

The Mozambique National Mine Clearance Commission was finally established in July 1995 and became operational the following year, with ongoing technical assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). By January 1996, in relation to the estimated 2 million mines in Mozambique, 1,750 mines areas had been identified and 12,675 mines cleared.

Mali/Sahara-Sahel Experience¹⁰³

In late 1993 the President of Mali identified a problem with the proliferation of illicit light weapons in his country, a problem which was a major contributor to instability and violence there. He requested the United Nations Secretary-General to assist in defining the scope of the problem and identifying ways in which it could be alleviated. In essence, he wanted advice and assistance on how to collect and control those illicit light weapons.

In response to that request, the Secretary-General approved an Advisory Mission and a team was dispatched in August of 1994. The mission met with many sectors of Mali society, with governmental and non-governmental organizations, with local UN agencies and with diplomatic representatives in the country. As a result of the Mali exercise, a second mission was authorized in 1995. Senegal, Mauritania, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad were visited during the course of that mission. The essential conclusions of the second mission were the same as the first (see *infra*), with an increased emphasis on the sub-regional approach and cooperation among the countries concerned. It also needs to be noted that, at the same time, certain governments were also struggling to reach accords with dissident elements among their populations.

Central to the work of the Mission was the preparation undertaken by the host governments. The governments provided, in advance, a memorandum giving their assessments of the problem. The governments each established a National Committee on the Proliferation of Light Weapons to, *inter alia*, act as the focal point for interaction with the Mission. They provided facilities for meetings, interpretation services and ground and air transport within the country.

The Mission examined the security situation in each country and the reasons for socioeconomic unrest, the status of agreements between the government and dissident organizations, problems of refugees and internally displaced peoples, banditry and the phenomena of 'auto-defense' (self-defence), all issues related to the proliferation of illicit light weapons: It tried to determine the scope of the

¹⁰³ The basis for this case study is interviews with the Secretary to the Advisory Mission, Mr. Douglas Fraser, then a political officer in the Centre for Disarmament Affairs. Original unpublished conference materials, particularly the Final Declarations, were also consulted. Peggy Mason was herself a participant in the July 1996 Bamako meetings.