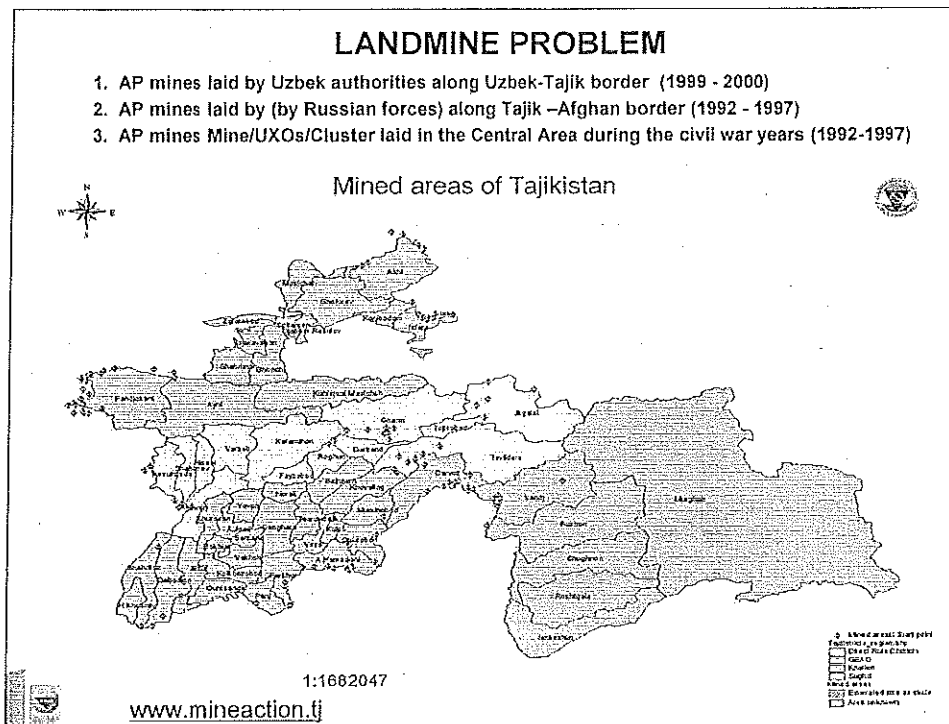


MINE ACTION IN TAJIKISTAN

9 Meeting of States Parties
(24 - 28 November, 2008, Geneva)

<http://www.mineaction.tj/>

Sonmahmad Rajabov



Dear Co-chairmen, Ladies and Gentleman!

I would like to thank donors, first of all sponsor Program of International Geneva Center on Humanitarian Mine Clearance, due to support of which Tajik delegation participates in this meeting.

First of all, I would like to remind you that Republic of Tajikistan – the state located in south-eastern part of Central Asia and is far from seas and oceans. Neighboring with: Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, China and Afghanistan. Is a typically mountainous country with highlands of 300 to 7495m. (93% of the territory of country covered by mountains, appurtenant to highest mountain systems of the world). There are more thousands of glaciers in the territory of country, which are the sources of majority of rivers delivering water to countries of Central Asia. The territory of the Republic of Tajikistan is 143,100 square kilometers. Population is more than 7 million.

What is your State's plan to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under your State's jurisdiction or control for the nearest future?

- The mine action program in Tajikistan is being undertaken in accordance with the Five Year Mine Action Strategic Plan for 2006-2010 which was approved by CIIHL (Commission on the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law) on 27 July 2006. Our long-term strategic plan is in line with our commitment to Ottawa Convention.



What is your State's plan to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under your State's jurisdiction or control for the nearest future?

The mine action program in Tajikistan is being undertaken in accordance with the Five Year Mine Action Strategic Plan and in the frame of this plan we intend to increase productivity and effectiveness of mine clearing in 2009-2010. In spite of measures which are prescribed in the mentioned plan for the next years, it is already clear that we are not able to complete detection and destruction of all anti-personnel mines during the period enacted for Tajikistan (April 1 of 2010), in this connection, by using the right which is prescribed by Ottawa Convention there will be prepared a new plan on mine clearing for an additional requested period. This plan will be an integral part of Request for prolonging the term of fulfillment the commitments prescribed by the 5th article of Convention which at the present time is being prepared and in March of 2009 it will be presented for review of the states-participants of Ottawa Convention.

In the frame of current strategic plan, our main and immediate objectives will be the following:

Decreasing of influence of land mines to nearest villages;

Increasing of effectiveness and profitability of mine clearing in comparison with previous years;

Increasing the quantity of mine clearance teams and explorations;

Attraction of opportunities of commercial companies to mine clearing and purchasing of mechanical machines:

What progress has been made in the implementation of your State's national demining programme since the last time that an update was provided to the Standing Committee?

Since the last Standing Committee meeting:

- Cleared : more than 870 000 sqm.;
- Found & Destroyed : more than 3000 mines UXOs/CM;
- Reduced SHAs : more than 23,5 mln. sqm.;
- Handed over : 8 cleared mine fields;



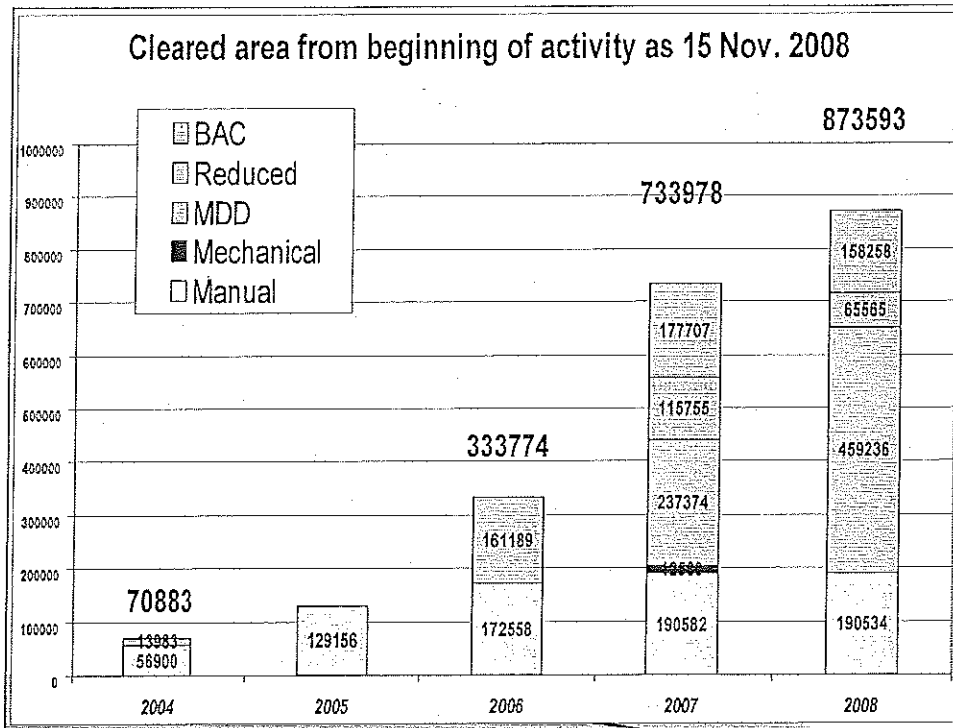
What are the achievements of your State in fulfillment of the national program since the moment when it was presented to Standing committees for the first time?

In 2008, there was cleared the area more than 870,000 sqm..

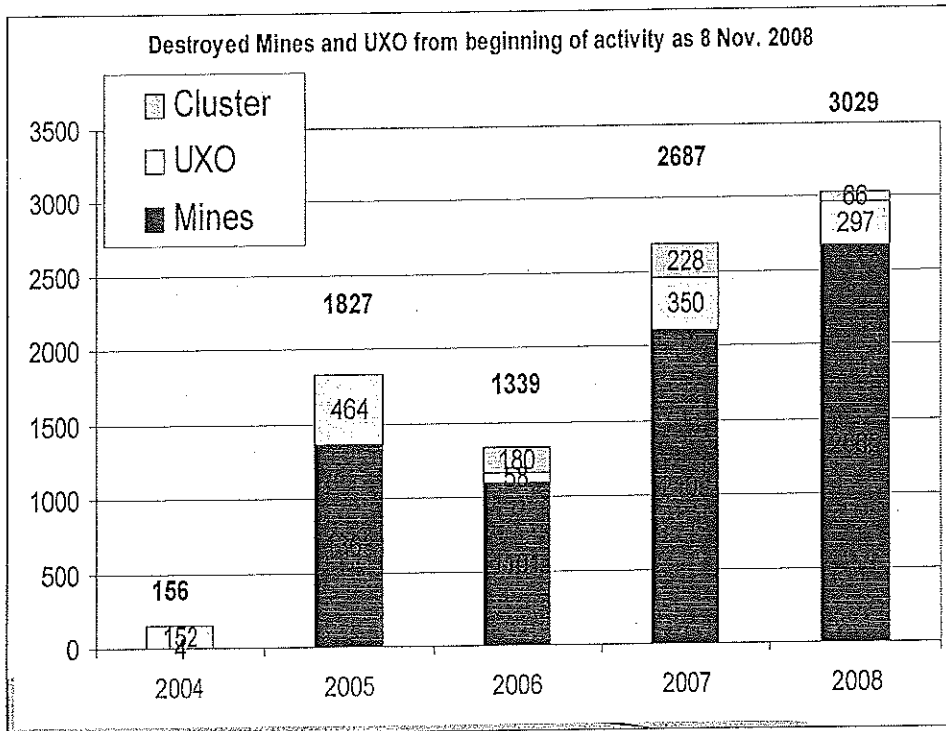
There were found and destroyed more then 3000 mines and 758 UXO's (including 228 cluster bombs). In the slide the data's are shown by taking into account already this year.

8 cleared fields were handed over to authorities for further utilization.

It is needed to emphasize that in the previous period we could attract more attention also to decreasing of dangerous areas, we could decrease more then 23,5 mln.sqm and in the next year we are planning to continue this work.



In this diagram we can see the process of mine clearing activity since 2004 till now. As you see we could achieve a good results. In 2008, we could clean the area equal to 870,000 sqm, it is for 140, 000 more then in 2007. This process allowed us to improve the organizing of labor in general, improve professionalism of the personnel and involve more mine detecting dogs.

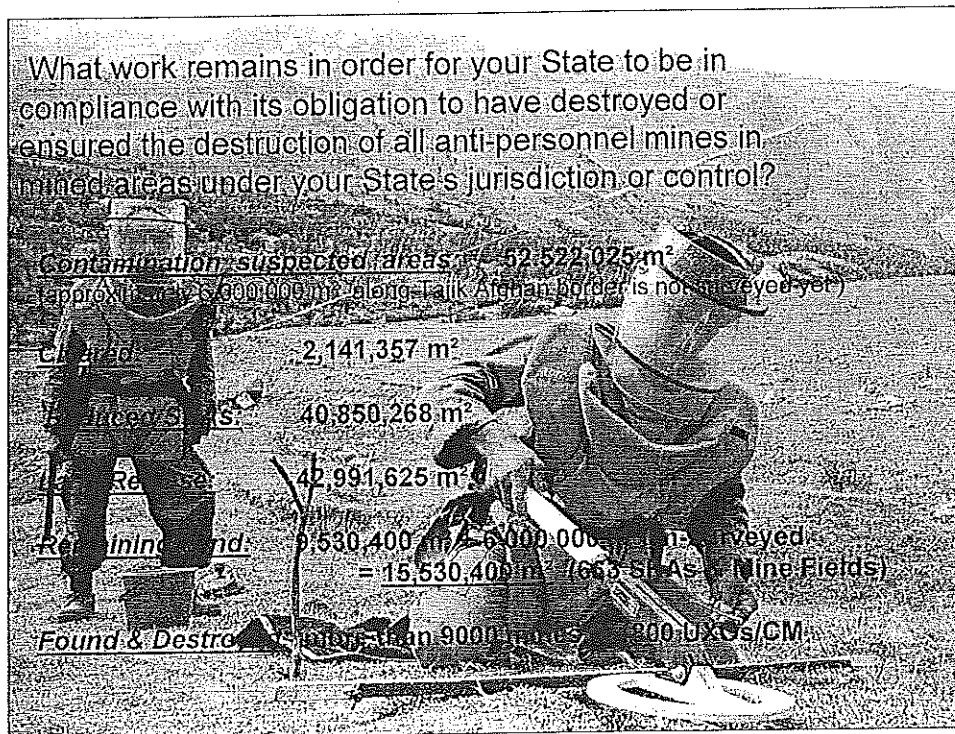


In 2008(November 15), as you see in a diagram we could achieve not bad results in aspect of finding and destroying of mines and UXO's. As it was mentioned above, in the enacted period there were found and destroyed 2666 mines and 363 UXO's (66 from them are cluster bombs), this amount is more then in last year. We can say that in each 275 sqm there was found approximately 1 mine.

Survey and manual clearance activity



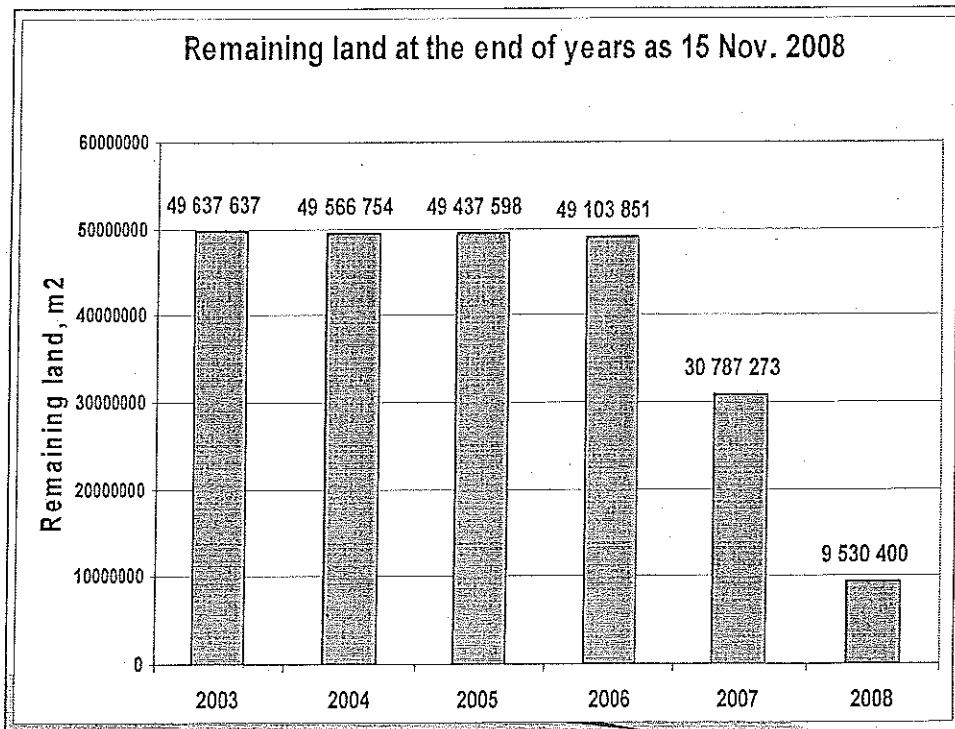
A number of teams is varying each year, depending on financial support of donors. As it shown, our program is not big and our potential as well. With this potential we cleared the area of 870, 000 sqm from mines. Of course, if there would be more support, our results could be more solid.



Какая работа остается для вашего Государства, чтобы выполнить свои обязательства по уничтожению или обеспечению уничтожения всех противопехотных мин, находящихся под юрисдикцией или контролем вашего Государства?

It is needed to emphasize that according the results of unfinished general survey, in Tajikistan more then 52 mln. sqm are mined areas. In the previous period, our groups cleared the area of more then 2 mln.sqm from mines, about 41 mln.sqm of mine danger fields are decreased as not dangerous anymore. In this manner, for today, in general there are almost 43 mln.sqm of area which was in mine danger, released from such danger and still remaining dangerous considerate to be 9,5 mln.sqm plus 6 mln.sqm of not-surveyed land across the tajik-afghan border. In the mentioned area the survey operations are continuing and we hope that by the time of submitting request for prolonging it will be more clear.

Regarding tajik-uzbek border several times we have been making statements that in these areas mines are fixed by uzbek authorities and considering that borderline of the frontier in this area is not fully defined by the international regulations. There is no opportunity for conducting any kind of works on survey and mine clearing, especially we can not say that existing mine fields are under jurisdiction of Tajikistan. We always with worrying saying about existence of these mine fields, because our citizens suffering from those mines and still continuing to suffer. Of course we hope that in political level this issue will be discussed and considered in order to solve it for ensuring the safety of people.



This slide shows the rest of dangerous sites for present time and as it was possible to us for last years by and reductions to come to this figure.

What, if any, circumstances may impede the ability of your State to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under your State's jurisdiction or control within ten years after entry into force of the Convention for your State? What is the prospective end-date for your State to have fully implemented Article 5?

Assumptions

Annually :

- land release by manual clearance – 250,000 m²
 - land release by MDD – 750,000 m²
 - land release by 1 Mechanical machine - 1,100,000 m²
 - (2 Mechanical machines – 2,200,000 m²)
 - land release by re-survey – 1,000,000 m²
- Total for year – 3,100,000 m² (4,200,000 m²)

Total for 4 year – 12,400,000 m² (16,800,000 m²)

Total for 5 year – 15,500,000 m² (21,000,000 m²)

Remaining Land (October 2008): 9,530,400 m² +

6,200,000 m² = 15,530,400 m²

What, if any, circumstances may impede the ability of your State to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under your State's jurisdiction or control within ten years after entry into force of the Convention for your State? What is the prospective end-date for your State to have fully implemented Article 5?

The main factors preventing the development of program are mainly incompletely and untimely funding of it.

As it was already mentioned, unfortunately, Tajikistan is not able to fulfill its commitments on mine clearing of mine risk areas by the time prescribed in the article 5 of Ottawa Convention, i.e. by April 1 of 2010. In this regard, by using the right prescribed in Ottawa agreement we intend to prepare and present for the review of countries-participants the Request on the necessity of prolonging enacted time. This work is already started and in the stage of completing. To this Request we will attach a new strategic plan on mine clearing, which will be developed already by taking into account a good analysis of the work done, existing problems, remaining objectives, necessary term, forces and tools for ending the full mine clearing of the country. The mentioned plan will cover also 2009, i.e. the last year of the current first term, and preliminary analysis, evaluation and proposal showing that for completing of works on mine clearing in rational term and existing potential of the program it is necessary to strengthen it due to inclusion of to mechanical machines in it (middle by parameters).

As you see in the diagram, if annually during the utilization of available potential, by taking into account attraction of mechanical machines we can clear 3,1 mln.sqm (by using one machine) or 4,2 mln.sqm. (by using two machines), then during 4 and 5 it can be 12,4 mln.sqm (16,8 mln.sqm) and 15,5 mln.sqm (21 mln.sqm) accordingly. In this option we could complete clearing of all remaining mine areas during rational period. Of course, these all are assumptions, the data's are as a sample, but in general they are not far from reality. More concrete picture for sure will be presented in our Request for prolonging.

But in order to realize them, first of all we need in mechanical machines. We have raised this issue starting from 2005, but unfortunately till now this issue can not find its positive solution. Currently, there is a negotiation process with USA regarding one mechanical machine, our proposal is in review by NATO more two years and we have also applied with this issue to Japan. Of course we understand, that donor's opportunities are also limited, we thanking all donors, especially Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, OSCE, UNDP, and ICRC for their annual support to Tajik main action program.

| Contribution | Details | Details | In US \$ |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Use of helicopter for evacuation of victim | 1000 \$ per 1 hrs. + fuel | 6 hrs. per year | \$6000/ year |
| Use of training areas, buildings and facilities | Rudaki district | 3 months x \$13,000 | \$39,000/ year |
| Free TV/radio broadcasting/TV spots on national TV | | No information | |
| Human resources provided by ministries & agencies | Deminers | 100 persons x 300 \$ x 7 months | \$210,000/ year |
| Imported equipments and materials for the program are tax exempted | | No information | |
| National Ortho Centre | 12 % of mine survivors | Monthly cost | \$235,000/ year |
| Pension for mine survivors | 700 mine survivors | 700 x 12 months x 15 \$ | \$126,000/ year |
| Total: | | | \$616,000/ year |

What financial resources your State has allocated for fulfillment of it's commitments according the Article 5.

Although economic condition and level of economic development in the current stage do not allowing to allocate a lot of resources to the mine action program, but year by year the contribution of the Government for support of the program is increasing. National mine action program in Tajikistan is functioning in friendly and kindly atmosphere. The Government of Tajikistan in the current stage mainly provides technical support in implementation of the article 5 of Convention. The amount of aid for this year was approximately \$ 616,000 USD that is for 41,000 dollars more then in last year. It is support with places and buildings, and also necessary textbooks and ammunition for trainings, permanent readiness of the helicopter in the case of necessity of evacuation of survivors from mine fields. Besides, the ministries of defense, emergency situations, frontier troops and National Guard providing the program with personnel which are not been paid by the program for their work. National TV/Radio companies broadcasting the programs and announcements related with mine action program mainly for free. Imported equipments and materials for program are not imposed by tax and custom duty, and also some other procedures are also simplified.

However, we understand that the contribution of the Government should be increased and such proposal is already in it's consideration.

If mine action in your country is still conducted or partially managed by foreign organizations and/or international organizations, what are the steps that your State has taken to develop its national capacity?



- Joint efforts
- Supported by FSD
- MoD – new Humanitarian Mine Clearance Agency

<http://www.mineaction.tj/>

If in your country the anti-mine action is still being managed or partially managed by an international organizations and/or foreign organizations, then what your State has undertaken in order to develop a national potential?

Soon will be five years that the responsible side for mine clearing in Tajikistan is Swiss Foundation for Mine Clearing (FSD), although all sappers are local personnel. In past period, local specialists gained a big experience and we believe that relevant national resources for independent managing (by taking into account the necessity of continuation of using the institute of advisors and specialists) of mine clearing program of course are prepared, certainly, by support of ШФР. By taking this into account there was decided under the engineer battalion of Defense Ministry of the country to create a squadron of humanitarian mine clearing and starting from next year, i.e. 2009, this squadron will be involved in implementation of the program of humanitarian mine clearing. This step was supported by OSCE, which expressed readiness to support newly created national body on fulfillment of important governmental program. We think that in the frame of international cooperation, the mentioned national body will introduce a significant contribution in the fight against anti-personnel mines in the territory of it's country, and in this manner will increase the successes of world community in this direction.

But our Government intends to continue cooperation with Swiss Foundation for Mine Clearing, which has contributed a lot in mine clearing of dangerous areas of the country's territory. It means that the mentioned organization in cooperation with national partners will continue it's work in Tajikistan. Thus, since 2009, two humanitarian mine clearance agencies will work in Tajikistan.

What, if any, are your priorities for external assistance to support your State's fulfillment of its Article 5 obligations?

- Increase financial support ;
- Purchase of mechanical machines
- Training and retraining of national staff ;
- Political commitment.



What are your priorities in foreign support, in order to fulfill commitments of your State according the Article 5?

The main priority for our program remains continuation and increasing of financial support for ensuring the activities of mine clearing groups and surveys, increasing of surveys, and first of all purchasing of two mechanical machines. In new strategic plan where will be defined the measures on fulfillment of commitments prescribed by the article 5, in the frame of requested additional period mine clearing with help of mechanical machines is the main condition for completion of mine clearing in intended period.

Thank you for attention !

