



# SRI LANKA

## MINE ACTION PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

For 2016

For 2015

Problem understood	9	8
Target date for completion of mine clearance	8	7
Targeted clearance	8	7
Efficient clearance	8	7
National funding of programme	5	5
Timely clearance	8	7
Land release system in place	7	7
National mine action standards	6	6
Reporting on progress	5	6
Improving performance	8	8
<b>PERFORMANCE SCORE: GOOD</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>6.8</b>

## PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

The adoption in May 2016 of a new national mine action strategy for 2016–20, which sets for the first time a deadline for completion of clearance by 2020, was a major development for Sri Lanka’s national mine action programme. Further district-by-district re-survey during the year provided significantly greater clarity on the extent of confirmed contamination remaining, which The HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group (MAG), the two

international demining operators in Sri Lanka, reported increased operational and strategic efficiency. More than 36km<sup>2</sup> of suspected contamination was cancelled in 2016, and operators reported valuable progress in improving the accuracy of the national database, facilitating the path to achieving the 2020 clearance completion goal, provided increased funding can be secured.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Sri Lanka should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Continued efforts should be made to ensure the implementation of efficient land release methodology and to more accurately define the size of remaining contamination.
- Greater resources should be allocated to the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) to enable it to increase its capacity and effectiveness, and to ensure sufficient resources for mine action activities.
- Sri Lanka should implement its resource mobilisation plan and seek increased funding to ensure mine action activities can meet the 2020 clearance target.

## CONTAMINATION

Sri Lanka is extensively contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Most contamination is in the north, the focus of three decades of armed conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which ended in May 2009. However, estimates of total contamination have fallen sharply: from 506km<sup>2</sup> at the end of 2010, to 98km<sup>2</sup> at the end of 2012, to nearly 68.4km<sup>2</sup> in 2015, and down to just over 26.3km<sup>2</sup> as at February 2017. Contamination estimates across the ten affected districts across three provinces are set out in Table 1.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1: Mine/ERW contamination (as at February 2017)<sup>2</sup>**

Province	District	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Northern	Jaffna	821,555
	Kilinochchi	10,787,756
	Mullaitivu	7,391,741
	Vavuniya	2,098,660
	Mannar	4,160,512
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>25,260,224</b>
Eastern	Trincomalee	403,823
	Batticaloa	323,133
	Ampara	9,839
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>736,795</b>
North Central	Anuradhapura	344,437
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>344,437</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>26,341,456</b>

Most remaining contamination is located in Sri Lanka’s five northern districts. Both sides made extensive use of mines, including belts of P4 MKI and II blast anti-personnel mines laid by the Sri Lanka Army (SLA), and long defensive lines with a mixture of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) laid by the LTTE.<sup>3</sup> Indian Peacekeeping Forces also used mines during their presence from July 1987 to January 1990.<sup>4</sup>

The SLA used both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, with all use said to have been recorded. Minefield records were handed over to the national mine action programme and entered into the national database after the conflict, which greatly facilitated clearance.<sup>5</sup> Operators have encountered a wide range of LTTE devices, including anti-personnel mines with anti-tilt and anti-lift mechanisms, most of which the group constructed itself, and often containing a larger explosive charge than the P4 MKI and II mines (up to 140g compared to 30g). Tripwire-activated Claymore-type mines and, to a lesser extent, anti-vehicle mines, were also used by the LTTE, along with a number of forms of IED to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices, and mines connected to detonating cord to mortar and artillery shells.<sup>6</sup>

Sri Lanka remains contaminated with a wide range of ERW, including unexploded air-dropped bombs, artillery shells and missiles, mortar bombs, handheld anti-tank projectiles, and rifle and hand grenades. Large caches of abandoned explosive ordnance also exist, particularly in the north.<sup>7</sup>

Since early 2009, resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has been the focus of survey and clearance activities, including in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, and Vavuniya districts in the north, and Ampara, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee districts in the east.<sup>8</sup> Clearance is focused on high-priority areas for resettlement, agricultural land, irrigation tank areas, and other infrastructure and development initiatives, as well as of heavily mined areas such as around Kilinochchi and the Muhamalai Forward Defence Line.<sup>9</sup> In addition, in 2016, the Government of Sri Lanka granted increased access to areas of the Jaffna High Security Zone allowing The HALO Trust to conduct clearance and MAG to clear previously restricted areas in Eastern province, further expanding the reach of mine action in the country.<sup>10</sup>

In 2016, The HALO Trust reported that the impact of mines in its areas of operations is primarily socio-economic, with large areas of paddy field and agricultural land blocked for use. Highest priority for clearance is land designated for the resettlement and return of IDPs, mainly concentrated in areas around Muhamalai, Nagarkovil, and the Jaffna

High Security Zone, it said. In December 2016, two sectors of the Muhamalai minefield cleared by HALO Trust were officially released which allowed for the resettlement of a portion of the Intherapuram village and the return of 13 displaced families.<sup>11</sup>

In 2016, MAG reported that in one of its areas of operations, in Mannar district, thousands of IDPs have returned since 2010, though a further 1,300 families are still awaiting resettlement. According to MAG, more than 70% of the population in Mannar district rely on agriculture to get by, and land free of mines and ERW is therefore vital to support conflict-affected communities. Of note in 2016, MAG reported that it performed emergency clearance within the grounds of Mannar Technical College due to discovery of an anti-personnel mine during site preparation for the building of new classrooms. In addition, MAG also cleared three mined areas that were obstructing the installation of electricity pylons, enabling infrastructure to be built to supply communities in Mannar that were previously without electricity.<sup>12</sup>

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs became the lead agency for mine action in 2015 as chair of the interministerial National Steering Committee for Mine Action (NSCMA), which sets policy and is mandated to “manage linkages within the government, mine action community and donors”.<sup>13</sup> Its policies and decisions are implemented by the NMAC, set up in 2010<sup>14</sup> to liaise with government ministries and development partners to determine mine action priorities; prepare a strategic plan; and set annual workplans to put it into effect. NMAC is also responsible for accrediting mine action operators, setting national standards, and acting as the secretariat of NSCMA.<sup>15</sup>

Clearance operations are coordinated, tasked, and quality managed by a Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO) in Kilinochchi, working in consultation with District Steering Committees for Mine Action. The Committees are chaired by government agents heading district authorities.<sup>16</sup>

Under its national mine action strategy for 2016–20, the Government of Sri Lanka intends to convene steering committee meetings for mine action up to twice per year at national level and at three regional levels, one for the East (Ampara, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee) and two for the North (Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu; and Anuradhapura, Mannar, Polonnaruwa, and Vavuniya, respectively).<sup>17</sup>

A decision by the previous government had set a deadline of the end of 2014 for the withdrawal of international operators from the country, which was then extended until the end of 2016. This decision led to NMAC’s activities being severely curtailed due to a suspension in funding while it awaited reassignment to a new government ministry following January 2015 elections, and loss of some international funding for mine action operations as donors withdrew support in expectation of international operators being asked to leave the country.

Previous political issues appeared to be resolved during 2016, however, with renewed political commitment to mine action in Sri Lanka. NMAC reported it fully expected international operators to continue operations until the completion of clearance in 2020 under the new mine action strategy.<sup>18</sup>

### Strategic Planning

As noted above, in May 2016, a new national mine action strategy for 2016–20 was adopted, developed with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and in consultation with operators and the SLA. The strategy, which sets the goal of clearing all mines and ERW by 2020, contains the following strategic objectives:

- The scope of the mine/ERW problem is identified, confirmed, and addressed using appropriate methodologies and resources.
- Mine/ERW safe behaviour among women, girls, boys and men is promoted.
- The needs of mine/ERW victims are determined and met and victims are integrated into society.
- Sri Lanka accedes to the APMBC and complies with relevant obligations.
- Long-term residual contamination is effectively managed by appropriate and sustainable national capacities.
- The Sri Lanka mine action sector can access quality information for its strategic and operational decision-making.<sup>19</sup>

An external mid-term review of the strategy will be requested by NMAC in mid-2018 to evaluate progress and ensure its continued relevance.<sup>20</sup>

## Standards

There were no changes to Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards, which continued to be in effect in 2016, though operators reported a full review of the standards was planned to take place in the course of 2017.<sup>21</sup>

## Quality Management

The HALO Trust and MAG confirmed that external quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) were conducted by NMAC in 2016 on clearance tasks and that completed areas were sampled during post-clearance inspections prior to handover to local communities.<sup>22</sup>

According to HALO Trust, NMAC's overall response time for QA improved during the year as it was able to hire additional QA officers. It noted a number of improvements in QA, including final checks of post-clearance inspections occurring within one month of submission of a completion report, quarterly QA of data submitted to IMSMA, and frequently same-day approval of minefield execution plans upon submission.<sup>23</sup>

## Information Management

In 2015, an updated version of the software for the national Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database was installed and a process of data entry and ground verification was initiated.<sup>24</sup> In 2016, operators reported that significant efforts were exerted by stakeholders to correct erroneous data entered into IMSMA, leading to a more accurate representation of remaining contamination. MAG reported that, following its re-survey of six districts, and data verification in two additional districts carried out by HALO Trust, the IMSMA database was completely overhauled in 2016. According

to The HALO Trust, NMAC information management staff met with clearance organisations on a monthly basis to tackle database issues, particularly with respect to clearing duplicated tasks.<sup>25</sup>

## Operators

In 2016, demining was conducted by the SLA; one national non-governmental organisation (NGO), Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH); and the two international NGOs, HALO Trust and MAG. A national organisation, SHARP, became operational from January 2016 after securing funding and inheriting equipment and staff from international NGO Danish Demining Group, which closed operations in Sri Lanka in 2014.<sup>26</sup>

After a steep reduction in demining personnel in 2015 due to a cut in funding following the previous government's announcement that all international demining organisations would have to leave the country by the end of the year (a decision subsequently reversed), in 2016, HALO Trust's operational staff increased from 330 staff at the start of the year to 442, as a result of the re-engagement of a former donor. In December 2016, 39 manual teams were deployed as well as 2 survey teams and 7 mechanical teams with the assistance of 6 machines, including four CASE front-end loaders, one tracked Caterpillar, one JCB excavator, and one stone crusher.<sup>27</sup> MAG's capacity increased in 2016 to a total of 15 manual clearance teams, 8 mechanical teams, and 4 community liaison teams.<sup>28</sup>

NMAC reported in October 2016 that the SLA employed a total of 555 persons in demining operations, of whom 515 were deminers, along with 11 mechanical flails. DASH, and its subcontractor, SHARP, employed 274 deminers, and a total of 355 staff during the year and one mechanical asset.<sup>29</sup>

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## LAND RELEASE

A total of nearly 38.5km<sup>2</sup> was reported released in 2016, an increase from almost 36.2km<sup>2</sup> in 2015. However, the amount of land released through clearance and technical survey decreased to 6.5km<sup>2</sup> in 2016, from close to 9.8km<sup>2</sup> in 2015.<sup>30</sup> Non-technical survey which began in June 2015 was completed in February 2017, with the cancellation of 42.4km<sup>2</sup> of suspected hazardous area (SHA), reducing the total contamination from just over 68.4km<sup>2</sup> to close to 26km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>31</sup>

NMAC has reported that, cumulatively, a total of 133.4km<sup>2</sup> of mine contamination was reduced or cleared between 2002 and March 2017, and a total of 705,565 mines destroyed during that timeframe.<sup>32</sup>

## Survey in 2016

A total of 32km<sup>2</sup> was reported cancelled by non-technical survey by MAG and The HALO Trust in 2016, while confirming nearly 22km<sup>2</sup> as mined.<sup>33</sup> Just under 4.2km<sup>2</sup> was reportedly reduced through technical survey during the year.<sup>34</sup> This compares to release by survey in 2015, when according to NMAC's official data, a total of 26.4km<sup>2</sup> was cancelled by non-technical survey and a further 6.3km<sup>2</sup> reduced through technical survey.<sup>35</sup>

In 2016, in close cooperation with NMAC, MAG re-surveyed six of eight contaminated districts to reclassify and confirm that SHAs registered in the IMSMA database were in fact confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). It reported cancelling a total of just over 27.6km<sup>2</sup> in 2016 through non-technical survey and reducing nearly 756,000m<sup>2</sup>, while confirming over 6.5km<sup>2</sup> as mined.<sup>36</sup>

HALO Trust reported cancelling just over 41,600m<sup>2</sup> of CHA during non-technical survey and clearance, and reducing over 123,600m<sup>2</sup> by technical survey, along with confirming close to 10,200m<sup>2</sup> as mined by survey activities in 2016. Additionally, HALO Trust was tasked by NMAC to re-survey SHAs originally reported by other clearance operators, and in the process cancelled 49 SHAs with a size of over 4.4km<sup>2</sup> and confirmed a further 103 areas with a size of nearly 14.7km<sup>2</sup> as mined.<sup>37</sup>

Ultimately, according to MAG, re-survey from June 2015 to February 2017 led to the cancellation of over 42.4km<sup>2</sup> of land, reducing the total of confirmed contamination to nearly 26km<sup>2</sup>, from the previously reported figure of 68km<sup>2</sup> in 2015.<sup>38</sup> MAG emphasised the impact of the collaborative re-survey effort in fundamentally changing how Sri Lanka plans towards completion at both the strategic and operational levels.<sup>39</sup>

**Table 2: Mined area survey in 2016<sup>40</sup>**

Operator	SHAs cancelled	Area cancelled (m <sup>2</sup> )	SHAs confirmed as mined	Area confirmed (m <sup>2</sup> )	Area reduced by TS (m <sup>2</sup> )
DASH	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	286,348
MAG	277	27,607,927	97	6,517,936	755,769
HALO		41,601 <sup>41</sup>	4	10,157	123,626
HALO	49	4,423,138	103	14,667,094	0
SHARP	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	0
SLA	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	3,014,006
<b>Totals</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>32,072,666</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>21,195,997</b>	<b>4,179,749</b>

## Clearance in 2016

Nearly 2.3km<sup>2</sup> of mined area was reportedly cleared in 2016, with a total of 59,304 anti-personnel mines, 117 anti-vehicle mines, and 2,907 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) destroyed.<sup>42</sup> This compares to 2015, when NMAC reported 3.52km<sup>2</sup> of mined area cleared.<sup>43</sup>

**Table 3: Mine clearance in 2016<sup>44</sup>**

Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
DASH	N/R	770,110	12,630	65	875
MAG	29	453,575	10,280	2	430
HALO	29	802,168	16,192	44	1,214
SHARP	N/R	27,264	69	0	5
SLA	N/R	296,304	20,133	6	383
<b>Totals</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>2,349,421</b>	<b>59,304</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>2,907</b>

AP = Anti-personnel

AV = Anti-vehicle

In 2016, MAG released in total over 1.12km<sup>2</sup> through clearance and technical survey, destroying over 10,280 mines in the process. It stated that this significant increase in output was a result of an increase in funding, primarily from the Governments of Australia, Canada, Japan, and the United States.<sup>45</sup> As a result of increasingly positive collaborative interaction with NMAC, MAG was able to conduct clearance in the Eastern province for the first time since 2009. Subsequently, MAG was able to project that all remaining confirmed hazardous areas in Eastern province could be completed by the end of 2017.<sup>46</sup>

The HALO Trust cleared 802,168m<sup>2</sup> and reduced 123,626m<sup>2</sup> in 2016, which shows a decrease in the amount of area cleared in 2016, compared with 2015 due to a decrease in the use of flails and beach-tech teams in Nagarkovil, as areas appropriate for the deployment of these mechanical assets were largely cleared in 2015 and in previous years. The SLA released additional sections of the Jaffna High Security Zone (HSZ) in 2016, which allowed for HALO Trust to increase its pace of survey and clearance of former HSZ areas, from clearance of just under 40,500m<sup>2</sup> in 2016, compared with nearly 21,700m<sup>2</sup> in 2015.<sup>47</sup>

## Deminer Safety

HALO Trust reported that five deminers were injured in separate accidents during 2016. Three deminers involved in anti-personnel mine clearance accidents in March, May, and September sustained minor injuries and were able to return to work, it said. As a result of the accidents, HALO Trust reported that a revised risk assessment lead to a change in deployment and the increased use of mechanical support for demining. Two other accidents in August and November involving an anti-personnel mine and an unknown device resulted in more serious injuries to deminers.<sup>48</sup> MAG reported no accidents involving demining personnel occurred in 2016.<sup>49</sup>

## ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Sri Lanka is not a state party or signatory to the APMBC but nonetheless has obligations under international human rights law to protect life, which requires the clearance of mines as soon as possible.

Sri Lanka's national mine action strategy for 2016–20 contains a specific strategic objective of accession to the APMBC and compliance with its obligations.<sup>50</sup> In December 2015, at the Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, Sri Lanka announced its commitment to accede to the Convention for the first time.<sup>51</sup> At the intersessional meetings in June 2017, Sri Lanka reiterated that its Cabinet of Ministers had approved the country's accession to the convention in March 2016, and that it was "presently working on domestic technical and other related processes required for Sri Lanka's accession".<sup>52</sup>

In line with Sri Lanka's national mine action strategic plan's completion deadline, both MAG and HALO Trust asserted in 2017 that clearance of all known contamination is possible by 2020, with increased support from donors and an expansion in clearance capacity. They emphasised that between their two international organisations, along with the SLA and DASH, the capacity, structures, and willingness to complete the job are in place, as well as the capacity to absorb additional resources and expand accordingly.<sup>53</sup>

In the last five years, Sri Lanka has reported clearing close to 32km<sup>2</sup> of mined area, though clearance dropped significantly in 2013 following a decline in capacity following closure of the operations of the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) in 2013, and two Indian demining NGOs, Horizon and Sarvatra, in 2012 (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Mine clearance in 2012–16**

Year	Area cleared (km <sup>2</sup> )
2016	2.35
2015	3.52
2014	3.75
2013	6.44
2012	15.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.64</b>

According to Sri Lanka's national mine action strategy, 6.5km<sup>2</sup> is expected to be reduced or cleared annually with sustained resources. As noted above, NMAC is expected to request an external mid-term review of the strategy in 2018 to evaluate progress and to adapt the strategy if necessary.<sup>54</sup> In 2016, a resource mobilisation action plan to accompany the strategy was developed by the Government of Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the GICHD, specifying, among other things, activities, tasks, responsibilities and time-lines.<sup>55</sup>

The government created a national budget line for mine action in 2015.<sup>56</sup> NMAC reported that during the year, funding for its operational costs and the SLA's demining unit had been provided by the government.<sup>57</sup> NMAC expected to see increased funding in 2016–17.<sup>58</sup>

Encouragingly, HALO Trust reported that increased donor funding in 2017 had enabled it to hire 60% more national staff and it was expecting a corresponding increase in clearance output. It stated clearance priorities would remain unchanged and that a large portion of HALO Trust's demining capacity would remain in Muhamalai and Nagarkovil for the purpose of clearing land for resettlement.<sup>59</sup> It would focus on completing clearance of all mined areas in Jaffna, which it said will hopefully be completed in early 2018.<sup>60</sup>

In 2017, MAG intended to reduce its survey capacity due to the successful conclusion of re-survey activities in 2016. It planned to continue deploying significant demining capacity in Mannar district, where it remained the only clearance operator. Additionally, it was set to complete clearance of all remaining confirmed hazardous areas in Batticaloa and Trincomalee, in cooperation with the SLA, and then intended to re-focus capacity to Mullaitivu. MAG hoped that with the completion of national re-survey and the establishment of a definitive picture of remaining contamination levels, former donors would consider re-engaging in the final phases of mine action to enable the successful completion of clearance of mine and ERW contamination by 2020.<sup>61</sup>

On 21 June 2017, the first of Sri Lanka's mine-affected districts was declared safe from landmines, after clearance of Batticaloa district was declared completed by MAG, with the support of the SLA and Government of Sri Lanka.<sup>62</sup>

1 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016; email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, Assistant Director of Operations, Quality Management, and Planning, and Chairman of Accreditation Committee, NMAC, 14 October 2016; and National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), "Annual Progress Report on Mine Action Year 2014", undated but 2015; and Mines Advisory Group (MAG), "SL District Re-survey Results Before & After Re-survey" August 2017; and email from Alistair Moir, Country Director, MAG, 28 September 2017. The figure of 26.3km<sup>2</sup> includes contamination figures for Anuradhapura district as at 30 June 2016. MAG reported that Anuradhapura was not part of the 2015–17 re-survey and that the total amount of contamination remaining in the areas re-surveyed (Mannar, Vavuniya, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, and Ampara) amounted to 25,997,019m<sup>2</sup> at August 2017.

2 MAG, "SL District Re-survey Results Before & After Re-survey", August 2017; and email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 28 September and 6 October 2017. Figures for Anuradhapura are as at 30 June 2016. MAG reported that Anuradhapura district was not part of the 2015–17 re-survey. It is also not clear based on previous reporting if a small amount of contamination remains in Colombo district.

3 Interviews with demining operators, Colombo, 29 March–2 April 2010; and with Maj. Pradeep Gamage, Officer-in-Charge, North Jaffna Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU), Jaffna, 3 April 2007.

4 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.

5 Ibid.; and interview with Rob Syfret, Operations Manager, HALO Trust, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.

6 Email from Valon Kumnova, HALO Trust, 11 April 2014; and "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.

- 7 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.
- 8 Ibid., p. 7.
- 9 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.
- 10 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, Programme Support Officer, HALO Trust, 25 April and 28 September 2017.
- 11 Emails from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April and 28 September 2017.
- 12 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August and 27 September 2017.
- 13 "The National Strategy for Mine Action in Sri Lanka", Ministry of Economic Development, September 2010, p. 9; email from Sri Mallikarachchi, Senior IMSMA Officer, NMAC, 13 October 2015. After Sri Lanka's January 2015 Presidential elections and change of government, the Ministry of Economic Development, which formerly housed NMAC, was dismantled. A March 2015 Cabinet memorandum then assigned development activity, implemented by the former Ministry of Economic Development, to other relevant ministries. This resulted in responsibility for the national mine action programme being assigned to the Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs. "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 10.
- 14 The cabinet formally approved the creation of NMAC on 10 July 2010.
- 15 Email from Amanthi Wickramasinghe, Programme Officer – Peace and Recovery, UNDP, Colombo, 11 March 2011.
- 16 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 9. It states that: "Steering committees used to play an important role in providing guidance to the mine action programme and in promoting transparency and accountability. At the national level the Steering Committee fulfilled the role of a National Mine Action Authority. It used to convene key national stakeholders including the SLA and relevant Ministries, mine action NGOs and main development partners. At regional and district levels, steering committees were tasked to ensure priority-setting of survey, clearance and MRE activities".
- 17 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 10.
- 18 Interview with Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, Colombo, 15 September 2016.
- 19 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 11.
- 20 Ibid., p. 27.
- 21 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Email from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 24 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.
- 25 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 26 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 12.
- 27 Emails from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April and 28 September 2017.
- 28 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017.
- 29 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.
- 30 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017; presentation by Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, "1st Quarter Meeting 2017", undated; and "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 13.
- 31 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 27 September 2017.
- 32 Presentation by Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, "1st Quarter Meeting 2017", undated.
- 33 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 34 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017; and presentation by Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, "1st Quarter Meeting 2017", undated.
- 35 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 14 October 2016.
- 36 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017.
- 37 Emails from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April and 28 September 2017.
- 38 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August and 27 September 2017.
- 39 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017.
- 40 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017; and presentation by Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, "1st Quarter Meeting 2017", undated.
- 41 HALO Trust reported that this was cancellation of confirmed hazardous areas, not suspected hazardous areas. Email from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 42 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017; and presentation by Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, "1st Quarter Meeting 2017", undated.
- 43 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016. Demining organisations are not permitted to destroy mines found using explosives. The SLA collects mines recovered on a daily basis which it transports to an army facility for destruction. Interviews with Ivica Stilin, MAG, in Vavuniya, 13 September 2016; and Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.
- 44 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017; and presentation by Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, "1st Quarter Meeting 2017", undated.
- 45 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Email from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 48 Emails from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April and 28 September 2017. HALO Trust reported that the accident in August involved an unknown device suspected to be a grenade and resulted in injuries to the deminer's hand, leg, and eyes. In the second accident in November, a deminer was injured by an anti-personnel mine, resulting in the amputation of both hands.
- 49 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017.
- 50 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 11.
- 51 Statement of Sri Lanka, 15th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.
- 52 Statement of Sri Lanka, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 9 June 2017.
- 53 Emails from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 54 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, pp. 13 and 27.
- 55 Ibid, p. 26.
- 56 Ibid, p. 22.
- 57 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016. NMAC reported the government also allowed all demining related equipment to be imported tax-free during the year.
- 58 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.
- 59 Email from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 60 Email from Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 28 September 2017.
- 61 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 21 August 2017.
- 62 MAG Press release, "Sri Lanka declares first district safe from landmines, thanks to work by MAG deminers", 21 June 2017, at: <http://www.maginternational.org/mag/en/our-impact/news/sri-lanka-declares-first-district-safe-from-landmines/>.