

LANDMINE MONITOR

2022



INTERNATIONAL
CAMPAIGN TO **BAN**
LANDMINES
1997 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Laureate

Between August and May 2022, mine-laying by PDFs resulted in several casualties among the Myanmar Armed Forces in Bago, Magway, and Sagaing regions, as well as in Kachin state.⁸⁰

Civilian casualties were also reported in 2021 and 2022. For example, in January 2022, a villager was killed by a landmine emplaced by the KNLA in Kyaukkyi township, Bago region.⁸¹ While armed conflict between the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP), and members of the Northern Alliance including the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) in Kyaukme township, Shan state, reportedly resulted in mine-laying that caused civilian injuries in February and March 2022.⁸² Also in March, mines laid by the KNLA caused casualties in Meh Klaw village tract, in Hpapun township, Kayin state.⁸³ In December 2021, locals blamed the Border Guard Force for a mine that caused civilian casualties near Kyaw Kayt Kee village, in Hpaan township, Kayin state.⁸⁴

ALLEGATIONS OF LANDMINE USE BY STATES

Landmines in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

Azerbaijan accused Armenian forces of laying mines in 2020 and 2021 in Nagorno-Karabakh, and in adjoining areas.⁸⁵ It has not been possible to independently verify these claims.⁸⁶ At the Mine Ban Treaty's intersessional meetings in June 2021, Armenia denied using antipersonnel mines in the 2020 conflict and stated that during withdrawal, Armenian forces lacked the time possible to mine areas that subsequently came under Azerbaijan's control.⁸⁷

Yet in May 2021, Armenia's acting prime minister, Nikol Pashinyan, told a government meeting that Armenian soldiers had emplaced mines along sections of the border to strengthen security, and had installed warning signs.⁸⁸ Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced on 12 June 2021 that 15 detained Armenians had been handed over to Armenia, in exchange for maps from Armenia showing the location of around 97,000 mines laid in the Aghdam region—one of seven territories outside Nagorno-Karabakh that Azerbaijan regained control over in 2020.⁸⁹ It is unclear if the maps show the location of newly laid minefields, mines emplaced before 2020, or both.

Landmines in Syria

The Monitor has not independently documented or confirmed any new use of antipersonnel landmines by Syrian government forces or by Russian forces participating in joint military operations in Syria. The last concrete indication of possible new use was an undated photograph circulated on social media in May 2019, where a Syrian Army soldier is shown

80 For further examples, see ICBL-CMC, "Country Profile: Myanmar: Mine Ban Policy," updated 17 November 2022, bit.ly/MyanmarMineBanPolicy2022.

81 Ibid. Villagers stated that the mine was laid by KNLA soldiers but did not indicate when.

82 "Father Of Six Injured By Landmine In Northern Shan State," *Shan Herald Agency for News*, 18 March 2022, bit.ly/SHANews18March2022.

83 KHRG, "KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2022. It is uncertain when the mines were laid.

84 David Boi, "Villager injured in landmine explosion in Hpa An Township," *Tha Din News and Radio*, 11 December 2021, bit.ly/ThaDinNews11Dec2021.

85 Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "No:121/21, Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the 4th of April - International Mine Awareness Day," 4 April 2021, bit.ly/AzerbaijanStatement4April2021.

86 It has also not been possible to distinguish between the actions of Armenian-supported separatist forces in Nagorno-Karabakh and the Armed Forces of Armenia, or whether this seemingly joint force used landmines.

87 Statement of Armenia, Mine Ban Treaty intersessional meetings, held virtually, 21 June 2021, bit.ly/ArmeniaStatement21June2021.

88 "Armenian military carried out mining work with the installation of warning signs, the purpose of sabotage was not – Pashinyan," *Novosti NK*, 27 May 2021, bit.ly/NovostiNK27May2021.

89 Joshua Kucera, "Armenia and Azerbaijan exchange detainees for mine maps," *Eurasianet*, 12 June 2021, bit.ly/Eurasianet12June2021.