

Youth Mine Action Ambassador Program

As part of a wider outreach effort by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, youth ambassadors are working in eight cities across Canada to interest and involve young Canadians in mine action. Projects in the first two years have included awareness building, regional youth conferences and fund-raising. A joint initiative with the Canadian Red Cross and Mines Action Canada, the program receives funding from DFAIT through the Mine Action Team and the Youth International Internship Program.

Casualties decline

Because many casualties go unreported or unrecorded, no one knows precisely how many people AP mines are still killing and wounding. But there is evidence of improvement:

- In Afghanistan, mine accidents declined by about 50 percent from 1993 to 1998.
- Cambodia's 1998 casualty rate was half the 1996 rate.
- Heavily mined Bosnia has seen a huge reduction in the number of deaths and maimings, from an average of 56 per month in 1995 to 5.5 per month by late 1998.
- In Mozambique, casualties fell from an average of 55 per month in 1995 to fewer than 7 per month in 1998.

Canadian Landmine Fund

The Canadian Landmine Fund was launched by the Government of Canada in December 1997. It is providing \$100 million over five years to activities that support the goals of the Ottawa Convention.

The Fund's efforts have focussed on two main areas:

- pressure for full and universal implementation of the Convention; and
- support for activities such as land clearance, mine awareness training, victim assistance, and research and development of new mine action technologies.

In its first year, the Fund made multi-year commitments to projects in many of the world's most heavily mine-affected regions. These included a \$10 million program in Bosnia, \$10.46 million for mine action in Mozambique and \$4.5 million for programming in Central America. In all, projects in 19 countries received support from the Fund in 1998-99.



Canadian soldier prepares anti-personnel mine for disposal in Bosnia.



Canadian military provides demining training in Cambodia.

Kosovo

In November 1999, Canada pledged additional resources to deal with the aftermath of conflict in the Balkans, including a further \$5 million over two years for mine action in Kosovo. The UN estimates that it will take two to three years to clear the province of mines and munitions. The Canadian Mine Action Program in Kosovo has given support to the UN Mine Action Centre, victim assistance, mine awareness training, and land clearance to permit the resettlement of displaced Kosovars. ●—

For more information on anti-personnel mines and the Canadian mine action program, visit the "Safe-Lane" Web site (www.mines.gc.ca) or call 1-800-267-8376 or (613) 944-4000.