

Overview of Landmine Incidents Impacting the Lives of Kurdish Civilians in Iran in 2020

Year in Review (2020)

Iranian Kurdistan is the most affected area of the country by landmines and undetonated ammunitions. The reason for this were armed conflicts: According to Iranian official statistics, during the eight years-long Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) the Iranian army planted more than 20 million landmines in Iranian Kurdistan and Khuzestan province that hamper seriously the daily life of civilians particularly the farmers, the nomads, the shepherds and traders. Essentially, an area of about 4 million and 200 thousand hectares is contaminated by mines and explosive materials. During the armed conflict of 1980-1993 between government forces and Kurdish combatants the Iranian Army planted also an unknown number of mines around their barracks and compounds in many villages and cities in Kurdistan.

Various international bodies and entities such as the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Iran (2010) and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (January 2016) have made observations and recommendations, urging the Islamic Republic to clear its territory of landmines and all the remnants of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). Nevertheless, despite international and domestic efforts, the Islamic Republic refuses to cooperate with international NGOs and entities, and to ratify the Ottawa Mine Ban Treaty.

According to KMMK-G's data, in 2020, a total of 35 citizens have been victims of landmine explosions in Iranian Kurdistan; 9 Kurdish civilians were killed and 26 were wounded due to landmines explosions and unexploded remnants of the Iran-Iraq war, which ended a long time ago in 1988. One of the victims named Payam Rostami from Kermanshah who lost his life was 14 years old. Most of the explosions took place in Ilam and Kermanshah provinces. Most of the injures are in the foot, hand and eyes. For more details, see the annual report.