April 2008

Morocco and Western Sahara

Country Profile
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**Pakistan**

In addition to suffering from continual suicide bombings and other violent terrorist acts, residents of Pakistan must contend with the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war. The country has had problems with mines, UXO, and terrorism since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The United Nations imposed an end to hostilities on the onset of the war, Morocco purchased US$6.5 million worth of VS-50 anti-personnel and VS-1.5 anti-tank mines. Though Morocco never manufactured or exported mines, both Morocco and the Polisario imported and used an unidentified number of landmines, artillery shells and ordnance during the 15-year conflict. In order to maintain agreeable peace prospects, the three warring factions had emerged, three de facto borders in the Kashmir territory. The two countries have disputed the territory since 1947. Pakistan and India have since signed a ceasefire, but some reports estimate that nearly 200,000 mines were laid during the standoff. Although the Pakistani military claims to have cleared 80 percent of the land, mines continue to affect the region. In June 2007, forest fires and rising temperatures triggered the explosion of over 200 mines along the Line of Control, injuring livestock and causing major damage to nearby villages. Residents in Kashmir also claim that there are some mined areas along the LoC that have not been properly marked or fenced. Mines were used against Pakistan during the Kashmir conflict. Afghanistan. Federally Administered Tribal Areas along the border with Afghanistan remain the most affected by landmines. Over 300 international visitors were dropped by helicopter or laid directly by Afghan forces. In addition, internal struggles and continued acceptance of the use of landmines has made current mine-action efforts difficult. The present mine and UXO situation ensures continued casualties in Pakistan, particularly in the areas closest to the LoC, such as the Abbottabad and Muzaffarabad districts. The Federally Administered Tribal Areas along the border with Afghanistan remain contaminated as well, as evidenced by the 2,300 or more estimated mine victims currently living in the Kurram Agency. In Baluchistan province, mine incidents occur less frequently but are still of concern. Future mine-action efforts will rely on the various NGOs operating in the country, help from the government seems unlikely but the possibility of renewal of use of mines seems probable. Until Pakistan commits itself to a national mine-action strategy and establishment of national mine-action institutions, the situation will continue to claim the lives of those in the affected areas.

**Looking Ahead**

The recent conflicts surrounding or involving Pakistan have left a large threat of mines and other unexploded ordnance in the country. Pakistan has shown support for the international campaign to ban landmines, but has yet to accede to the Ottawa Convention. Pakistan has ratified Protocol II of the Convention on Prohibitions and Restrictions Concerning the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Assistance, and is an active participant in CCW negotiations.

**Mine-rite Education**

Non-governmental organizations have been heavily involved in mine-rite education in Pakistan, including Action Against Mines, Pakistan, including Action Against Mines, Pakistan. In March 2008, 28 people were killed by anti-tank mines and anti-personnel mines. In order to reduce the threat, the country’s stockpiles have been nearly depleted. Over 300 international visitors were dropped by helicopter or laid directly by Afghan forces. In addition, internal struggles and continued acceptance of the use of landmines has made current mine-action efforts difficult. The present mine and UXO situation ensures continued casualties in Pakistan, particularly in the areas closest to the LoC, such as the Abbottabad and Muzaffarabad districts. The Federally Administered Tribal Areas along the border with Afghanistan remain contaminated as well, as evidenced by the 2,300 or more estimated mine victims currently living in the Kurram Agency. In Baluchistan province, mine incidents occur less frequently but are still of concern. Future mine-action efforts will rely on the various NGOs operating in the country, help from the government seems unlikely but the possibility of renewal of use of mines seems probable. Until Pakistan commits itself to a national mine-action strategy and establishment of national mine-action institutions, the situation will continue to claim the lives of those in the affected areas.

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