

News from the Field

Mozambique: A Priority for Canada

With an estimated one to two million landmines contaminating the country's geography, Mozambique is one of the world's most heavily-mined nations.

As a result of Mozambique's substantial humanitarian need and the country's demonstrated commitment to support a global ban on landmines, Mozambique has been designated a priority for funding from the Canadian Landmines Fund. A total allocation of \$10.5 million has been set aside for a program in Mozambique.

The program will focus on organizing and conducting a national level-one general survey aimed at gathering information on the general location of suspected or

mined areas; the production of maps; and the provision of Canadian technical mine action specialists to the United Nations Development Program's Accelerated Demining Program to support training of survey personnel and database management.

Canadian assistance is aimed at defining the extent of the mine problem through the provision of accurate mined-area data. With these essential tools in place, mine action programs will be focused, avoid unnecessary and costly duplication, and be in a position to efficiently promote the economic and social recovery of Mozambique.



Demining operation in Mozambique

Over the longer term, the program is expected to lay the foundation for: a decline in mine-related casualties; the recovery of previously-held land, thereby enabling refugees to return and cultivate these areas; and the reconstruction of rural infrastructure.

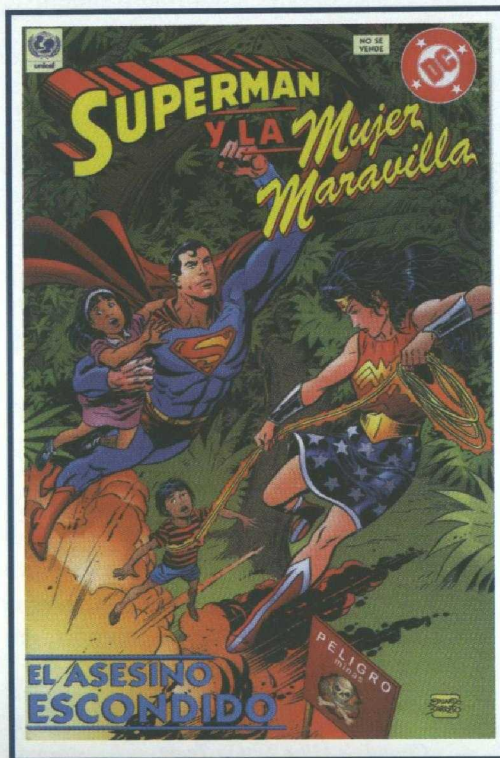
Canada's Mine Action Team

Superman and Wonder Woman to the Rescue

On June 11, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and Ambassador Bill Richardson, U.S. Representative to the United Nations, launched the latest effort of the U.S. Department of Defence, DC Comics and UNICEF partnership — a Superman and Wonder Woman comic book. The comic book, entitled *Superman y la Mujer Maravilla: Al Asesino Escondido*, seeks to promote mine awareness among children of mine-affected countries.

The comic book, which is available in both Spanish and English, tells the story of two brothers, Miguel and Diego, and their sister Gabriela who encounter landmines. The super duo give them practical information on how to keep safe. The comic book includes games and a page of stickers together with a 70-point quiz and the warning: "Spread the Word: Mines Kill!"

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Moving Forward

U.S. 2010 Initiative: The Importance of International Co-ordination

As we near the end of the 20th Century, the scourge of anti-personnel (AP) mines threatening innocent civilians has become a tragic legacy of civil strife worldwide. In order to help tackle this problem, U.S. Secretary of State Albright and Secretary of Defense Cohen launched President Clinton's Demining 2010 Initiative. The Initiative seeks to eliminate the threat to civilians of uncleared AP mines by 2010 through effective international co-ordination involving close interaction among governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international organizations (IOs).

To further this Initiative and contribute to the Ottawa process, the U.S. hosted the Washington Conference on Global Humanitarian Demining in May, 1998.

The U.S. will sign the Ottawa Convention by 2006 if we succeed in identifying and fielding suitable alternatives to our AP mines for Korea and to our mixed anti-tank munitions by then.

The Conference represents a major step forward in consolidating international co-ordination for donor assistance to humanitarian demining, centered in the new United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). Activities will be carried out with the active support and guidance of

the twenty major donor governments comprising the Norwegian-chaired Mine Action Support Group. UNMAS will facilitate close interaction between governments, NGOs, IOs and on-the-ground programs in mine-affected countries. This enhanced co-ordination is complemented by a new commitment on the part of Conference participants to increase the level of global resources devoted to demining, particularly in the areas of technology research and development (R&D), victim assistance, mine awareness and mine removal.

During the Conference, the U.S. reaffirmed its commitment to end the use of all AP mines outside Korea by 2003 and to seek to have AP mine alternatives ready for Korea by 2006.

The Conference focused on improving victim assistance, enhancing the military's role in humanitarian demining and encouraging co-operation between the public and private sectors. Among the Conference's achievements were agreements to:

- Develop solid baseline data. The U.S. is compiling the most up-to-date data on the global AP mines crisis for its publication, *Hidden Killers*. Delegates welcomed its main conclusion that the number of mines in the ground is less than the previous estimate of 110 million. With the support of UNMAS, NGOs will conduct extensive surveys in 10 of the most severely mine-affected countries over the next 30 months. The UN Foundation,

which manages Ted Turner's UN contribution, is offering to match donor government contributions to the surveys.

- Co-ordinate technology R&D and technology application in mine-affected countries. The U.S. and European Commission agreed on three specific proposals aimed at creating and accelerating the use of effective, safe and affordable technology for humanitarian demining. Several countries expressed interest in participating, and the UN has agreed to play a co-ordinating role in the R&D effort.



Washington Conference

The Washington Conference and the U.S.'s AP mines policy announcement have demonstrated the U.S. commitment to bring the scourge of landmines that kill innocent civilians to an end in years, not decades. With effective international co-ordination, this goal can be achieved. The U.S. looks forward to working with its partners in the international community to make this happen.

Karl Frederick Inderfurth
U.S. Special Representative
Global Humanitarian Demining