



NIGERIA

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(NEEDS TO REQUEST EXTENSION)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Nigeria should urgently take all possible measures to clear anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature, on its territory on the basis of humanitarian needs and priorities.
- Nigeria should inform states parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) of the discovery of any contamination from anti-personnel mines and report on the location of all suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for their destruction.
- As soon as security conditions permit, including as a result of hostilities, non-technical survey should commence in Nigeria's three most conflict-affected provinces: Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states.
- Where appropriate, Nigeria should encourage and facilitate the provision of assistance and expertise from humanitarian demining organisations and continue to roll out risk education to minimise harm to civilian populations.

CONTAMINATION

In 2017–18, numerous incidents involving both civilian and military casualties from landmines and a range of other locally produced explosive devices planted by Boko Haram continued to be reported in the north-east of Nigeria. The majority of the reports appear to describe mines of an improvised nature produced or adapted locally by Boko Haram, whether anti-personnel or anti-vehicle.

The extent of contamination from mines and other explosive devices is not known. Incidents involving landmines and other explosive devices have been reported in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, with Borno state the most heavily affected. According to the

Nigerian military, the Sambisa forest in Borno state, Boko Haram's stronghold, has been heavily mined, along with "extensive" mine use by Boko Haram around military positions.¹

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) carried out a scoping mission to the three north-eastern states in April 2017 to assess the extent of the threat from munitions, explosive remnants of war (ERW), and "unconfirmed but credible reports of landmines". It received reports of the use of both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines of an improvised nature around defensive positions.²

UNMAS confirmed that use of explosive devices by Boko Haram was extensive, and included body-borne, vehicle-borne, pressure plate-activated, and to a lesser extent, command-wire and radio-controlled devices. In particular, Boko Haram had made significant use of pressure-plate-activated mines on main supply routes, primarily to attack military convoys, it said.³

A November 2015 assessment in Adamawa and Borno states by international demining organisation Danish Demining Group (DDG) had noted local community reports of a number of local government areas in Borno state they thought needed clearance, including Bama, Dikwa, Gwoza, Kala-Balge, Kukawa, Marte, and Ngala.⁴ Interviewees identified contamination including anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines resembling Chinese No. 4 anti-personnel mines and Type 72 anti-vehicle mines; a variety of body-borne, vehicle-borne, and remotely controlled devices; as well as cluster munition remnants, mortars, rockets, and rocket-propelled grenades, hand grenades, and Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS).⁵

In 2015, the Nigerian army warned civilians of the threat of improvised devices using adapted submunitions. Caches of French-made air-delivered BLG-66 “Beluga” cluster munitions were reportedly found in Adamawa state, alleged to have been taken from stockpiles of the Nigerian armed forces or smuggled in from Libya.⁶

Contamination from mines and other explosive devices has had a serious humanitarian impact, impeding the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and exacerbating the crisis in the region.⁷ In October 2016, the governor of Adamawa state confirmed that many IDPs continued to be unable to return to their farms due to a fear of landmines.⁸ Roads were closed to civilian traffic by the military due to the presence of mines or other explosive devices and there were numerous reports of civilian casualties and farmers who feared returning to work their fields, contributing to sharply worsening food shortages.⁹ According to UNMAS, as at April 2017, Borno state hosted 80% — 1.5 million — of Nigeria’s IDP population, and 400,000 returnees were living in areas affected by the conflict.¹⁰ It reported that the security situation in Adamawa and Yobe states had improved gradually, but remained volatile, especially in the north-eastern part of Yobe.¹¹

According to UNMAS, in 2016–17, the significant majority of the casualties from mines of an improvised nature and other explosive devices were soldiers. More than 300 military casualties were inflicted in December 2016–April 2017, according to a Nigerian Brigade Commander.¹² Mines Advisory Group (MAG) reported that between January 2016 and March 2018 there were 439 casualties from 144 incidents, the overwhelming majority of which involved landmines. Most incidents were in Borno state, but there were also casualties in Yobe and Adamawa. Of the 439 victims, 144 were civilians. Many of the casualties were among security or military personnel accompanying civilian convoys.¹³ According to MAG data, the casualty rate in Nigeria has risen from an average of 12 people killed or injured by landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) each month in 2016, to almost 19 per month in 2017 and early 2018. Although most incidents took place on roads and against vehicles, MAG consider the landmines to be anti-personnel rather than anti-

vehicle as the operating pressure is as such that it could be activated by a person.¹⁴

UNMAS also declared that the likelihood of explosive accidents might significantly increase with the planned mass return of more than one million refugees and IDPs.¹⁵ It similarly expected a significant threat to UN and humanitarian agencies with the expansion of relief efforts and increased use of main supply routes.¹⁶

UNMAS reported that in July 2018 in Borno state, a “road-planted improvised explosive device (IED)” injured one civilian in the vicinity of Fuye, a “road-planted IED” injured one civilian and two security force personnel on Bama-Kwakwa road; and “IEDs” caused three civilian casualties in the south of the state. According to the UN Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), in April 2018 five people were killed and eleven others injured when a commercial vehicle escorted by security forces detonated a “road planted IED” along the Ngala–Rann road.¹⁷ UNMAS did not specify to Mine Action Review whether or not it considered these explosive devices meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine under the APMBC. In March 2018, four loggers were killed when they stepped on a landmine near Dikwa in Borno state. They had gone to retrieve a vehicle they had abandoned following a Boko Haram ambush.¹⁸ In September 2017, two vehicles struck mines at the Koibe village on the Mafa to Dikwa road in Borno state: two people were killed and several others sustained injuries.¹⁹ In June 2017, three loggers were killed outside Abbari village, in Konduga district of Borno state, when their truck struck a mine laid by Boko Haram.²⁰

There were also numerous reports of military casualties from mines or from vehicles driving over explosive devices planted along main roads. According to UNMAS, in August 2018, in Jakana, a military vehicle was “hit by an IED” causing four casualties. In April 2018, on the Bita-Tokumbere axis, an “IED was triggered by a military convoy”, injuring seven soldiers, and an “IED was struck by” a Nigerian military convoy near to Wulgo, killing six soldiers and wounding twelve.²¹ UNMAS did not specify to Mine Action Review whether or not it considered these explosive devices meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine under the APMBC. In March 2018, five soldiers were killed when they drove over a mine in the Gworza area of Borno state while on patrol.²² In October 2017, three soldiers were killed following a Boko Haram ambush when their vehicle hit a mine while en route to Maiduguri.²³ In April 2017, a convoy carrying two Nigerian generals encountered a cluster of four explosive devices at a crossing point near Firgi, Borno state, which were safely destroyed by the army’s explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) unit.²⁴ In March 2017, a Cameroonian soldier on a joint military operation with the Nigerian army was killed after his vehicle hit a mine laid by Boko Haram in Kumshe, Borno state.²⁵

Military casualties have also been reported among soldiers clearing mines. In 2015, two soldiers were killed and two others seriously wounded during clearance operations in Gudumbali town.²⁶ UNMAS reported in April 2017 that manual render-safe procedures were the primary method used by the Nigerian military EOD teams, which could be contributing to a high number of casualties among EOD personnel.²⁷

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no structured mine action programme in Nigeria. Both Nigeria's armed forces and its police carry out EOD activities and ERW clearance. The state police have EOD units that support the army in clearing UXO and explosive devices. The army's ERW clearance is primarily focused on facilitating military operations and clearing roads and areas to facilitate access for troops to carry out attacks on Boko Haram and to keep military supply routes open.²⁸ The 2016 Buhari Plan for Rebuilding the North East from the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI) includes a plan for demining as part of clean-up operations in reclaimed communities before resettlement of IDPs. It assigns responsibility for clearance to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the Nigerian Military and Para Military Agencies.²⁹ In September 2018, it was announced that the federal government was planning to spend \$6.7 billion to deliver the Buhari Plan.³⁰

In March 2017, the United States reported donating demining and EOD equipment to Nigeria and providing mine action training for Nigeria's EOD teams at the Nigerian School of Military Engineering.³¹ In December 2016, a media source published photos of a "newly-acquired" Slovak-made Bozena demining machine, which it said had been deployed on roads in Borno state.³² In 2015, it was reported that Nigeria had ordered 10 demining machines from a Slovakian company, with five scheduled for delivery in 2015 and the remainder in 2016.³³ In 2015, 24 Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles (MRAPs) were said to have been given to the Nigerian army by the United States.³⁴

In April 2017, a senior Nigerian military commander informed UNMAS that due to limited resources, the army's priority was to provide demining support for military operations. Saying that it lacked the capacity to undertake humanitarian demining, he called for additional equipment ongoing support, and refresher training.³⁵

The 2017 and 2018 Humanitarian Response Plans from UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for north-east Nigeria both make reference to mine action activities, in particular emphasising the importance of mine risk education which features in three of the 2018 plan's objectives.³⁶ In 2017, DDG was delivering mine risk education sessions for community members and humanitarian organisations in the north-east states. It will also provide recommendations to the government regarding how to ensure injury surveillance systems include data on injuries from mines and other ERW. Funded by the European Union (EU), the project is part of a wider initiative to promote stability in Nigeria's north-east and will run from December 2016 to November 2018.³⁷ In 2017, DDG also delivered initial EOD training to police officers in Maiduguri, Borno state.³⁸

MAG has been working in Nigeria since 2016 initially in arms management and destruction. In March 2017, MAG secured funding to begin providing risk education to internally displaced people, refugees and host communities affected by the conflict. MAG is also working to map mine contamination in north-east Nigeria and has conducted non-technical survey in accessible areas of Borno state.³⁹ In July 2018, UNMAS deployed a rapid response team to Maiduguri in order to develop a programme aimed at coordinating and supporting humanitarian mine action.⁴⁰

LAND RELEASE

MAG conducted non-technical survey in Konduga, Gubio, Bama, and Gwoza, in Borno state in 2017 and 2018. Due to issues with access this relatively "light touch" non-technical survey is based on collecting information from individuals during mine risk education sessions. When participants report having seen a suspicious device while they were fleeing the conflict, MAG send staff to verify, and if this is confirmed, they demarcate, take pictures and global positioning system (GPS) coordinates, and hand over the information to the security forces. During this process MAG has located 23 devices across 17 different locations within Borno state.⁴¹

In March 2018, Colonel Garba Nura, Acting Brigade Commander of the 21st Armoured Brigade, reported that demining of roads and general areas was taking place around Bama in Borno state to facilitate the safe return of IDPs to the area.⁴²

In April 2017, the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant-General Tukur Buratai reported that the army was carrying out limited clearance of routes in forested areas to enable troop movements, but said that humanitarian demining of the Sambisa forest as such had not begun. He called for assistance from the UN and non-governmental organisation (NGO) demining organisations.⁴³

ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Nigeria was 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 2012. At the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties in November 2011, Nigeria declared it had cleared all known anti-personnel mines from its territory.⁴⁴

Under the Convention's agreed framework, in the event a mined area is discovered after the expiry of a state party's Article 5 clearance deadline, it should immediately inform all other states parties of this discovery and undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines as soon as possible. Nigeria has not submitted an Article 7 transparency report since 2012.

Given the extent of apparent contamination from anti-personnel mines, Nigeria should request a new extended Article 5 deadline, which should be no more than five years. It must also continue to fulfil its reporting obligations under the APMBC, including by reporting on the location of all suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for the destruction of all anti-personnel mines therein.⁴⁵ As at September 2018, Nigeria had not made a public declaration of any newly discovered anti-personnel mine contamination to states parties of the APMBC.

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