



Jordan Article 5 Mine Clearance Update
11th Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention

Phnom Penh, Cambodia
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Norwegian People's Aid, which is demining the border minefields, plans to verify an additional 7km² outside the recorded mine belts to check for the unaccounted for mines and will conduct Land Release activities combining non-technical survey and technical survey addressing areas of risk. The Land Release activities will be completed in July 2013 when no mines or suspicion of mines will prevent development of the area.

A number of challenges have been faced by the mixed mine-belt along the north border. These challenges have been addressed to the extent possible. The main threat to Jordan complying with its Article 5 deadline by May 2012 is increasing tensions along its northern border. This will be the only factor that may cause a delay. 30 days have been lost in the past 6 months due to security constraints.

Mr. President, Co Chairs, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In addition to mine clearance operations in the North, Jordan remains committed to its ongoing verification procedures throughout the Jordan Valley region. The National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation conducted a review of records of previously mined areas cleared by the Jordan Armed Forces prior to the establishment of a national authority and implementation of national and International mine action standards. Records showed a large number of mines unaccounted for and therefore Jordan committed to conducting comprehensive verification of suspected hazardous areas in the Jordan Valley in order to reduce the lingering risk of mines to local inhabitants and remove impediments to socio-economic development.

At the start of the Jordan Valley Verification Project in 2009, it was first estimated that up to 20,000 mines remained unaccounted for. However, after current extensive studies and operations in the field it is now believed that the actual number of unaccounted for mines is much less. The verification project is led by the NCDR and executed by the Royal Engineering Corps. In July 2011, the number of teams deployed in the Jordan Valley was increased from three to six manual teams in addition to one mechanical team. By December 2011 two Mine Detection Dog teams from the Norwegian People's Aid Program will be deployed in the Jordan Valley for three months to accelerate the verification process.

After the deployment of the three additional teams, major achievements have been achieved; 27 Suspected Hazardous Areas with a total area amounting to 1.62 million m² have been verified, of which 119,200 m² have been sampled. 214 explosive items have been found and destroyed in the past 5 month period between June 2011 and as of the end of October 2011. This brings the total number of found items up to 1,549, of which 766 are mines and 783 are UXOs and Small Arm Ammunitions.