

# Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction

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Volume 4

Issue 1 *The Journal of Mine Action*

Article 32

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February 2000

## Moldova

Country Profile

CISR

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### Recommended Citation

Profile, Country (2000) "Moldova," *Journal of Mine Action* : Vol. 4 : Iss. 1 , Article 32.

Available at: <http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol4/iss1/32>

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# MOLDOVA

**HISTORY:** Moldova is split into two main regions, Bessarabia and Transnistria. Bessarabia is in the eastern part of historic Moldova and is mostly Romanian while Transnistria is the land on the eastern bank of the Nistru River and is mostly Slavic (Ukrainians and Russians). After the Russo-Turkish War in 1806-12, Bessarabia ceded to Russia. Finally on Aug. 27, 1991, Moldova declared its independence from the USSR and was recognized by the United States in December of that same year as they opened an embassy in its capital in 1992. A new constitution was adopted on July 28, 1994, which forever replaced the Soviet Union's constitution and was a symbol of the complete break away from the USSR.



that all but 15km of the 72km affected by landmines have been cleared. The remainder of this land is being cleared with the help of the United States.

**DEMINING:** The demining process in Moldova has been marked as painstakingly tedious because of the constant problems that arise. The Moldovan governmental officials as well as the army have been working over time to clear as much land as possible. During the 1991-1992 conflict in Dniester, Separatist and Russian Cossacks mined much of the village's fields and roads that surrounded the center of the war zone, leaving most people little access to their homes. After the Dniester war ended, over 371 acres still remained uncleared. Vladimir Munteanu, chief of the demining unit in the Staff of the Army, announced that countless vineyards and forests surrounding the villages of Cosnita and Pogrebea needed to be demined. These two areas are of the greatest priority because there are no maps defining the position of the landmines for the deminers. Sgt. Boris Milhailov and Pvt. Ion Frunza were killed while searching for and demining the landmines in these regions. Other landmine incidents have continued to occur all

throughout the country. Three other Moldovan soldiers were killed while 24 others were severely wounded during a peacekeeping operation in a security zone.

Vladimir Bodnar, Joint Control Commission Transnistrian co-chairman, believes that Moldova should not exclude the funds that are being negotiated with the United States. These funds are needed for demining all throughout Moldova but specifically in the region of the Pogrebea village. Bodnar does not want American forces and experts flooding into Moldova. He explains that he simply wants funding for special equipment and machinery to help with the overall demining process. His plan is for an indigenous team of local workers to be paid and funded by other countries, but have Moldavians working to preserve and restructure what is left of Moldova.

**LANDMINES AND UXO OVERVIEW:** In August 1996, over 4,500 mines were destroyed in Transdniestria in the span of two months. Many believe that the disposal of these mines is very important for the safety of the people while the Republic says that the explosions are destroying the environment and will arrest and prosecute anyone who attempts to do so. Bessarabia has accused Transdniestria of producing the mines and shipping them into Bessarabia as well as other countries. The Moldovan army has over 12,000 mines in their possession even though the government denies any knowledge of the production of these mines. The Moldovan army is not the only one that has access to landmines. In 1998, grenades and even mines were used in several different burglaries throughout Moldova. The apprehension and confiscation of these landmines is currently unclear, but the government officials are still working hard to find all of the undiscovered landmines to destroy them. In May 1998, the Foreign Ministry of Moldova stated

**VICTIMS AND MEDICAL FACILITIES:** Thousands of people have been affected by the presence of landmines within this country as well as hundreds of other countries. The Moldova Foreign Ministry reported that in one incident from 1992 to 1993, two Moldovan peacekeepers were killed, eight injured and six severely wounded. Landmine explosions are not only devastating to a single individual. For every one person harmed, there is a family in need and suffering due to the unfortunate explosion. The facilities in Moldova leave much to be desired, as there is a shortage of good doctors and necessary equipment. These facilities can offer the basic, minimum treatment, which leaves most to fend for themselves.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**  
Not available

