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Ms. Lise BECH

Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee
of the Parliament of Denmark

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to bring to your attention a serious humanitarian concern: the extensive contamination of Azerbaijan's recently liberated territories with landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). This persistent threat continues to endanger civilian lives, obstructs reconstruction efforts, and prevents the safe return of nearly 800,000 internally displaced persons.

Enclosed with this letter you can find "Report on Mine Action in Azerbaijan: Priorities and Needs," which outlines the country's ongoing demining efforts and highlights urgent areas requiring international support.

We respectfully call on our interparliamentary partners to express solidarity with Azerbaijan by condemning the indiscriminate use of landmines and urging the full disclosure of minefield maps. In addition, we welcome any form of practical assistance, including technical expertise, support for mine victims, and institutional cooperation.

Your engagement and support are essential to helping Azerbaijan address this humanitarian crisis and to fostering lasting peace, security, and development in the affected regions.

Sincerely,

Samad Seyidov

Chairman of the Committee



Report on Mine Action in Azerbaijan: Priorities and Needs

QUARTERLY UPDATE

January – March 2025

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Executive Summary

The Republic of Azerbaijan faces a significant challenge due to landmine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination as a result of nearly three decades of military occupation by Armenia. The end of war in 2020 marked the beginning of an extensive humanitarian demining initiative to restore safety in the liberated territories, facilitating the reconstruction of these areas and the safe return of former internally displaced persons (IDPs). This quarterly report provides general information on the mine problem in Azerbaijan and outlines the achievements and challenges in mine action in the period from January to March 2025.

Key Findings:

1. Azerbaijan is among the most heavily mine-contaminated countries globally, with an estimated 1.5 million landmines and unknown number of ERW contaminating more than 13 % of nation's territories, posing severe risks to civilians and hindering socio-economic development.
2. Over the last 30 years, the cumulative toll of landmine victims in Azerbaijan is more than 3400.
3. From the end of war in 2020 until 31 March 2025, 231 landmine explosion incidents occurred, resulting in 384 victims, including children-youths and women, underscoring the urgent need for mine clearance and victim assistance.
4. Since the start of large-scale humanitarian demining in 2020, foreign assistance has accounted for only 4.8% of the resources dedicated to humanitarian demining in Azerbaijan. This is notably low, both in light of the gravity of demining challenges Azerbaijan confronts and when compared to the level of contributions typically made by the international donor community to similar issues elsewhere.
5. Armenia's refusal to present accurate maps of landmines it planted on Azerbaijani territory complicates the demining efforts and obstructs return of 800,000 former IDPs to their homes.

Picture 1. Heavily mine contaminated area, Tartar region



Progress Made:

1. The Mine Action Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ANAMA), in collaboration with partners, has spearheaded demining operations, capacity building initiatives, and awareness-raising activities to mitigate the risks posed by landmines and ERW.
2. Since the end of war in 2020, important progress has been attained in demining operations, with a total of 190 794.2 hectares of land successfully cleared of 58 086 mines and 133 518 ERW. The total area cleared constitutes approximately 16.4% of the total estimated contaminated area, and the number of found landmines constitutes approximately 3.9% of the estimated 1,5 million landmines.
3. In the 1st quarter of 2025 alone, 11,002.4 hectares of land were cleared of 1,626 mines and 12,330 ERW.

This report emphasizes the critical role of international cooperation and assistance in addressing the landmine problem in Azerbaijan. Enhanced global partnership is essential for accelerating

demining operations, supporting victim assistance programs, and ensuring the safe and dignified return of former IDPs to their homes, thereby contributing to regional stability and development.

Scope and Extent of the Mine Problem in Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan is currently facing one of the most severe challenges related to landmines and ERW globally, a situation resulting directly from almost three decades of military occupation by Armenia. The laying of landmines by Armenia occurred not only during the armed conflict but also continued after its end on November 10, 2020. Armenia's emplacement of landmines persisted until its remaining troops were compelled to vacate Azerbaijani territory as a result of the anti-terror measures conducted by Azerbaijan on September 19-20, 2023.

Picture 2. Anti-personal landmines produced in 2021 in Armenia (PMN-Э) and planted after the Trilateral Statement of 2020



What exacerbates these dire circumstances is the fact that Armenia deployed these landmines in an indiscriminate manner, devoid of any military necessity and without appropriate markings required under international law. Armenia's refusal to present accurate maps of landmines it planted on Azerbaijani territory further complicates matters. This reckless attitude and steps by Armenia considerably obstruct demining operations.

The landmine contamination in Azerbaijan remains a pressing issue. Our comprehensive surveys have made substantial progress, allowing to gather more accurate data on the extent of contamination. Through extensive efforts and the application of advanced methodologies, we are able to continuously refine our assessments. The latest survey indicates that total contaminated area in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan stands at approximately 11,667 square kilometers. This area constitutes approximately 13.47% of the nation's total territory (the previous figure was 11.88%) of 86,600 square kilometers. Estimated 1,5 million landmines and an unknown number of ERW contaminated those areas.

The contaminated areas span diverse terrains, including 60% flat agricultural lands, 30% grassy hills, and 10% mountainous regions. This widespread contamination affects areas that are crucial for the nation's agricultural productivity and the restoration of everyday life in the liberated territories.

The extensive contamination from these explosives poses an obstacle to development, perpetually endangering human lives and hindering the safe return of former IDPs into their ancestral territories. The omnipresent landmines, alongside the extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure, stand as the primary impediments to the expedited return of former IDPs.

These mines significantly restrict access to indispensable resources, damage environment, obstruct agricultural endeavors, and delay the essential reconstruction and development of

infrastructure, thereby exacerbating the challenges former IDPs face in their quest to return to their original homes.

The human toll of this contamination in Azerbaijan is immense. Unmarked and unfenced deployment of mines continues to be a deadly hazard, significantly threatening the lives of innocent civilians. 231 incidents of landmine explosions were recorded, resulting in 384 casualties, including 70 fatalities, from 2020 up to March 31, 2025 (Table 1.). Among the victims 11 were children-youths, 2 were women.

Table 1. Number of victims by devices since 2020 (as of 31.03.2025)				
ATM	APM	Cluster	UXO/NA	Total
156	177	12	39	384

Picture 3: Found anti-personnel and anti-tank mines during mine clearance operations, Fuzuli region.



Notably, 263 individuals were affected by landmine incidents in regions beyond the former contact line, and there were 12 casualties due to cluster munitions. Over the last 30 years, the cumulative toll of landmine victims is more than 3400.

Azerbaijan’s Policy and Practice in Mine Action

Azerbaijan has developed a comprehensive policy framework and solid capacity to tackle the challenges posed by landmines, reflecting a multifaceted approach that prioritizes human security. This policy also underscores the nation's commitment to fostering international human solidarity, actively pursuing global initiatives aimed at mitigating the impact of landmines. By seeking collaborative efforts and partnerships, Azerbaijan demonstrates its dedication to a collective response to this pressing issue.

The newly proposed "Law on Mine Action" was voted on and subsequently adopted by the Parliament of Azerbaijan. Consisting of 3 chapters and 14 articles, the new law will regulate and govern mine action activities, including the organization and implementation of demining operations in Azerbaijan.

Institutional Framework and Key Stakeholders

ANAMA stands as the primary entity tasked with overseeing humanitarian demining initiatives within the country. Established in 1998, ANAMA embarked on its mission to mitigate the socio-economic repercussions of landmines and ERW by launching humanitarian demining operations

in 2000. Following the liberation of occupied territories in late 2020, ANAMA underwent a strategic restructuring via a Presidential Decree in February 2021, aimed at enhancing its capacity to plan, coordinate, and supervise humanitarian demining efforts nationwide.

This restructuring has facilitated the involvement of national stakeholders, alongside local and international NGOs, in mine action activities across Azerbaijan, ensuring all demining operations align with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

Table 2. Operational resources for humanitarian mine clearance (as of 31.03.2025)

Agencies / companies	Operational staff	Mine detection dogs	Mine clearance machines
ANAMA	1 931	119	54
Ministry of Defense	181	9	19
Ministry of Emergency Situations	48	6	4
State Border Service	43	0	0
Local commercial operators:	339	47	10
Alpha Demining	99	20	2
Qaya Safety Solutions	71	8	3
Safe Point	111	10	2
Azerbaijan Demining Company	58	9	3
Total	2,542	181	87

An Interagency Working Group on the Clearance of Mines and Unexploded Ordnance has been established to monitor the progress and ensure quality control of demining activities, in accordance with the annual demining plan. This group convened five times in the fourth quarter of 2024 to review operations and enforce standards.

Furthermore, ANAMA has significantly invested in capacity building in 2025, organizing training sessions covering 5 different subjects for mine clearance personnel from various agencies. During this period, 616 new recruits participated in basic humanitarian demining and battle area clearance courses, while 114 staff members attended in-service training at the ANAMA's Goygol Training Center.

Alongside ANAMA, which leads the process with 1,931 operational staff, 119 mine detection dogs, and 54 mechanical demining machines, the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Emergency Situations, State Border Service, and various national private companies also hold substantial demining capabilities and actively participate in demining operations (Table 2.).

Clearance operations

Azerbaijan carries out extensive humanitarian mine clearance so that formerly displaced civilians can return to their homes. Given the vast extent of the problem and the constrained resources for mine action, the Azerbaijani government prioritizes the demining of critical areas such as access roads, essential infrastructure, and residential zones to facilitate the safe and timely return of former IDPs. Since the end of occupation in 2020, remarkable progress has been achieved in demining operations, with 190794.2 hectares of land being cleared of 58,086 landmines and 133,518 ERW. This cleared area represents about 16.4% of the total estimated contaminated area, with the discovered landmines accounting for roughly 3.9% of the estimated 1,5 million landmines, while the extent of ERW contamination remains challenging to determine.

Picture 4: Manual clearance operation in the region of Jabrayil



By March 31, 2025, ANAMA and other demining entities had conducted operations in 4,706 fields, clearing a total of 190794.2 hectares from mines and ERW, neutralizing 133,518 pieces of ERW, 36,479 anti-personnel mines (APMs), and 21,607 anti-tank mines (ATMs), totaling 191,604 explosives.

In the 1st quarter of 2025 alone, demining efforts led to the discovery of 13,956 landmines/explosives and the clearance of 11002.4 hectares of land.

These findings, representing 7.3% of the total discoveries since November 10, 2020, included a significant proportion of ERW (69.7%), APMs (19%), and ATMs (11.3%), underscoring the emphasis on former battlefield clearance (Table 3, 4).

In total, demining operations during 2025 resulted in the neutralization of 12,330 ERW, 1,141 APMs, and 485 ATMs (13,956 in total), covering 11002.4 hectares of land (Table 5.).

Table 3. Area cleared in the 1st quarter of 2025 (per operator)

Operator	Area cleared (ha)	
	Area cleared during the 1 st quarter 2025	Cumulative area since 10 Nov 2020
ANAMA	7642.9	113546.4
Ministry of Defense	938.5	44935
Ministry of Emergency Situations	3	1451.9
State Border Service	0.7	2772.2
National private operators:	2417.3	28088.7
<i>Alpha Demining</i>	751.6	6810
<i>Qaya Safety Solutions</i>	315.8	6651.5
<i>Safe Point</i>	683.9	7051.5

Total**11002.4****190794.2**

The clearance to date covers approximately 16.4% of all designated threat areas. The 2024 work plan, which targeted 60530 hectares was fulfilled. 2025 work plan aims to expand clearance capacities to cover 65,092.6 hectares.

Under ANAMA's leadership, Azerbaijan's demining community not only addresses the immediate challenges within its borders but also accumulates valuable experience and innovative practices that contribute to global humanitarian demining efforts.

Picture 5: Anti-personnel landmines found in the region of Fuzuli



Table 4. Number of explosive devices found in the 1st quarter of 2025 (per operator)

Operator	Number of explosive remnants of war (ERW) found		Number of anti-personnel mine (APM) found		Number of anti-tank mines (ATM) found		Combined number of ERW, APM and ATM found	
	Number found during the 1 st quarter 2025	Cumulative number found since 10 Nov 2020	Number found during the 1 st quarter 2025	Cumulative number found since 10 Nov 2020	Number found during the 1 st quarter 2025	Cumulative number found since 10 Nov 2020	Number found during the 1 st quarter 2025	Cumulative number found since 10 Nov 2020
ANAMA	11235	80938	1111	21707	380	12321	12726	114966
Ministry of Defense	14	36906	0	10672	0	3333	14	50911
Ministry of Emergency Situations	1	2304	0	1379	0	2665	1	6348
State Border Service	1	688	0	1670	0	1488	1	3846
National private operators:	1079	12682	30	1051	105	1800	1214	15533
Alpha Demining	575	7264	20	255	64	571	659	8090
Qaya Safety Solutions	198	1528	0	550	0	808	198	2886
Safe Point	209	1218	1	235	0	330	210	1783

Azerbaijan Demining Company	97	2672	9	11	41	91	147	2774
Total	12330	133518	1141	36479	485	21607	13956	191604

Table 5. Areas cleared and number of explosive devices found in the 1st quarter of 2025 (per district)

District	Cleared area (ha)		Total ERW/APM/ATM found	
	During the 1 st quarter of 2025	Cumulative during 2025	Found during the 1 st quarter of 2025	Cumulative found in 2025
Aghdam	1722.6	1722.6	1116	1116
Aghdara	219.1	219.1	135	135
Jabrail	1658.1	1658.1	1060	1060
Fuzuli	2099.4	2099.4	1258	1258
Kalbajar	775	775	0	0
Lachin	1358.6	1358.6	5	5
Gubadly	956.4	956.4	11	11
Shusha	37.8	37.8	1	1
Khankendi	134.2	134.2	8857	8857
Khojavand	588.3	588.3	675	675
Khojali	359.6	359.6	593	593
Zangilan	865.6	865.6	2	2
Others	227.7	227.7	243	243
Total	11002.4	11002.4	13956	13956

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)

The Government of Azerbaijan implements EORE initiatives aimed to prevent casualties posed by mines and other explosive ordnance (EO). These efforts focus on enhancing awareness and fostering behavioral changes through public information campaigns, education, training and community liaison.

The indication of successful EORE activities must be behavior change of local population. The ultimate objectives are to mitigate risk to a manageable level, enabling people to live safely, and

to facilitate the restoration of an environment conducive to economic and social development without the limitations posed by explosive hazard contamination.

As part of the "Great Return Program", the number of population (former IDPs) involved to EORE session reached to 7325 at the 1st quarter of 2025 in Khojaly, Shusha, Jabrayil, Aghdara regions (Picture 6).

Picture 6. ANAMA Risk Education specialists provide EORE sessions for former IDPs.



EORE sessions have engaged over 315 local organizations since November 2020. As a result of EORE total number of beneficiaries reached to 516.468. (Picture 7).

To enhance safety measures, totally 1560 EO awareness billboards were installed in liberated territories (Picture 8.). Most part of highly contaminated territories along with former contact line fenced to prevent EO casualties.

Picture 7. EORE sessions provided for local organizations.



Picture 8. EORE billboards installed in an affected areas



Victim Assistance

The Government provides assistance for the care and rehabilitation, social and economic reintegration of mine victims and for mine risk education programmes. Assistance is provided to

meet the immediate and long-term needs of EO survivors, their families and persons with disabilities. Assistance includes, but is not limited to, emergency and continuing medical care; physical rehabilitation; psychosocial support and social inclusion; and laws and public policies that promote effective treatment, care and protection for all disabled citizens. EO victims were provided with psychological support and various services, such as targeted social assistance, pension and different types of prosthetic devices.

In order to reintegrate victims into the society, relevant steps were undertaken based on the mutual cooperation with international organization, civil society and state entities. ANAMA is implementing joint activities with Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan in regard with landmine victim reintegration to society and rendering EORE messages to target audience.

The team of amputees from Azerbaijan mostly consist of mine victims participated in the final stage of the European Championship held in France in 2024 (Picture 9). Azerbaijan will host League of Nations "C" group (with participation of amputee football national teams from Netherland, Belgium, Ukraine, Israel) tournament in October 2025.

In collaboration with Football Development Fund 10 years old mine victim Huseyn Huseynzade strike the first kick to the ball, taking the stadium by international referee at the UEFA European League football tournament held in Baku to ensure widespread distribution of safety messages of EORE. Huseyn, who fell into a minefield with his father at the age of six, participated in the 7th round of the UEFA Europa League. His relatives and his father who came to help were killed, and his uncle was injured.

In the context of rehabilitation and prosthetic assistance to mine victims. Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) of the Republic of Türkiye supported reintegration process in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan. Several activities have been undertaken by ANAMA, Ombudsman of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Social Rehabilitation Center of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society, Azerbaijan Mine Victims Association and ICRC, in regard with need assessment, social, economic and juridical support.

Picture 9. Amputee football team in the European Championship



While the Government is working to meet immediate needs of mine victims, more international assistance would be much appreciated.

Picture 10. Distribution of seasonal clothing to the mine victims.



Foreign assistance and international cooperation

Azerbaijan faces an immense landmine contamination and needs substantial foreign assistance. While international support adequate to the level of country's enormous challenges is very much needed, it is crucial to emphasize that Azerbaijan's motivation for active engagement primarily stems from its humane approach that recognizes the adverse impact of the landmine problem on mankind as a whole.

Foreign assistance

Azerbaijan welcomes support by foreign partners in humanitarian demining in forms of direct assistance and collaborative actions. ANAMA remains committed to enhancing its international collaborations and is continually seeking new avenues to expand and strengthen its external cooperation in humanitarian demining efforts.

Azerbaijan received assistance from numerous countries. Most of them channeled their assistance via the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or specialized NGOs. In partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), ANAMA benefits from specialized training provided to its site paramedics, enhancing the safety and efficiency of demining operations. Furthermore, the collaboration with Mines Advisory Group (MAG) has facilitated training and mentoring programs specifically for female deminers, promoting gender inclusivity in the field. The contribution of Mine Detection Dogs (MDDs) by the Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) plays a crucial role in bolstering ANAMA's capabilities in detecting landmines.

Working closely with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), ANAMA has improved its operational effectiveness through the adoption of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). This collaboration includes system usage assistance and comprehensive training for ANAMA experts, focusing on enhancing operational and informational efficiency.

A partnership among the European Union (EU), UNDP, and ANAMA has led to the launch of a new project, funded with a budget of 4.25 million Euros, aimed at facilitating the safe return of former IDPs to liberated areas.

In collaboration with the US and MAG, and the International Eurasia Press Fund (IEPF) has embarked on a project to train and equip four 14-person demining teams, further advancing its mission to create a safer environment and contribute to the global endeavor of achieving a mine-free world.

Since 2020, foreign assistance has accounted for merely 4.8% of the resources dedicated to humanitarian demining. This is notably low, both in light of the gravity of demining challenges Azerbaijan confronts and when compared to the level of contributions typically made by the international donor community to similar issues.

In the first quarter of 2024, Saudi Arabia provided 3 million USD direct assistance to ANAMA to support its demining operations. On January 16, 2024, a Memorandum of Financial Contribution was signed between Vugar Suleymanov, Chairman of ANAMA, and Abdullah Muhammad Alwadei, Deputy Director of the Medical and Environmental Department of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Italy also pledged to allocate 1.5 million Euros for financing programs in support of Azerbaijan's demining activities.

The United Arab Emirates has extended support to Azerbaijan's demining efforts with a donation of 5 million USD. The partnership was officially cemented through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Chairman of the Board of ANAMA and His Excellency Mohammed Al Blooshi, the Ambassador of the UAE to Azerbaijan.

Croatia has made a significant in-kind contribution by donating eight mine detection dogs to bolster mine action in Azerbaijan, along with additional support activities that include training four dog handlers of ANAMA in Pojega, Croatia to work with the mine detection dogs.

Furthermore, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ANAMA and the Marshall Legacy Institute, under which 12 specially trained mine detection dogs have been delivered to ANAMA, enhancing the ANAMA's operational capabilities in demining efforts. These collective efforts from international partners underscore the global commitment to supporting Azerbaijan's humanitarian mine clearance and enhancing the safety of affected communities.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Tajikistan National Mine Action Center and ANAMA to provide support to ANAMA personnel through specialized training on mine clearance operations in forested and mountainous areas. Moreover, a project document was signed between Leicester University (United Kingdom), ANAMA, and Ostrohradskiy National University (Ukraine) for the implementation of the "Stand-off Chemical Detection of Landmines for Ukraine and Azerbaijan (MineSensa)" project, under the framework of NATO's Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme.

Additionally, the Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) has pledged to donate up to 30 Mine Detection Dogs during 2025–2026 to help accelerate landmine clearance operations in Azerbaijan. Notably, 2025 marks the 20th anniversary of cooperation between ANAMA and MLI, reflecting a long-standing and productive partnership in humanitarian mine action.

Given the immense adverse humanitarian impact, and the fact that lingering landmine contamination represents a challenge to efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation, Azerbaijan counts on adequate support by the international community to its demining efforts as a matter of humane solidarity.

International cooperation

Azerbaijan has embarked on numerous initiatives to galvanize international community's attention to the mine problem in the country's liberated territories.

During the first quarter of 2025, Vugar Suleymanov, Chairman of the Board of the Mine Action Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ANAMA), met with the delegation led by Kairat Saribay, the Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), as well as with a delegation led by Zukan Helez, Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Picture 15. Presentation of the book "Silent Echoes: Untold stories of mine victims" dedicated to the landmine problem in Azerbaijan



Annual international conference on landmine problem

Together with the United Nations, Azerbaijan co-organized international conference on mine action, which has evolved into one of the prominent global dialogue venues addressing the mine problem. The first conference held in 2022 in Baku, Azerbaijan, saw the attendance of nearly 60 representatives from 34 countries and 4 international organizations.

At the 2nd conference on Mine Action entitled "Mine Action – the Path to Reaching Sustainable Development Goals" held on 25-26 May 2023, in Aghdam and Baku, Azerbaijan, nearly 190 delegates representing 51 countries and 16 international organizations participated (including former heads of state and government, parliamentarians, representatives of influential international organizations). The 2023 conference, which attracted greater participation by states, international

organizations, and NGOs alike, produced a tangible final document addressing a wide range of issues on humanitarian demining and sustainable development.

Azerbaijan, in partnership with the UNDP, hosted the 3rd International Conference on Mine Action, on topic "Mitigating the Environmental Impact of Landmines: Resource Mobilization for Safety and Green Future," May 30-31, 2024, in Zangilan and Baku.

During the first day of the Conference, the Statement of Intent between UNDP and ANAMA on cooperation in establishment of the ANAMA-UNDP International Centre of Excellence and Training for Mine Action in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan was signed.

Devising a Sustainable Development Goal on landmine problem

One of the most concerning challenges to the achievement of the SDGs is the landmine problem, which undermines global efforts to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all. This problem hinders access to land and resources, impedes economic development, damages infrastructure and the environment, and creates pervasive fear and insecurity. Moreover, landmine contamination obstructs post-conflict reconciliation efforts, exacerbating the challenges to achieve lasting peace. What is more, the estimates indicate a steady increase in the scale and magnitude of this problem.

Despite the gravity of the landmine problem, mine action has not received the degree of attention it urgently requires. The level of international political engagement in and practical support for mine action remains rather modest.

As it was mentioned by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan His Excellency Mr. Ilham Aliyev in his address to the participants of the 2nd International Conference on Mine Action, Azerbaijan has officially declared humanitarian demining as the 18th National SDG. Azerbaijan proposed addressing the mine action within the Agenda 2030 process, believing that it would raise awareness, mobilize resources and enhance international cooperation on this issue, and is working to ensure the recognition of this issue as the UN's Global 18th SDG.

Highlighting environmental impact of landmines

Azerbaijan has directly experienced detrimental environmental effects of landmines, with extensive portions of its farmland severely damaged and segmented due to the construction of military fortifications and the emplacement of landmines by Armenia. These military engineering activities, along with the presence of landmines and other unexploded ordnances, have significantly disrupted the land, affecting vegetation cover, water infiltration, the flow of surface water, and have made vast areas of valuable agricultural land inaccessible.

In response, Azerbaijan actively communicates the adverse ecological impacts of landmines in various international forums, aiming to elevate global awareness of the issue and foster international consensus and collaboration. Environmental issue was incorporated into 3rd International Conference on Mine Action that was held in May 2024, in Azerbaijan.

Emphasizing the impact of landmines on cultural property

Landmines, explosive ordnances and unexploded ordnances threaten cultural property by directly damaging them, limiting people's access to these sites and disrupting connection to their heritage. Azerbaijan has also been subjected to this devastating impact of landmines, as much of its cultural heritage was decimated during the occupation, and remaining sites are still inaccessible due to heavy contamination with landmines.

Upon Azerbaijan's initiative, a resolution "The impact of mines on cultural heritage" was adopted on December 11, 2023, at the 15th meeting of states parties to the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property during Armed Conflict". As a follow-up to this landmark resolution, a "Special Conference on the Impact of landmines, explosive ordnances and unexploded ordnances on cultural property" was organized within the 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue in Aghdam on May 3, 2024.

Non-Aligned Movement Contact Group on Humanitarian Demining

Upon initiative by the President of Azerbaijan, His Excellency Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the Non-Aligned Movement established a Contact Group on Humanitarian De-mining in July 2023. The Group commenced its activities by holding the inaugural meeting in September 2023, in New York.

The NAM Contact Group, chaired by Azerbaijan, aims at fostering a collective approach to a problem that encompasses over 120 million landmines planted globally, with more than 100 million within NAM territories. The group's formation marks a significant step towards coordinated efforts in humanitarian mine action, emphasizing advocacy, best practice sharing, victim assistance and resource mobilization.

The Contact Group seeks to enhance global awareness, advocate for adherence to international norms, and improve the mobilization of resources towards achieving a mine-free world, thereby contributing to development, peace and security for the affected countries.

Key Priorities for International Assistance

Given Azerbaijan's institutional capacity and training frameworks, *the most critical form of assistance needed at this juncture is direct financial donations*. Such contributions are essential to amplify the humanitarian mine action efforts and further augment the operational scope of ANAMA and relevant operators.

Other priorities identified for this phase include:

Mine Victim Assistance: Assisting in delivery of medical care, social-economic contribution to the people in Azerbaijan affected by landmines and other EO, including providing prostheses, psychological support for their rehabilitation and reintegration to society.

Technical Surveys and Feasibility Studies: Streamlining humanitarian mine clearance efforts through accelerated surveys and studies.

Data Management and Technological Advancements: Implementing geo-spatial methodologies and technology layering to refine clearance needs and optimize the tasking process within the national work plan.

Support for Female Demining Teams: Encouraging and empowering women in return, rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction phase by supporting the training and integration of female deminers, leveraging international partnerships for institutional capacity building.

Mechanical Demining Enhancement: Upgrading mechanical demining capabilities with specialized equipment for uneven terrains and armored machinery for safer operations.

Mine Detection Dogs (MDD) Training: Enhancing the MDD program with international expertise to maintain high competency levels through established training procedures and continuous on-site assistance.

Explosive Containment Chambers: Procuring specialized containment chambers to safely store and transport detected explosive ordnance, ensuring secure disposal and minimizing risks to personnel and surrounding environments.

Explosive Materials Transportation Vehicles: Acquiring purpose-built vehicles equipped with advanced safety features for the secure transportation of explosive materials from contaminated sites to designated disposal locations.

Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR): Mounted on a drone with data logging and mapping software integrated for detection of deep buried minimum metallic mines.

Demarcation and Fencing: Implementing visible markers and fencing to prevent access to hazardous areas and mitigate mine migration due to seasonal weather changes.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE): Integrating EORE to raise awareness through direct and indirect methods.

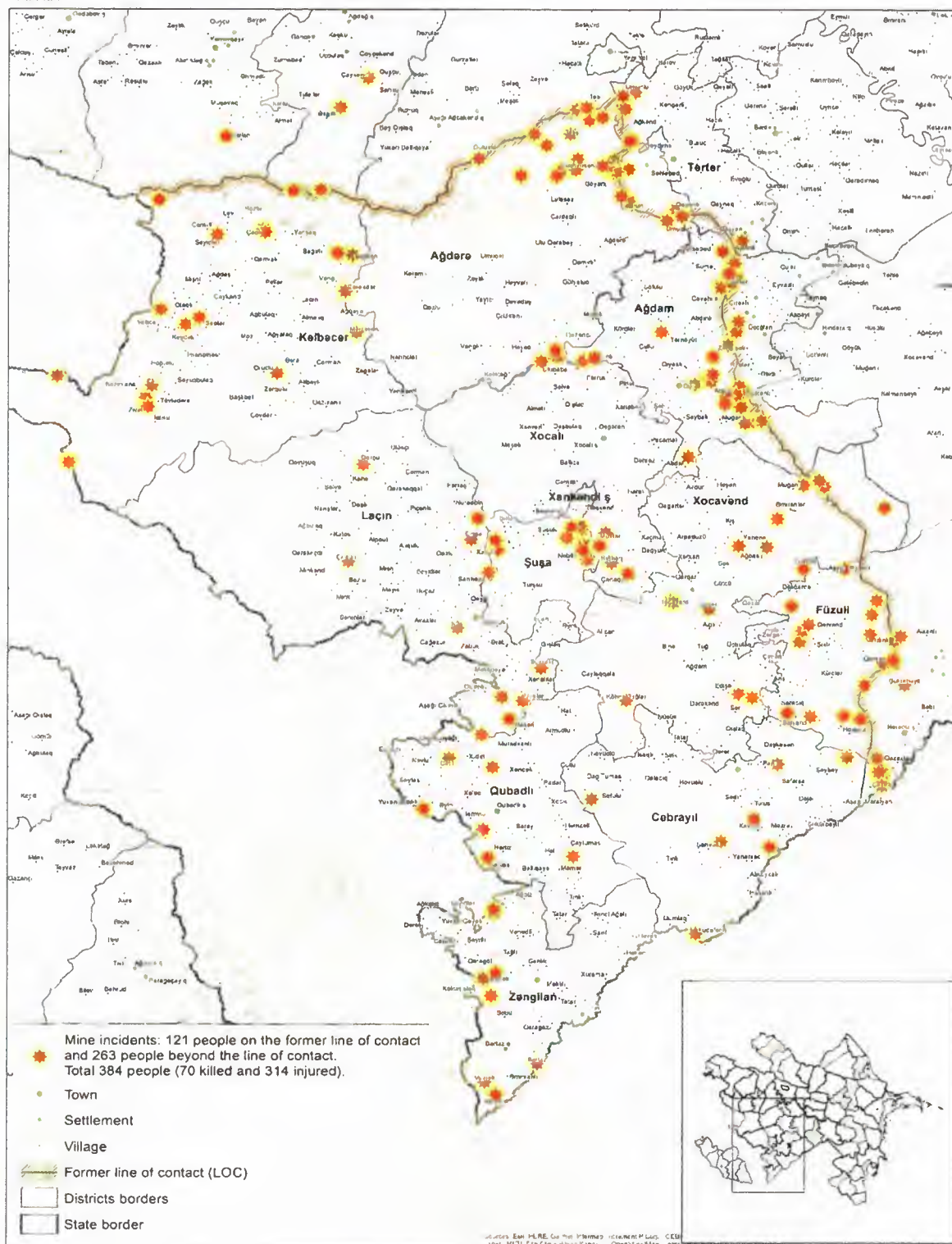
Increased international support and cooperation are crucial to the success of mine action in Azerbaijan. Enhanced humanitarian demining efforts will not only reduce the incidence of mine victims but also facilitate the rehabilitation and reconstruction necessary for the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of over 800,000 former IDPs. By providing a secure environment and promoting well-being, these initiatives contribute significantly to eliminating the consequences of the past conflict and facilitate peace.

Azerbaijan is eager to collaborate with potential donors and organizations willing to support mine action in the country and remains actively involved in international forums on landmine issues, sharing experiences and best practices to enhance global mine action efforts.

List of Annexes

1. Map depicting mine incidents from November 2020 to March 31, 2025
2. Infographic

Annex 1: Map depicting explosion incidents involving landmines and ERW from November 2020 to March 31, 2025



Annex 2: Infographic

November 10, 2020 - March 31, 2025

