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### DDASaccident820

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*Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database*

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# DDAS Accident Report

## Accident details

<b>Report date:</b> 12/04/2019	<b>Accident number:</b> 820
<b>Accident time:</b> not recorded	<b>Accident Date:</b> 20/03/2019
<b>Where it occurred:</b> Nr Aleppo	<b>Country:</b> Syria
<b>Primary cause:</b> Other (?)	<b>Secondary cause:</b> Other (?)
<b>Class:</b> Missed-mine accident	<b>Date of main report:</b> 20/03/2019
<b>ID original source:</b>	<b>Name of source:</b> Press
<b>Organisation:</b> [Name removed]	
<b>Mine/device:</b> IED	<b>Ground condition:</b> residential/urban
<b>Date record created:</b>	<b>Date last modified:</b> 12/04/2019
<b>No of victims:</b> 1	<b>No of documents:</b> 1

## Map details

<b>Longitude:</b>	<b>Latitude:</b>
<b>Alt. coord. system:</b> Not recorded	<b>Coordinates fixed by:</b>

## Accident Notes

inadequate investigation (?)  
inadequate training (?)  
no independent investigation available (?)

## Accident report

This accident was reported in the press. The press reports are reproduced below, edited for anonymity. Text in square brackets [ ] is editorial.

Syria 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Armenia sapper wounded in Syria landmine explosion, foot amputated

<https://news.am/eng/news/500203.html>

A sapper from Armenia was wounded in the foot after a landmine explosion Thursday, and while carrying out a humanitarian mission in Syria.

[Name removed], public relations officer at the Armenian Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise, told Armenian News that the right foot of this sapper has been amputated.

She noted that this landmine explosion victim will be transported back to Armenia soon.

In Elbakyan's words, this sapper was carrying out humanitarian mission in Syria since February 8. He is part of the 83-member team—comprising deminers, doctors, and their

security professionals—that travelled from Armenia to Syria on February 8, to provide humanitarian and professional assistance to the Syrian people.

<https://www.aysor.am/en/news/2019/03/08/deminer-syria/1535599>

8<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Deminer wounded in Syria not transported to Armenia yet

The deminer wounded in Syria has not been transported to Armenia yet and continues staying at Syrian hospital, head of Armenian Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise [Name removed] told [us], refusing to unveil the personal data of the deminer.

The incident was caused by trap mine with plastic waist. The deminer received a foot injury and was immediately transported to hospital and operated on.

“Nothing has been decided over his transportation to Armenia yet,” [Name removed] said [adding that] the deminer was a professional not a beginner.

The incident was caused by trap mine with plastic waist. The deminer received a foot injury and was immediately transported to hospital and operated on.

His life is not in danger. The demining works, in the sidelines of humanitarian mission in Syria, continue.

<https://www.panorama.am/en/news/2019/03/08/Armenian-sapper-landmine-blast/2082999>

Armenian sapper wounded in landmine blast in Syria

A sapper of the Armenian humanitarian mission dispatched to Syria was injured in a landmine explosion on Thursday, 7 March.

The Humanitarian Demining and Expertise Center said the de-miner suffered injuries in the right foot after a booby trap landmine with a plastic back exploded while he was carrying out his duties. He was immediately hospitalized and underwent a surgery. The sapper has no life-threatening complications.

The de-mining activities of the Armenian mission continue.

The sapper was one of dozens of officers who had recently been sent to Syria in what the Armenian military described as a humanitarian mission coordinated with Russia.

An Armenian demining officer recently deployed to Syria has been seriously wounded while clearing landmines near Aleppo.

According to Armenia's Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise (CHDE), the sapper hit an improvised explosive device and was rushed to hospital on March 7.

"According to our information, his right foot was amputated," [Name removed], a spokeswoman for the center overseen by the Armenian Defense Ministry, told RFE/RL's Armenian service on March 8. [She] said the officer's condition was stable and he will return to Armenia soon.

The officer was among 83 Armenian army medics, sappers and other servicemen who were sent to Syria on February 8 in what the Armenian military described as a humanitarian mission coordinated with Russia.

The United States, which has been highly critical of the Russian military presence in Syria, criticized the Armenian deployment on February 13.

"We do not support any engagement with Syrian military forces, whether that engagement is to provide assistance to civilians or is military in nature," the U.S. State Department said in a statement. "Nor do we support any cooperation between Armenia and Russia for this mission."

Armenian officials downplayed the criticism, saying that U.S.-Armenian relations would not deteriorate because of it.

How have the Armenian experts settled in Aleppo and what have they managed to do until now? Mediamax has talked about it with Director of Armenian Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise [name removed], who paid a four-day visit to Syria and met with representatives of the UN Mine Action Gateway as well as Syrian and Armenian political and public figures.

#### The general tasks

The expert group has several areas of focus: demining, defusing of explosives, raising awareness of mines in schools and the community, and medical services.

Humanitarian demining means total clearance of the area even of the smallest pieces of metal. It is conducted in the Armenian-populated areas and the territory adjacent to the group's base.

In general, there are no land mines in Aleppo, but there is ammunition that did not explode at the strike and is now left in the ground and the buildings. It is extremely dangerous, and people (especially children) can easily become victims of an explosion if they approach the ammunition out of curiosity.



Our main task is to collect the unexploded ammo and submit it for elimination, which is done by the Syrian army's sappers. We will not blow up the ammo in any case.

#### Areas of priority

The priority is the areas of public use and lands adjacent to water sources, etc. Therefore, the Armenian experts will also clear the surrounding territories. Contrary to the areas of demining

in Armenia, for instance, the experts have to deal with self-made explosives in Aleppo. They are more dangerous because the explosive device is activated remotely.

In Aleppo usually, it is the local residents who identify the mined areas because they move there a lot and they notice the ammunition. We cannot plan which areas to clear, so for several days our group examined the place, asked the local people for tips, and singled out concrete spots. It is all done now. The deminers outline tracks, clear them and use them to get to the dangerous zones. In the end they put signs telling the residents of Aleppo that the given zone is clear from mines and unexploded ammo.

<https://www.mediamax.am/en/news/special-report/32334/>



<https://armenpress.am/eng/news/966862.html>

MARCH 7, ARMENPRESS. An Armenian de-miner who was among the humanitarian support mission dispatched to Syria has been wounded while carrying out his duties on March 7. The Center For Humanitarian Demining and Expertise, an Armenian governmental civilian agency that sent the specialists to Syria, said on Facebook that the de-miner suffered injuries to his right foot. The cause of the incident was a booby trap landmine that was concealed in a plastic layer. He was immediately taken to a hospital to undergo surgery. The injuries are non-lethal.

<http://asbarez.com/178224/armenian-de-miner-injured-near-aleppo/>

8th March 2019

Doctors have amputated the right foot of an Armenian de-miner who was seriously injured when a landmine exploded near Aleppo, the Armenian Center for Humanitarian De-Mining and Expertise reported on Friday.

[Name removed], a spokesperson for the agency that is affiliated with Armenia's Defense Ministry said that the officer, who was clearing mines as part of a humanitarian mission dispatched to Syria last month, was out of danger.

"Doctors now describe his condition as normal. He will be transported to Armenia," [name removed] told RFE/RL's Armenian service. She refused to identify the injured officer.

The cause of the incident was a booby trap landmine that was concealed under a plastic layer.

<https://armenpress.am/eng/news/967793.html>

16th March 2019-04-12

An Armenian de-miner, who was wounded during the humanitarian mission in Syria, has been transported to Moscow from a Syrian hospital, the defense ministry of Armenia told Armenpress. An Armenian de-miner has been wounded on March 7 during Armenia's humanitarian mission in Syria. The Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise told Armenpress that doctors have amputated the de-miner's right foot wounded after a landmine explosion in Syria.

### Victim Report

<b>Victim number:</b> 1038	<b>Name:</b> Not made available
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Gender:</b>
<b>Status:</b> deminer	<b>Fit for work:</b> not known
<b>Compensation:</b> not recorded	<b>Time to hospital:</b> not recorded
<b>Protection issued:</b> Not recorded	<b>Protection used:</b> not recorded

**Summary of injuries:** Amputation of Leg Below knee

COMMENT: No Medical report was made available.

### Analysis

The primary and secondary causes of this accident are listed as 'Other' because there is too little information available to determine the events surrounding the accident.

It appears that the explosive hazard was a small IED concealed or wrapped in plastic (which is common with IEDs). The only recorded injury was a severe foot injury that resulted in surgical amputation, from which it is reasonable to infer that the Victim stepped on a pressure initiated explosive device that he had missed during his search.

It was consistently reported that the hazard was concealed with plastic, so the plastic must have been seen but not recognised as concealing a hazardous device. This may indicate that the deminers had not been appropriately trained to deal with improvised hazards that they had not encountered when working in Armenia, so a possible training inadequacy is listed under 'Notes'.