



Clearing mined land

The global landmine problem is no longer considered insurmountable. Widespread acceptance that the nature of the problem is better explained by the human impact of landmines than by the number of mines in the ground has led to mine clearance proceeding in areas that have the greatest socio-economic value to affected communities.

Mine detection dog teams have helped to clear substantial areas of mined land in the Balkans.



More sophisticated priority-setting combined with the Ottawa Convention's impetus to clear mined areas within a 10-year time-frame means that the terror of landmines can be eliminated in years, not decades. However, given the painfully slow pace of mine clearance activities, concerted efforts will be required to achieve this goal. Approximately 60 states are mine-affected and require outside assistance in addressing their landmine problems. Mine clearance operations continued in most of these states in 2000, and some notable progress has been made:

- In Afghanistan, 24 million square metres of mined land or land suspected of being mined were cleared.
- In Cambodia, 32 million square metres of contaminated land were cleared, opening valuable terrain for cultivation.
- In the Balkans, 7.1 million square metres of land were cleared in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 9.8 million square metres were cleared in Croatia and 19.4 million square metres were cleared in Kosovo.
- In Mozambique, 5 million square metres of land were cleared along with 317 kilometres of road.

Efforts to clear mined areas were assisted by a 10 percent increase in funding from 17 key donors in 2000. Other important developments that occurred in 2000 included the completion of the UN's