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Pakistan

Country Profile

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PROFILES

PAKISTAN

HISTORY

Pakistan was officially declared an independent sovereign state on August 14, 1947, ceasing its union with India and establishing a homeland for Indian Muslims. Despite its recent liberation, the country has become embattled by conflicts with India over ownership of Kashmir. Frequent fighting over the past decades with anti-Taliban forces, Iran and others has resulted in a landscape littered with explosives. Often ruled under martial law, the country has experienced much turmoil and strife and has created tension between its neighbors and potential supporters.

LANDMINES/UXO OVERVIEW

Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) is Pakistan's primary generator of landmines. A government-imposed moratorium on landmine production during negotiation to affirm Amended Protocol II has since limited the volume of landmines produced to comply with the protocol's provisions. Though Pa-



kistan supports the eventual termination of landmine use, it asserts that security concerns are paramount due to potential conflict with India and the situations in Jammu and Kashmir

Pakistan's tribal belt is mine-affected, though no assessment has been made to determine the extent of the problem. The Pakistan Campaign to Ban Landmines (PCBL) reports that landmines are often found in agricultural lands, roads, near schools and in other public areas. The current estimate of Pakistan's landmine stockpile is at least 6 million AP mines.

CASUALTIES

A PCBL survey in the Bajaur area reported 405 landmine victims. Most of these incidents occurred in remote areas, preventing medical treatment for the majority of the injured. A lack of

psychological and social rehabilitation centers detours the victims' reintegration into their communities. Furthermore, many victims cannot afford prosthetics and other assistance.

DEMINING

Pakistan has contributed to U.N. mine clearance missions, though no official clearance operations have occurred in Pakistan. Soldiers have participated in U.N. demining operations in Cambodia, Kuwait, Angola, and Western Sahara. In response to the humanitarian crises inherent with mines, Pakistan's Human Survival and Development (HSD) office has initiated a mine action program in the country's tribal areas. The program focuses on mine awareness and risk avoidance education.

REALITY CHECK

Recent events have only deteriorated Pakistan's situation. The assassinations of Iranian diplomats believed to support anti-Taliban insurgent forces have subsequently led to tension between Iran and Pakistan. This has caused Pakistan to deploy troops along its border with Afghanistan. In response, Iran has publicly threatened military intervention.

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