

Defense Ministry to Clear Chechnya of All Mines by 2017

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Khloponin has announced that about 13,500 hectares of farmland and forests in Chechnya will be cleared of mines by 2017.

At a meeting with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Monday, Khloponin said that the Defense Ministry would demine all farmland by 2015, and by 2017 clear the remaining forest areas, RIA-Novosti reported.

Apart from the Defense Ministry, "no additional resources will be required," Khloponin said.

The program will involve 5,500 hectares of farmland and 8,000 hectares of forestry and could cost anywhere from 3 to 50 billion rubles, Moskovsky Komsomolets reported.

The ministry estimated that it will require over 3 billion rubles for the purpose, but the Emergency Situations Ministry said between 10 and 50 billion, according to Moskovsky

Komsomolets.

The announcement comes after Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov raised the issue with the Russian prime minister on Feb. 9 at a meeting on Chechnya's development, saying that hundreds of people have been injured by mines.

Medvedev said at that time that clearing mines was also important because the "Caucasus could feed Russia."

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