



OMAN

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 FEBRUARY 2025
(UNCLEAR WHETHER ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Oman should ensure that its report at the Seventeenth Meeting of State Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) includes information about outstanding landmine contamination, a detailed workplan for survey and clearance, and a clear statement of any needs for international assistance.
- In its annual APMBC Article 7 transparency reports, Oman should provide more detailed information about outstanding contamination and its demining activities, including the location of clearance, amount of land cleared, and the number and type of mines that have been destroyed.

CONTAMINATION

Oman is suspected to be contaminated by mines, though the precise location and extent of any residual threat is not known. In its initial Article 7 report, submitted in 2015, Oman declared that there were no areas in the Sultanate confirmed to be mined, but reported “many” suspected mined areas in the south, particularly Dhofar Region.¹

According to its 2015 report, during the mid-1960s to mid-1970s the presence of rebel movements in Dhofar led to “vast” areas being affected by anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines. After the end of the conflict in 1975, the government made significant efforts to clear the areas, but it is impossible to be sure that the areas have been fully cleared. This is for three reasons: the size of the region (about 99,000km²); the lack of maps or marking; and the terrain (which includes mountains and valleys), with many mined areas located on steep slopes. In addition, the rain over the years may have scattered the mines.²

In 2001, it had been reported that the Royal Army of Oman had mapped seven zones of suspected mined areas based on historical records of battlefield areas, unit positions, and mine incident reports.³

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Oman has not had a functioning mine action programme. In its Article 7 transparency report for 2016, however, it reported that survey and clearance is being performed by its army engineers.⁴ In its statement before the Committee on Article 5 Implementation during the June 2018 Intersessional Meetings, Oman reported that it began implementing a national programme in 2017 and was planning to set up a national mine action centre but have not specified when this will occur.⁵

LAND RELEASE

Oman declared in its latest Article 7 report that in 2017 a clearance plan was formulated in the “southern strategic sector” and approximately 1,700m² of land was cleared. It did not specify where exactly this clearance had taken place nor the number or type of mines that were destroyed.⁶

ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Oman 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 February 2025.

It is too early to say whether Oman will meet this deadline but it should be readily achievable if modern land-release approaches are employed successfully. In its Article 7 report for 2017 Oman stated that it is “trying hard” to clear mined areas by 2024.⁷ At the June 2018 Intersessional Meetings, Oman promised to provide a comprehensive report at the Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2018, including all the information that has been requested on demining activities since the 1970s, what has been done as part of their new programme, and the support that they will need to complete clearance.⁸

1 Initial Article 7 Report, 2015, pp. 4–5.

2 Ibid., pp. 4–5.

3 “Humanitarian Demining”, *Journal of Mine Action*, 2001, p. 49.

4 Article 7 Report (for 2016).

5 Statement of Oman, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, 5–8 June 2018.

6 Article 7 Report (for 2017).

7 Ibid.

8 Statement of Oman, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, 5–8 June 2018.