

- b) Participants unanimously recognized the pioneering demining achievements in Central America and the significant contribution of the OAS and donor countries. They acknowledged the need to redouble efforts in view of the setbacks caused by Hurricane Mitch.
- c) All states were urged to destroy their stockpiles and to sign and ratify the Convention in time for the First Meeting of States Parties to be held in Maputo in May 1999. The following concrete steps were taken:
- Nicaragua announced its intention to destroy all stockpiles by March 1.
  - Peru/Ecuador announced the demining of their border as a result of their 1998 Peace Agreement.
  - USA and Canada announced assistance for Peru/Ecuador demining.
  - Antigua & Barbuda committed to ratifying the Convention before Maputo.
  - USA committed to clearing all US landmines around Guantanamo Base in Cuba by the end of 1999 and to increasing funding for mine action.
- At the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council meeting held on January 13, Canada's Ambassador to NATO, David Wright, delivered a speech on Canada and mine action in which he emphasized the importance of cooperation, particularly in stockpile destruction.
- The Landmine Monitor group met in Tunis, January 26-28, to urge all North African countries to ban landmines.

### **Mine Action Programme Updates**

- Foreign Affairs Minister Axworthy and Minister for International Co-operation and Minister responsible for La Francophonie, Diane Marleau, announced a contribution of \$1.1 million to support mine action projects in Nicaragua, Peru and Ecuador: \$1 million will be given over two years to a mine clearance project in Nicaragua. (Norway, also cooperating on the project, will contribute another \$1 million.) The remaining \$100,000 will go to support the first phase of mine clearing along the border between Peru and Ecuador.
- \$14,000 has been pledged to support the work of the Nepal Campaign to Ban Landmines in building public awareness and hosting a national conference.

### **3. Upcoming Events**

- Georgia/Egypt (February, 1999) - Jody Williams, ICBL co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize, will pay a visit to Georgia and Egypt in an effort to encourage these countries to sign the Convention.