

Tajikistan Mine Action Centre

“16 MSP s to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction”

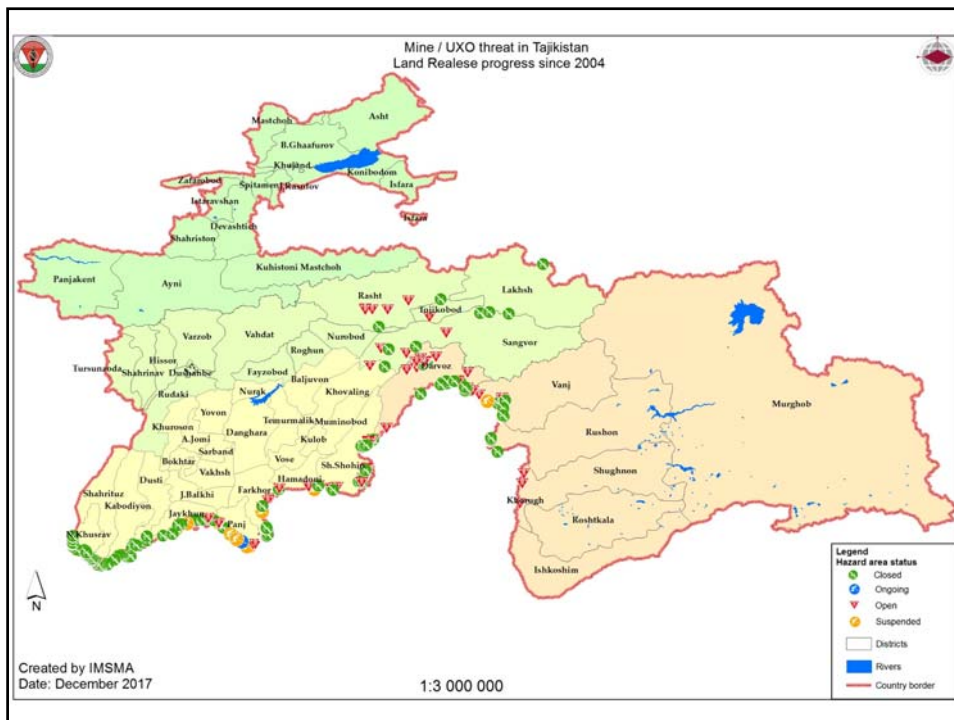
Vienna , 18 -21 December, 2017

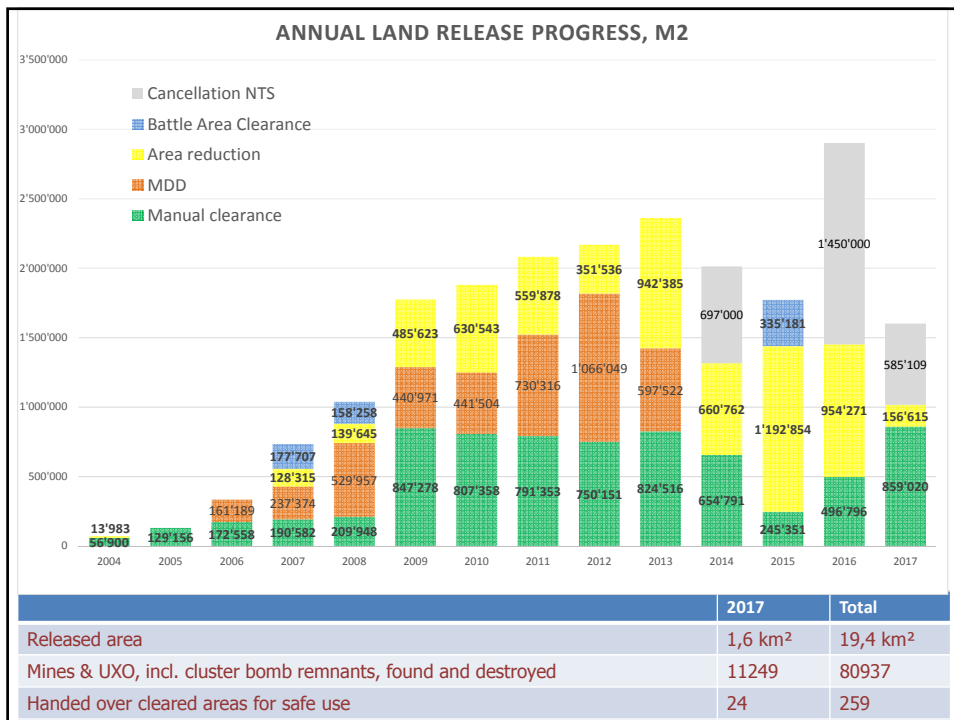
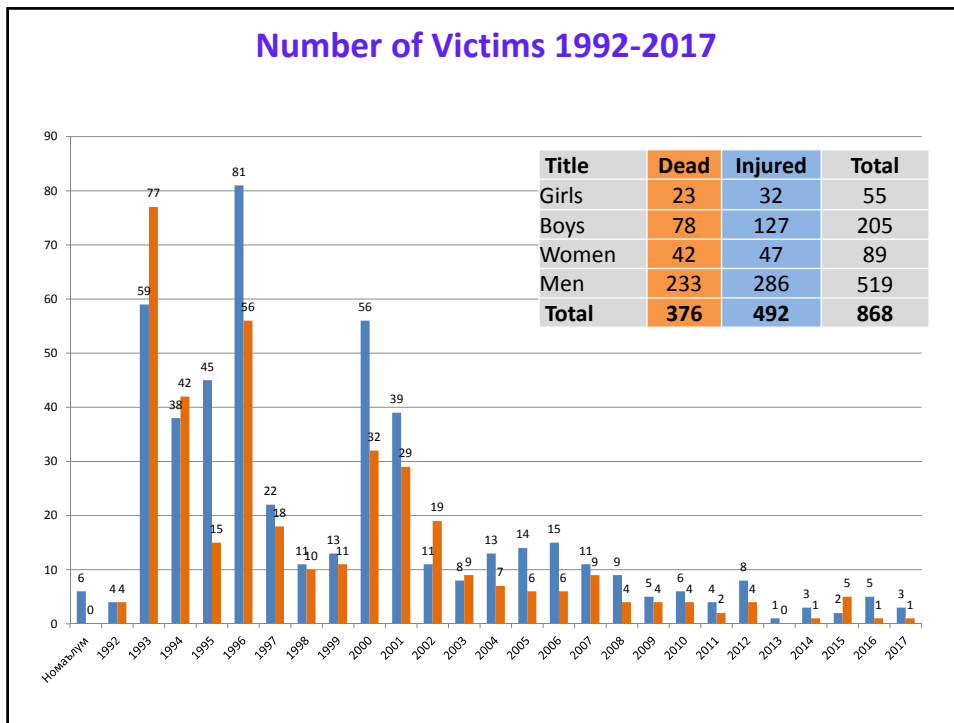
TAJIKISTAN

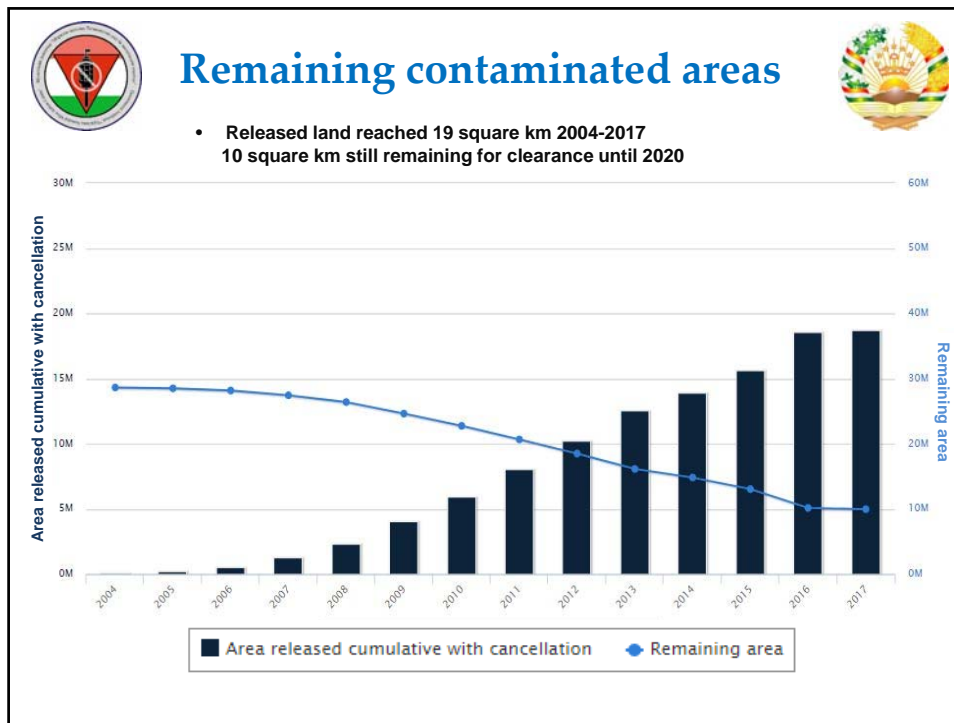
“Land Release progress and toward Article 5 completion”

Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda

1



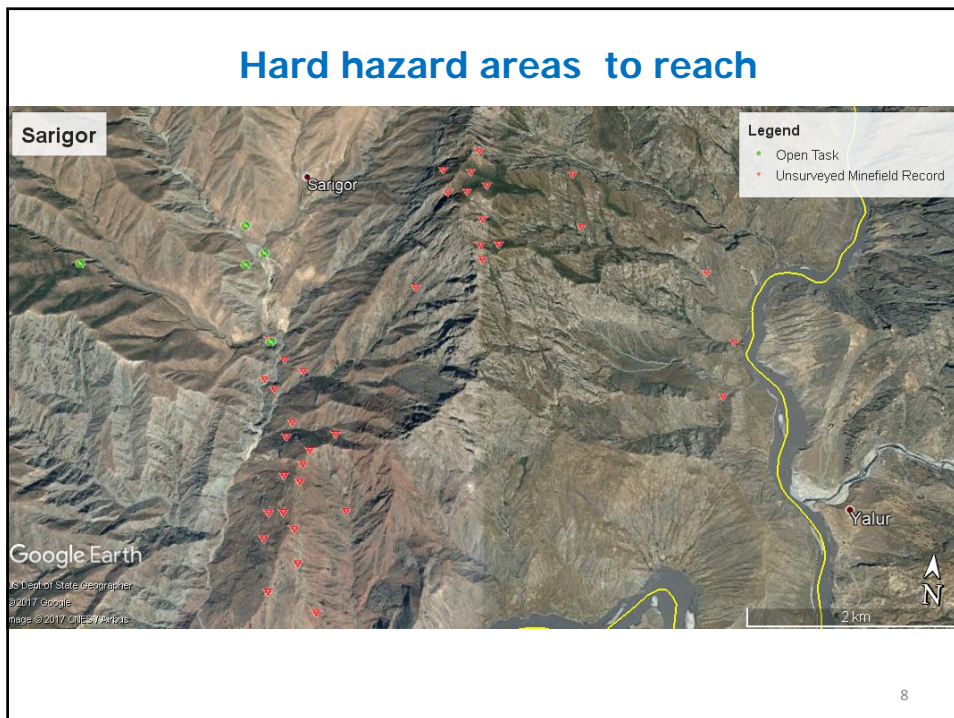




Hard hazard areas to reach



Hard hazard areas to reach





TMAP demining operational capacity for 2018



Norwegian People's Aid (NPA):

- 2 Manual clearance teams
- 2 Female manual clearance team

Ministry of Defense (MoD):

- 4 Manual clearance teams
- 1 teams Committee of emergency and civil defense

Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD):

- 2 Manual clearance team-financial support still not confirmed

Union of Sappers of Tajikistan (UST):

- 2 Non-technical survey teams

CROSS BORDER COOPERATION PROJECT



Progress in the legislative field in 2016- 2017

1. The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Humanitarian Mine Action". The law was finally adopted and signed by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan on 23 July, 2016, and has the number # 1338;
2. The National Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan on humanitarian mine action for 2017-2020, approved by Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan from February 25, 2017, No.91;
3. The National Humanitarian Mine Action Standards approved by Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan from «1» April 2017 year, №162



11



Tajikistan Mine Action Centre



**Many thanks
for your attention!**

12

The speech of the Director of Tajikistan Mine Action Centre in the 16th Meeting of the States Parties regarding article 5 of the Ottawa Convention, Vienna , 2017

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, using the opportunity, I would like to thank the Austria for warm hospitality also I would like to thank the ISU and UN for their contribution in organizing this meeting.

I would like to update you on the mine action related activities in Tajikistan.

The level of mine contamination in Tajikistan remains relatively high, mainly on Tajik-Afghan Border, where the landmines and explosive remnants of war including cluster munition remnants are still affecting the lives of the people of Tajikistan.

The situation along the Tajik-Uzbek border has become more clear following the survey, the mined areas along this border are now know or expected to be in Uzbek territory. However, there is an ongoing process to properly demarcate this border. Thus teams working along the border may require some technical assistance in the future.

Based on the available statistics since 1992 868 people were involved in mine/ERW accidents, out of which 492 people were injured and 376 people died. In 2017, 4 teenagers were involved in mine accident which resulted in three injuries and one died

During the last five years, TMAP has made significant progress in land release activities. Efficiency has been improved by the introduction of new assets and methodologies and by updating the NMAS and the SOPs of implementing partners accordingly.

The progress made since the start of the programme in 2003 is that more than 19.4 km² of the land has been released through joint NTS/TS interventions, mine clearance and TS. In total, 259 (including 5 BACs) hazardous areas were released and handed over to the local authorities for safe use.

In Tajikistan, as of November 2017, 163 confirmed hazard areas (CHA, including 8 BAC) with an approximate total size of **8.4** km² and 45 unsurveyed minefield records with approximate total size of 1.4 km² remain to be addressed.

The released land is used by Tajikistan's population for agriculture, water supply, construction works (road, border posts etc.), fisheries, mining.

Circumstances that hamper the land release operations are the following:

- **Difficult areas:** Tajikistan is highly mountainous country; many of HAs are located in hard to reach areas.
- **Operational season:** Generally, annually operations starting in early April and suspending in end of November (only an 8 month operational season), but taking into consideration monthly break shifts, weekends and holidays operations conducting only 6 months a year.in mountainous areas.
- **Weather:** Extreme weather conditions are another challenge to clearance operations. In Central region, many HAs are accessible only 3-4 months a year (i.e. only during summer period).
- **Inaccessibility of areas for machines and dogs:** All areas accessible for machines and dogs are almost completed.
- **Terrain:** The Tajik-Afghan border area offers some of the most challenging terrain in the world in which to conduct mineclearance operations. High, steep peaks and hard rocky ground make progress slow and treacherous (тречорус) as seen in the image).
- **Remote Area:** The remoteness of the region presents an even larger challenge as the mines were laid on and around military positions on hilltops overlooking the Panj river valley. Troops who manned these positions were moved in and out by helicopter meaning there are no established roads or tracks to access the minefields for survey or clearance.
- There are **45 tasks** which have minefield records that are **awaiting survey and clearance**. Some them are considered to be currently inaccessible for survey and clearance.

- Remaining area is **only suitable for manual demining operations**: The speed of which is slow and productivity is less.
- **Financing**: Insufficient funds for the programme have imposed operational challenges.

We are in full commitment to perform these tasks with the purpose to meet the Ottawa obligations and make the life of our people safe!!!

What concerns Article 5 Completion Plan, it describes the multifaceted and serious dimensions of the mine problem in Tajikistan, specifies the institutions involved in the implementation of the Article 5 Completion Plan and the funds required for its implementation, as well as the timetable for addressing of remaining confirmed hazard areas and unsurveyed minefield records. Now we updating Article 5 completion Plan based on challenges and progress made in 2017.

Next year (2018) it is expected that during Article 5 completion period the following available capacities of the demining agencies will be involved in Land release operations

- **4 manual demining teams (one - is a female team) of NPA**
- **5 manual demining teams of Ministry of Defence**
- **2 manual demining teams of FSD financial support still not confirmed**
- **2 NTS teams of UST**

To meet Article 5 obligations by 1 April 2020 – de facto by the end of 2019 – there is a need to mobilize only manual land release assets for non-technical survey, technical survey and manual clearance. All contaminated areas suitable for employing mine detection dogs and mechanical demining assets are completed.

There is still a lot of work to do for Tajikistan to fulfill its obligations. Tajikistan still needs international assistance in mine action program implementation in the future and invites the world community to continue its precious assistance for this important issue.

Despite the challenges we made some progress in terms of the regional cooperation:

- Based on the MoU between Tajikistan and Afghanistan, within the framework of Cross-Border cooperation, with the financial support from the US Department of State, TNMAC officers, starting from this year, provided QA and QC on the Afghan side according to the Afghanistan National Mine Action Standards. Before starting the project our specialists have been certified by DMAC Afghanistan. Within the Cross-Border cooperation project, in total 5 QA missions have been conducted by TNMAC QA officers to 6 minefields in Afghanistan, from 6 minefields they did QC for the 4 completed minefields, where checked 9270 m². In addition 12 new minefields observed during the NTS and confirmed and reported to DMAC. In 2018 we are planning to cooperate with such activities in terms of Cross-Border cooperation between DMAC and TNMAC

- Moreover, OSCE and TNMAC, with financial support from the US Department of State provided EOD level 1,2.3 and 3+ for specialists from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Turkmenistan, Mongolia and Afghanistan.

The considerable progress was made in the legislative field in 2017:

The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On Humanitarian Demining”, the National Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan on humanitarian mine action for 2017-2020 and the National Humanitarian Mine Action Standards were developed and agreed with the state authorities and approved by the Government, and this makes the operations of TNMAC safe and more flexible. All the listed legal acts and the law passed the necessary and strict Government procedures and all of them were signed by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan

There is a vital need to increase the demining capacity in Tajikistan in order to ensure timely implementation of Ottawa convention obligations by 2020. Of course this will require additional resources.

On behalf of the Republic of Tajikistan, I would like to thank UNDP, OSCE GICHD, ISU and all our donors US DoS, Norway, Switzerland, Japan for their great contribution to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme. Also we present our highest gratitude and appreciation to the international agencies (NPA and FSD) that have been involved in implementation of mine action program in Tajikistan.

Thank you for your attention!