

Ukraine stockpile destruction

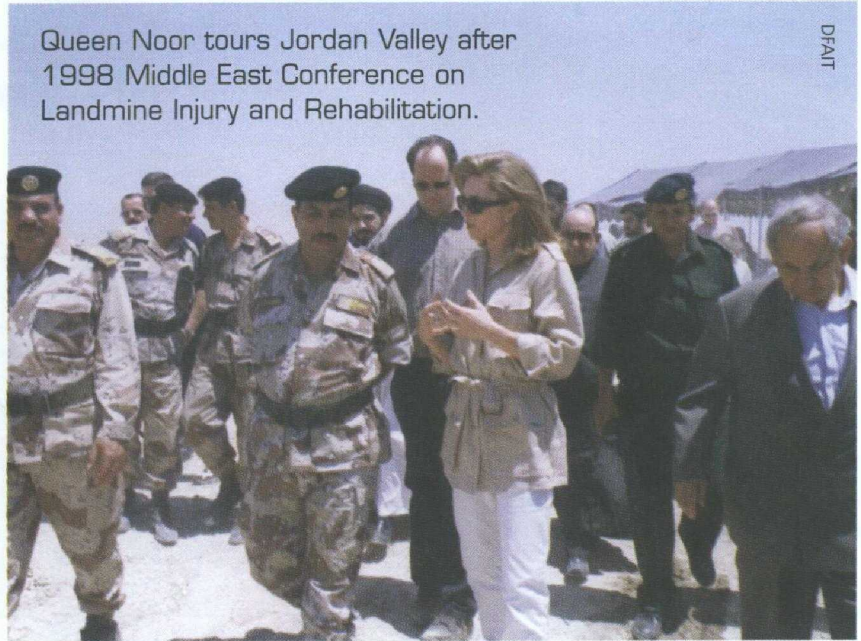
Great progress on Ukrainian stockpiles has been made since our last report. On January 28, 1999, Canada and Ukraine signed a Memorandum of Understanding: Ukraine agreed it would sign the Ottawa Convention, and Canada

stated it would provide appropriate financial, technical and material assistance to a Ukraine anti-personnel mines stockpile destruction program, and facilitate the same from other donors. Ukraine subsequently signed the Convention on February 24th.

Meanwhile, following the Canadian visit in October, Ukrainian officials had prepared a mine destruction technology proposal and a mine destruction program proposal. Both proposals were sent to Canada in January. The number of mines to destroy is slightly less than expected – 9.6 million instead of 10.1 million. A review meeting with Ukraine took place in early April.

Canada is confident that both nations are eager to start the anti-personnel mines destruction program. Our team is offering suggestions to simplify the destruction program, reduce its costs and hasten the debut of mine destruction. About half a dozen other nations have expressed interest in joining the assistance project.

— Lieutenant-Colonel N. Levert, DND Liaison Officer to DFAIT



Four-way partnership in Jordan Valley demining

In support of Jordan's signature of the Convention on August 12, 1998, a four-party mine action program for demining in the Jordan Valley has been developed among Jordan, Canada, Norway, and Israel. A Canadian contribution of \$300,000 is providing mine detection equipment and protective gear, helping to ensure safer, faster mine clearance.

The Jordanian Royal Engineer Corps has the lead on mine action in Jordan, particularly on

demining. The Ministry of Interior and Social Development is responsible for the rehabilitation and care of AP mine victims. Queen Noor has taken on the role of Patron of the Landmine Survivors Network. The Jordanian Red Crescent Society and the Hashemite Charitable Society also seek a role in mine action. There are hopes that Jordan's signature will have a positive effect on other governments in the region.



Canadian official examines case of stockpiled AP mines on recent Ukrainian tour.

ICBL targets MIDDLE EAST/ NORTH AFRICA and RUSSIA/CIS

Since December 1998, the ICBL (International Campaign to Ban Landmines) has focused its treaty promotion efforts on two key areas – Russia/ CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) and the Middle East/ North Africa.

Several events took place in the Middle East in January and February as part of this strategy including a workshop on landmines in Tunis attended by NGO representatives from throughout North Africa; a conference in Beirut; a visit to Egypt by ICBL Ambassador Jody Williams and Liz Bernstein, ICBL Co-coordinator; and a visit to Israel and Palestine to meet with NGOs interested in becoming active in the campaign.

Williams also travelled to Georgia to meet with government and NGO representatives to promote and support the mine ban campaign.

Tunisia, January 26-27

A two day regional meeting on landmines was hosted in Tunis by l'Observatoire des transferts d'armements (France) and l'Institut Arabe des droits de l'homme (Tunisia). Human Rights Watch, an ICBL member, used the occasion to call upon North African countries to embrace the AP Mine Ban Treaty. North Africa is a heavily mined region, with all countries affected.

Mary Wareham of Human Rights Watch urged Tunisia and Algeria – the only signatories in the region – to start destruction of their stockpiled antipersonnel landmines, to accelerate their demining programs, and to provide assistance to landmine survivors. She also called on them to comply with the treaty's requirement to report on their progress in implementing the treaty.

The meeting was attended by NGO representatives from human rights, development, women's, environ-

ment, medical, children's and disability organizations, as well as the Red Cross/ Red Crescent Societies from throughout the Maghreb. Media were also present.

Several participants committed themselves to increasing their involvement in the landmines campaign, particularly in Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania, and contact points were

established to maintain communication. The final recommendations from the seminar included a call for all Maghreb states to sign, ratify and implement the treaty, and to work with civil society in doing so.

Georgia, February 7-9

Jody Williams and other ICBL delegates met with high level government officials, including President Eduard Shevardnadze, along with members of the Georgian, Azerbaijan and Armenian campaigns against landmines.

Officials were generally receptive to the ICBL briefing on the mine ban campaign and, while expressing support, outlined their concerns about territorial control.

NGO representatives visited the site of a Russian base with a barely marked and poorly protected mined



Continued next page