



# UZBEKISTAN

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Uzbekistan should accede to and abide by the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Uzbekistan should take the necessary measures to identify the extent and impact of mine contamination and clear mined areas in a timely manner.
- Uzbekistan should be more transparent in detailing the extent of its mine contamination and clearance operations.

## CONTAMINATION

Uzbek forces have laid mines along its international borders at various times, including on its borders with Afghanistan in 1998, with Kyrgyzstan in 1999, and with Tajikistan in 2000. In 2010, the Secretary-General United Nations (UN) Ban Ki-moon criticised as “unacceptable” Uzbekistan’s emplacing of mines along parts of its border that have not been delineated.<sup>1</sup>

Soviet troops also laid mines on the Uzbek-Afghan border. Survey on the Tajik side of the border over several years had identified a total of 57 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) as at December 2008 (size unknown), which were subsequently deemed to be on Uzbekistan territory. Uzbekistan had reportedly cleared 95% of the minefields along the Tajik border by the end of 2007 in demining operations conducted by Uzbek army deminers in cooperation with Tajik border troops.<sup>2</sup> The first ever state visit by the President of Uzbekistan to Tajikistan took place in March 2018, and several agreements were signed between the two countries, including one on demarcation of the separate regions of the Tajik-Uzbek

border. Tajikistan expected decisions to be taken in 2018 regarding clarification and identification of SHAs on the Uzbek border, and any demining operations will require agreement and cooperation between both nations (see Mine Action Review’s *Clearing the Mines* report on Tajikistan for further information).<sup>3</sup>

In 2005, media reports cited Kyrgyz officials in Batken province as saying Kyrgyz border guards had checked previously mined areas of the border around the settlements of Ak-Turpak, Chonkara, and Otukchu, which had been cleared by Uzbek deminers, and confirmed that they were free of contamination.<sup>4</sup> According to the most recent information available (2005), Uzbekistan has no plans to clear mines laid on its 150km border with Afghanistan.

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no functioning mine action programme in Uzbekistan.

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## LAND RELEASE

There are no reports of any land release occurring in 2017.

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## ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Uzbekistan is not a state party to the APMBC, but nonetheless has obligations under international human rights law to protect life, which requires the clearance of mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

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1 "Ban calls Uzbekistan land mines 'unacceptable'", *The Hindu*, 6 April 2010, at: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/ban-calls-uzbekistan-land-mines-unacceptable/article389776.ece>.

2 Email from Jonmahmad Rajabov, Director, Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TMAC), 16 February 2009; Tajikistan Anti- Personnel Mine Ban Convention Article 7 Report, "General situation", 3 February 2008, p. 3; and "Uzbekistan started demining on Tajik border", *Spy.kz*, 23 October 2007.

3 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre, 27 April 2018.

4 IRIN, "Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan: Landmine threat along Uzbek border removed", at: [www.irinnews.org](http://www.irinnews.org).