

Encouraging universalization

In some instances, small targeted initiatives can make the difference in dispelling reservations about adopting the ban or in persuading willing states that they can comply with their treaty obligations. To support national, regional and global initiatives that strengthen the political will for the Ottawa Convention, DFAIT launched a five-year, Mine Ban Initiatives Program (MBIP)—a flexible mechanism designed to fund small, regional mine action projects which may encourage signatories and ratifications. In 1998-99, the MBIP disbursed just over \$1.8 million, much of it in support of international conferences and workshops that promoted the Convention and worked to build capacity for compliance.

The MBIP supported conferences in Jordan, Thailand, Burkina Faso, Lebanon, Mexico and Russia. Each of these conferences

produced positive results for the Ottawa Convention. In Amman, Jordan announced its signature to the Ottawa Convention. Shortly after the Burkina Faso conference, this country became the 40th signatory to ratify the Ottawa Convention which set the date for its formal entry-into-force on March 1, 1999. At the Moscow conference, the Russian government announced a further three-year moratorium on the export of landmines and a halt to the production of blast AP mines.

The MBIP has supported the establishment of new ICBL offices in Ukraine and Georgia and bolstered ICBL campaigns in Nepal and Yugoslavia. The program has also allowed Canada to fund a range of small-scale mine action programs which assist states in meeting treaty obligations. These include a number of land clearance and victim assistance projects which are reported on more fully below.

Regional seminars and conferences have been a catalyst in the steady increase in ratifications.

Jody Williams, George Alleyne, Director General of the Pan American Health Organization, and Minister Lloyd Axworthy at a Canada-Mexico co-sponsored regional seminar on anti-personnel mines in January 1999.

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