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## China

Country Profile

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# PROFILES

## CHINA

### People's Republic of China

#### HISTORY

Dynasties, Kublai Kahn and warlords have ruled China, one of the world's oldest civilizations. In the early 20th century, the Nationalist Party, with the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, captured Beijing, executing many communists. Remaining communists reorganized under Mao Zedong and in 1949, declared the People's Republic of China. In 1989, pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square resulted in violence. Despite its political situation, China is currently experiencing rapid economic growth.

#### LANDMINES/UXO OVERVIEW

China is known to be one of the largest producers and exporters of AP landmines. The Type 72 mine may be the most encountered landmine in the world. China has planted an estimated 10 million AP landmines along its borders with Russia, India and Vietnam. According to the Chinese government, major clearance operations from 1992-1999 have resulted in a reduced mine



threat along the Sino-Vietnamese border. The danger posed to civilians along China's borders with Russia and India are minimal because of the inhospitable mountainous terrain.

#### CASUALTIES

In a 1999 document obtained by the *Landmine Monitor Report*, information regarding mine injury disabled persons was detailed for Fang Cheng Gang city, which shares a border with Vietnam. Of the 149 disabled people 80 percent were male farmers with half of the accidents occurring from 1978-1985. Only eight of the disabled had a functioning prosthetic. There is no special care for disabled people within the medical system, nor do they receive pensions or financial assistance.

#### DEMINEING

Demining is carried out by the People's Liberation Army and is considered a

military activity. In September 1999, China completed its clearance of the Sino-Vietnamese border. Officers and soldiers cleared 1.88 million landmines, 32,000 UXO and destroyed more than 700 tons of discarded ammunition. A total area of 300 square kilometers was cleared. China has proposed to assist South and North Korea to clear landmines in the demilitarized zone (DMZ) near the truce village of Panmunjom. Chinese Defense Ministry officials are believed to have given the go ahead to lending technical and personnel support for removing landmines in both Koreas.

#### REALITY CHECK

China signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in November 2000. The MOU program will initially focus on training in the areas of human rights education, police, and the issue of minor crimes and administrative detention. However, it does not appear to include a monitoring component.

"The Chinese government should take concrete steps to improve the human rights situation on the ground by addressing the widespread torture, executions, and repression. It should widen its cooperation with the U.N. and invite human rights monitoring mechanisms to visit China freely and without conditions, and implement U.N. recommendations," the United Nations said.

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