

Landmines in Central Asia



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Summary

- Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan are among 156 countries that are States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan have not joined the treaty, which was opened for signature in Ottawa, Canada on 3 December 1997 and entered into force on 1 March 1999.
- On 2 December 2008, four Central Asian countries voted in favor of UN General Assembly Resolution 63/42 calling for universalization and full implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.
- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan stockpile antipersonnel mines. Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan have destroyed all known stockpiles of antipersonnel mines.
- Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are mine-affected. Officials in Kazakhstan have at times acknowledged the use of landmines in border areas and at other times denied the existence of minefields in Kazakhstan.
- Afghanistan and Tajikistan have been self-identified as having high numbers of mine survivors and therefore the greatest responsibility to provide assistance to survivors, their families and communities.
- Four states in the region—Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—provide inadequate care for the short- and long-term needs of landmine survivors in terms of immediate assistance, rehabilitation and socio-economic inclusion. The situation of landmine survivors in these and other countries in the region remains very difficult.

Country Profiles

- **Afghanistan** – Afghanistan is one of the world's most heavily mine-, cluster munition- and explosive remnants of war-affected countries, the result of decades of conflict. Afghanistan is a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty and completed stockpile destruction in 2007. The Taliban continue to use antipersonnel and antitank mines, but the majority of explosive devices continue to be remote-detonated improvised explosive devices. Over 700km² of land are contaminated, and there are upwards of 60,000 mine and ERW survivors.
- **Kazakhstan** – Kazakhstan has not joined the Mine Ban Treaty but has voted in favor of some pro-ban UN General Assembly resolutions. Kazakhstan inherited a stockpile of antipersonnel mines from the Soviet Union and has begun destroying some of these stocks. It is not unclear whether antipersonnel mines have been used in Kazakhstan.
- **Kyrgyzstan** – Kyrgyzstan has not joined the Mine Ban Treaty and abstains from voting on pro-ban UN General Assembly resolutions. Kyrgyzstan inherited a stockpile of antipersonnel mines from the Soviet Union and used them in 1999–2000 to prevent infiltration across its borders. Uzbekistan used landmines on Kyrgyz territory between 1999–2000. The extent of contamination is uncertain. Several casualties have been reported in recent years.

- **Tajikistan** – Tajikistan, a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty, completed destruction of its stockpiled anti-personnel mines in 2004, and in 2006 destroyed additional stockpiles of mines discovered after completing its formal stockpile destruction program. It is contaminated by antipersonnel mines, cluster submunitions and other UXO, the result of civil war from 1992–1997 and Soviet and Uzbek mine-laying in 2000–2001. On 31 March 2009, Tajikistan requested a ten-year extension of its mine clearance deadline until 1 January 2020. The ICBL has called for Tajikistan to reduce its extension request to five years. Casualties continue to be reported in Tajikistan each year.
- **Turkmenistan** – Turkmenistan is a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty, is not mine-affected, and completed destruction of its stockpiled antipersonnel mines in 2005.
- **Uzbekistan** – Uzbekistan has not joined the Mine Ban Treaty nor voted in favor of pro-ban UN General Assembly resolutions. Uzbekistan inherited stockpiles of antipersonnel mines from the Soviet Union and has used antipersonnel mines along its borders with Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. There is no formal mine action program and demining is carried out by Ministry of Defense troops. There are no official records of mine casualties.