strategy, despite national authorities assertions for several years that a multi-year strategic mine action plan had been drafted and was expected to be adopted shortly.³⁴ Significant changes in governmental regulations, legislation, processes, and structures in Turkey have delayed approval of the draft national strategic mine action plan for 2019–21, which as at July 2019 was waiting approval by the MoD.³⁵ The three-year plan reportedly covers national capacity development, survey and clearance of mined areas, the provision of mine risk education, and assistance to mine victims.³⁶

There is a workplan in place for 2019. MECHEM are planned to clear around 0.5km², under the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project.³⁷ The military demining teams task plan was as follows:

- Doğubeyazıt (Eastern Border) 4 teams (gendarmérie)
- Ardahan Göle (non border) 2 teams
- Syrian Border in Hatay (8 teams) Kilis (4 teams)
- Hakkari (4 teams)
- Diyarbakır (2 teams)
- Şırnak (2 teams).³⁸

To date, prioritisation of clearance appears to have been influenced more by where permission is granted for operations and for which funding can be secured than by humanitarian impact. For example, areas currently being cleared as part of the EU Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project will remain as restricted areas (due to their location) even after completion of mine clearance. TURMAC has claimed that survey and clearance for the EU Eastern Border Project, are conducted geographically from north to south in order to improve cost, time, and labour efficiency; but that clearance of other areas was prioritised according to impact.³⁹

According to the draft national mine action plan, demining is prioritised according to:⁴⁰

- National political priorities
- Border management system
- Socio-economic projects
- Requests from citizens
- Non-border areas and military heavy weapons ranges.

SYRIAN BORDER

Mined areas of the Syrian border are estimated to account for two-thirds of the mines and close to 90% of the remaining mined area in the country. Officials observed it is also the easiest border to clear because the terrain is flat and there has been minimal displacement of mines as a result of factors such as land erosion.⁴¹ Minefields in this region are clearly mapped, marked, fenced, and reported to be well known to the local population.⁴²

According to its 2013 Article 5 extension request, Turkey had expected to complete clearance of mines along the Syria border by the end of 2019,⁴³ but clearance efforts were delayed due to the armed conflict in Syria.⁴⁴ However, construction of the Border Security Surveillance System along Turkey's border with Syria, which was completed in June 2018, is

supposed to allow the demining of the Syrian border to begin.⁴⁵ During the construction of the Border Security Surveillance System, which consists of a 837km-long modular concrete wall and impoundment (supported by a fence), as well as roads, and surveillance system, military demining teams were deployed to clear mines to enable operations to proceed in safety.⁴⁶ Demining efforts in support of the construction of the surveillance system also included survey and clearance of areas suspected or confirmed to contain mines of an improvised nature and other explosive devices deployed by non-state armed groups.⁴⁷ Planned clearance on the Syrian border (i.e. not part of clearance to support construction of the Border Surveillance System), began in early 2018, focusing on the provinces of Hatay and Kilis.⁴⁸

EASTERN BORDERS

Turkey's 2013 Article 5 extension request set out plans for clearance of its eastern borders, beginning with the Armenian border and continuing southwards to the borders with Azerbaijan, Iran, and Iraq.⁴⁹ It was forecast that 13.5km² would be cleared in Phase 1 of the project and 2.4km² in Phase 2, as part of an EU project envisaged to start by the end of 2014.⁵⁰

The two-phase EU Eastern Border Mine Clearance project is being carried out under the supervision of the Turkish authorities in a joint project with UNDP.⁵¹ Under the project, UNDP is managing the demining and assuring quality while also supporting capacity development of TURMAC.⁵² The demining tender for the project was awarded to Denel MECHEM (MECHEM), as part of a consortium in which national operators would be subcontracted by MECHEM.⁵³ Clearance operations for Phase 1 of the project began in June 2016, and

were completed by the end of 2017.⁵⁴ A total of almost 3.3km² of mined area was released (0.64km² cleared, under 0.1km² reduced, and almost 2.6km² cancelled) with 25,667 mines were destroyed in 2016 and 2017.⁵⁵ This was significantly less than the 13.5km² that Turkey forecast would be cleared under Phase 1 in its 2013 Article 5 extension request.

Phase 2 of the project commenced behind schedule in June 2018, due to serious organisational issues in MECHEM in South Africa, which resulted in a change of senior management. MECHEM Turkey had to wait for these changes in order to sign the contract and start 2018 operations. In addition, personal protective equipment visors had to be changed, which also resulted in a delay to operations.⁵⁶ A one-year extension to the project was approved, with Phase 2 now expected to be completed at the end of 2019.⁵⁷

SOUTH-EASTERN/IRAQI BORDER

In 2017, Turkey had planned for survey of suspected mined area in Sirnak Province (in parts of the province bordering Iraq) in 2018 and of confirmed mined area in this province in 2019; and of suspected mined area in Hakkari Province in 2019.⁵⁸ However, no mention of any survey in this region was made in Turkey's latest Article 7 transparency report (for 2018).⁵⁹

Clearance of the 969 mined areas, totalling just over 2.86km², with the destruction of 79,017 anti-personnel mines, was

scheduled to start after Phase 2 of the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project is completed.⁶⁰

TURMAC reported that the Syrian border was prioritised instead, to help the installation of the border management system and to reduce the flow of refugees through the border. According to TURMAC, under the EU project, €2.1 million will be allocated to non-technical survey across Turkey from national budget in 2020.⁶¹

NON-BORDER AREAS

Non-border areas account for less than 2% of all contaminated areas in Turkey. In its 2013 Article 5 deadline extension request, Turkey reported that partial clearance in non-border areas would be conducted by the Turkish armed forces until the establishment of an operational NMAA and mine action centre and a subsequent tendering process. It was expected that clearance would be conducted in 2015–22. In 2015, Turkey estimated that all 873 mined areas in non-border areas would be cleared by 2021, amounting to total clearance of 3.1km², with the destruction of 34,410 anti-personnel mines.⁶²

In this region, Turkey prioritises mine clearance based on areas used for military operations; areas with low or no risk of terrorist threat; and areas where the local population may benefit from agriculture and livestock.⁶³

Due to ongoing capacity development efforts and prioritisation of clearance for the construction of the wall and customs area on the Syrian border, no clearance took place in non-border areas in 2016 or 2017.⁶⁴ However, a small amount of clearance was conducted in 2018 at a former military range (see the "Land release output and Article 5 compliance" section below for details).

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

UNDP and the GICHD assisted TURMAC to formulate new national mine action standards based upon the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and the provisional standards elaborated for the EU Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project.⁶⁵

In April 2017, a set of national mine action standards were sent to the National Standards Institute of Turkey for approval.⁶⁶ In February 2019, 44 national mine action standards, including on land release policy, were issued.⁶⁷

As at July 2019, TURMAC's SoPs had been completed and were available on its webpage. The SoPs of the military demining units and MECHEM have been in use since 2017.⁶⁸

OPERATORS

In 2018, mine clearance operations in Turkey were conducted by MECHEM, with Altay as a subcontractor, under the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project; and by the Turkish Armed forces along the Syria border, to support construction of the Border Security Surveillance System and at a military base in a non-border area.⁶⁹

MECHEM, a South African company, was awarded the tender for mine clearance under the EU Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project.⁷⁰ In 2018, MECHEM deployed 30 MDD teams, 11 clearance teams (approx. 100 deminers), and 1 Minewolf machine for Phase 2 of the EU project.⁷¹ RPS-Explosive Engineering Services, a United Kingdom-based company, was contracted for quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC).⁷² TURMAC also has oversight of operations on site.⁷³ During 2018 operations, all deminers and team leaders of MECHEM and QA/QC personnel of RPS Explosive Engineering Services, were Turkish nationals.⁷⁴

In 2019, MECHEM was no longer sub-contracting to Altay, and was instead employing Turkish nationals directly.⁷⁵ As at July

2019, MECHEM was deploying 15 MDD teams, 6 clearance teams (approx. 60 deminers), and 1 Minewolf machine.⁷⁶

Military demining companies were accredited for manual demining in 2017.⁷⁷ Turkey is in the process of significantly expanding the number of military demining units, with approval for five new demining companies granted in 2018. Three of the five new demining companies (equivalent to twelve 9-person demining teams) were established in June 2018 and have been accredited for manual demining.⁷⁸ As at July 2019, procurement of equipment had been completed for two companies (eight demining teams), which were accredited in 2019 and tasked to several locations. The remaining companies were expected to become operational in 2020.⁷⁹

As at July 2019, a total of 26 military demining teams operational: 20 from the army and 6 from the gendarmerie.⁸⁰

The quality management of military demining troops is conducted by TURMAC personnel.⁸¹

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Both MECHEM and Turkish army demining teams conduct mechanical as well as manual demining, and also use MDDs.

DEMINING SAFETY

There was one demining accident in October 2018, during which a Gendarmerie deminer suffered injuries to his hands whilst removing a DM-11 anti-personnel mine. The incident was investigated and was found to be due to a mistake by the deminer, while removing the detonator. Demining operators were informed about the issue and additional trainings were conducted.⁸²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2018

According to its Article 7 report for 2018, more than 2km² of mined area was cleared, with the destruction of 22,220 anti-personnel mines. However, TURMAC subsequently advised Mine Action Review that the 2.08km² reported as clearance in 2018 in its Article 7 report unintentionally included 35,168m² reduced through technical survey and 864,316m² cancelled through non-technical survey. Therefore the correct clearance figure for 2018 is 1.18km².⁸³

In addition, according to Turkey's Article 7 report, a further 4.7km² of mined area was cancelled through non-technical survey.⁸⁴

SURVEY IN 2018

Nearly 5.54km² of mined area was cancelled through non-technical survey in 2018: 864,316m² cancelled through non-technical survey, but mistakenly reported as clearance (see above) and a further 4,672,000m² on the Syrian Border.⁸⁵ This is seemingly a decrease from the 7.5km² reported cancelled through non-technical survey the previous year, though the figure for 2017 includes land released for 2016 as well as 2017.⁸⁶

Non-technical survey in 2018 was conducted by TURMAC in the Hatay Region of the Syrian border and revealed that suspected areas had been used as agricultural land for many decades and the area had been free of mines. Consequently, approximately 4,672,000 m² of land was cancelled.⁸⁷

As previously mentioned, TURMAC advised that the 2.08km² reported as clearance in 2018 in Turkey's Article 7 report, included over 0.03km² reduced through technical survey. This compared to 0.08km² the previous year (which included land released for both 2016 and 2017).

CLEARANCE IN 2018

In its Article 7 report for 2018, Turkey reported clearance of 2.1km² of mined area: more than 1.4km² on the eastern border with Iran, almost 0.4km² on the Syrian border, and almost 0.3km² in non-border areas (see Table 2).⁸⁸ However, TURMAC subsequently informed Mine Action Review that the 2.1km² reported as cleared in its Article 7 report, mistakenly included 35,168m² reduced through technical survey and 864,316m² cancelled through non-technical survey, therefore putting correct clearance for 2018 at 1,183,986m².⁸⁹

Furthermore, there is under-reporting of the area cleared on the Syrian border, as no area/m² value was attributed to 1,015 anti-personnel mines destroyed during armed forces clearance to support safe construction of the Border Security Surveillance System. This is reportedly because TURMAC does not consider that this clearance has undergone quality control, despite the fact the cleared land is largely built over as part of the construction.⁹⁰

This is a significant increase in clearance output compared to the 0.82km² of mined area released through clearance the previous year, especially given that the 0.82km² reported in 2017 included clearance for both 2016 and 2017.⁹¹

Table 2: Mine clearance in 2018⁹²

Region	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Iran border	MECHEM	1,161,278	15,989	0	0
	Army Demining Units	246,380	5,141	0	0
Syria border	Army Demining Units	398,385*	1,090	14	0
Non-border areas	Army Demining Units	277,427	0	0	665
Totals		2,083,470*	22,220	14	665

*TURMAC subsequently confirmed to Mine Action Review that of the 2,083,470m² reported as cleared in 2018, 35,168m² was reduced through technical survey and 864,316m² cancelled through non-technical survey. Furthermore, no square metre output (only the number of mines destroyed) is reported for clearance along the Syria Border in support of the construction of the Border Security Surveillance System. The area reported on the Syria border is clearance in the Karkamiş and Elbeyli regions on the border, during which 75 mines were found and destroyed. AV = Anti-vehicle

On the **Iranian border**, a total of 1,407,658m² of mined area was cleared in 2018, with the destruction of 21,130 anti-personnel mines. Of this 1,161,278m² was cleared under the contract with MECHEM, with destruction of 15,989 anti-personnel mines. This was part of Phase 2 of EU Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project that began in June 2018. A further 246,380m² was cleared by military demining units of the gendarmerie in Iğdır and Doğubeyazıt provinces.⁹³

On the **Syrian border**, a total of 1,090 anti-personnel mines and 14 anti-vehicle mines were destroyed in 2018, by Turkish army demining units.⁹⁴ Clearance along the border was primarily as part of demining in support of the Border Security Surveillance System, as well as four demining teams that cleared 398,385m² of mined area in the Karkamiş and Elbeyli regions on the border, during which 75 mines were found and destroyed,⁹⁵ with the land handed to relevant authorities for use as customs areas.⁹⁶

In **non-border areas**, 277,427m² of mined area was cleared by Turkish army demining units at a former military range in Muş (Malazgirt) province and handed over to the relevant authorities. During clearance, 665 items of UXO were found and destroyed, but no anti-personnel mines.⁹⁷

In addition, Military Engineer/Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams conducted counter-IED operations in non-border areas within the scope of national security operations. A number of IEDs emplaced by terrorist organisations were found and destroyed, but are not reflected in Turkey's reporting under the APMBC.⁹⁸ Turkey has not specified if, or how many, of the IEDs destroyed, are victim-activated IEDs that meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine and therefore fall under Turkey's APMBC Article 5 and 7 obligations.

No mine clearance was conducted in 2018 along Turkey's borders with Armenia or Iraq.⁹⁹

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the eight-year extension granted by states parties in 2013), Turkey 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 March 2022. Turkey will not meet this deadline.

Turkey's original Article 5 deadline was 1 March 2014 and in March 2013 Turkey submitted a request for an eight-year extension to its deadline until 2022 to complete clearance of all mined areas. Turkey stated that the envisaged timeframe was subject to revision pending progress with tenders and clearance activities on the ground.¹⁰⁰ Turkey also revealed in its 2013 extension request that since 1998 it had only cleared a total of 1.15km² of mined area, close to three-quarters of which took place in one year (2011), with destruction of 760 anti-personnel mines and 974 anti-vehicle mines. In addition, military teams had cleared 24,287 mines, but only to allow safe movement of troops, not to release a contaminated area.¹⁰¹

Since the Third Review Conference in Maputo in 2014, Turkey has made significant progress in putting in place the systems and processes required to implement Article 5. The adoption in January 2015 of a mine action law, and the subsequent establishment of TURMAC were very positive developments and are central to Turkey's national ownership of its mine action programme. With capacity development support from UNDP and the GICHD, TURMAC has made steady progress towards becoming fully operational and assuming management and coordination of mine action in Turkey.

Initiating clearance along its eastern borders in June 2016, as part of the EU Project, funded by the EU (75% of funding), Turkey (24%), and the UN (1%), was also a welcome development.¹⁰² Phase 1 of the project was completed by the end of 2017, and Phase 2, which commenced in June 2018, was expected to be completed by the end of 2019. As at July 2019, Turkey reported that funding had been secured for Phase 3 of the project, but the "procedures will continue" until 2020. TURMAC reported that the EU will dedicate €18.5 million for clearance and Turkey will contribute €2.2 million for non-technical survey.¹⁰³ The non-technical survey planned for 2020 will help give TURMAC a better idea of a predicted date for completion.¹⁰⁴

Completion of the Border Security Surveillance System along all of Turkey's border with Syria should allow survey and clearance to finally take place all along the border. This is significant, as mined areas on the Syrian border, which are mapped, account for two thirds of the mines and more than 85% of the remaining CHA in the country.

In the five-year period since 2014, Turkey has cleared only some 3.2km² of mined area, albeit with 2018 seeing a significant increase compared to previous years (see Table 3).

Table 3: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance (2014–18)

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2018	1.18
2017	*0.82
2016	0.12
2015	0
2014	0.16
Total	2.28

*Also included previously unreported clearance output relating to 2016.

Challenges in Article 5 implementation, as identified by TURMAC, include funding, difficult terrain, weather conditions limiting the demining window each year, and challenges posed by the sensitive security situation in certain provinces.¹⁰⁵ By far the main obstacle, though, has been lack of political will in Turkey to fulfil its international legal obligations under the APMBC. Indeed, despite a marked increase in clearance output in 2018, Turkey's total mine clearance to date still only amounts to a tiny fraction of its overall mine contamination, and more than 15 years after becoming a state party to the APMBC, Turkey has only made marginal progress in addressing mine contamination. Based on the current rate of clearance, Turkey will not complete implementation of Article 5 by its deadline in 2022 and is also not on track to complete by 2025, as per the APMBC Maputo+15 political declaration.

That said, Turkey is planning to commence systematic survey and clearance of the Syrian border, and to dramatically upscale non-technical survey. Turkey announced in May 2019 that it plans to conduct non-technical survey on 20km² of mined area in 2019, which would represent a dramatic increase in survey.¹⁰⁶

Turkey's updated workplan for Article 5 implementation, submitted in March 2015, only included plans to address a small portion (10%) of total mine contamination, and it is unclear how and when the remaining contamination will be addressed. It is therefore essential that TURMAC approves and publishes the national strategic mine action plan for 2019–21, without further delay, as this also reportedly includes plans for survey of SHA and CHA in the south-eastern/Iraqi border, the Syrian border, and non-border areas.¹⁰⁷

Turkey should also report on plans for clearance of mined areas under its control in Northern Cyprus, in order to meet all of its APMBC Article 5 obligations.

- 1 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D; and Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 2 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, Head of QM Section, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 3 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form D.
- 4 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, Head of QM Section, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 5 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. A-1 and A-5.
- 6 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form D.
- 7 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. A-1.
- 8 Ibid., pp. A-1 and A-5.
- 9 Response to Landmine Monitor questionnaire by Elif Comoglu Ulgen, Head, Disarmament and Arms Control Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 14 July 2008; and email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 10 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. A-5.
- 11 Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form C.
- 12 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.
- 13 Article 7 Report (for 2014), "Workplan for mine clearance activities", Annex 1; and Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report, Form A, 2015.
- 14 Article 7 Report (for 2014), "Workplan for mine clearance activities", Annex 1; and CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report, Form A, 2015.
- 15 Article 7 Report (for 2014), Form F.
- 16 Interview with Gen. Celalettin Coban, Director, TURMAC, and Col. Ali Güngör, Mine Action Officer, Strategic Planning Branch, TURMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 17 Presidency Decree No. 1 of 10 July 2018; Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A; and Statement of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018.
- 18 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 19 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 20 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, Geneva, 24 May 2019.
- 21 Article 7 Report (for 2016), Form A; and Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 8 June 2017.
- 22 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A; and Statement of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.
- 23 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 24 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 27 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, Geneva, 24 May 2019.
- 28 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Interview with Col. Ali Güngör, TURMAC, Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 31 Statement of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.
- 32 Statements of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018; email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019; and Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 33 Interview with Hans Risser, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, Geneva, 7 September 2016.
- 34 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017; Statement of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017; and Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A.
- 35 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 36 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 37 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 38 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 39 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 40 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 41 ICBL interview with Ömer Burhan Tüzel, Serhan Yiğit, and Ramazan Ercan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Abdullah Özbek, Ministry of Interior, Ankara, 5 May 2011.
- 42 Statement of Turkey, 15th Meeting of States Parties, Santiago, 29 November 2016.
- 43 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 29 March 2013, pp. A-2, A-13, and A-14.
- 44 Article 7 Report (for 2014), "Workplan for mine clearance activities", pp. 3 and 8; and Statement of Turkey, 15th Meeting of States Parties, Santiago, 29 November 2016.
- 45 Interview with Col. Zaki Eren, Director of Operations Department and Acting Director of TURMAC, and Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, in Vienna, 20 December 2018.
- 46 Article 7 Reports (for 2016, 2017, and 2018), Form A.
- 47 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 48 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 49 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. A-14.
- 50 Ibid., pp. A-3, A-14, and A-15.
- 51 Article 7 Report (for 2014), "Workplan for mine clearance activities", p. 6.
- 52 Email from Hans Risser, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, 3 October 2016.
- 53 Interview with Gen. Celalettin Coban and Col. Ali Güngör, TURMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 54 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017; interview with Col. Zaki Eren and Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, in Vienna, 20 December 2018; and Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A.
- 55 Statements of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018 and Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 56 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 57 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A; and Statements of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018 and Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 58 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 59 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 60 Article 7 Report (for 2014), "Workplan for mine clearance activities", pp. 7 and 8; and email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 61 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 62 Article 7 Report (for 2014), "Workplan for mine clearance activities", pp. 5 and 6.
- 63 Ibid., p. 4.
- 64 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017; and Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A.
- 65 Email from Hans Risser, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, 3 October 2016; and Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form F.
- 66 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A; and Statements of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017 and 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018.
- 67 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 68 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 69 Interview with Col. Zaki Eren and Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, in Vienna, 20 December 2018; and Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 70 UNDP, "Turkey, UNDP begin clearing landmine along eastern borders", 4 April 2016.
- 71 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A; statements of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018 and Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 72 UNDP, "Turkey, UNDP begin clearing landmine along eastern borders", 4 April 2016.
- 73 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 74 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A; and Statement of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.
- 78 Statement of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017. Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 79 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A.
- 82 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D.

- 85 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A; Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and email from Maj. Can Ceylan, Head of QM Section, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 86 Article 7 Report (for 2016), Forms A and D; Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form D; and email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 87 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A; and Statement of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018.
- 88 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D.
- 89 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, Head of QM Section, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 90 Interview with Col. Zaki Eren and Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 20 December 2018, Vienna.
- 91 Article 7 Report (for 2016), Forms A and D; Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form D; and email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 92 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Forms A and D; and Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 93 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A; and Statements of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018; and Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 94 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Forms A and D.
- 95 Ibid., Form A.
- 96 Statement of Turkey on Clearance, APMBC 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018.
- 97 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
- 98 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 99 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D.
- 100 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. A-13.
- 101 Ibid., 29 March 2013, pp. A-8 and A-9.
- 102 Emails from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017, and Cpt. Ahmet Gun, TURMAC, 16 November 2017.
- 103 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 104 Ibid.
- 105 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 106 Ibid.
- 107 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.