



OMAN

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 FEBRUARY 2025
 [UNCLEAR WHETHER ON TARGET TO MEET DEADLINE]

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Oman should present plans for implementation of its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 obligations at the earliest opportunity, at least at the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties.
- In doing so, Oman should detail any needs for international technical assistance in non-technical and technical survey of mined areas.

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 APMBC Article 7 transparency 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 SMAs 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

LAND RELEASE

Oman has reported that it cleared mined area at Sarfait in Dhofar governorate in 2016, but it has not reported the area cleared nor the number and type of mines that were destroyed.⁵ Sarfait is a settlement on the coast of the Arabian Sea, near the border with Yemen.

In addition, Oman stated that a number of suspected mined areas in Dhofar governorate have been marked with warning signs. Minefield fencing will be erected “based on need”.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. Oman did not take the floor at the Fourteenth or Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to present a plan to implement its Article 5 obligations. In its Article 7 report for 2016, Oman stated only that mined areas will be destroyed “in cooperation with any linked entity and without conflicting with Omani sovereignty”.⁷

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 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.