

Sustaining the Effort

As the struggle shifts from the achievement of a comprehensive ban of anti-personnel mines to implementing the Ottawa Convention, maintaining public support remains crucial. Canada supports efforts to universalize the Convention and raise awareness at home and abroad of its importance in the process of eliminating landmines.

The devastation caused by landmines around the world and the steps being taken to address this problem continue to interest and mobilize Canadians. To promote public awareness of the landmine issue and further engage Canadians in the process of eradicating landmines, DFAIT implements an Outreach and Sustainability Program in partnership with NGOs across Canada.

Canada works with national and community organizations to promote the sustainability of mine action efforts, with a focus on engaging Canadian youth. In partnership with MAC and the CRC, DFAIT has initiated the Youth Mine Action Ambassador Program (YMAAP), which sees young university graduates placed in host NGOs across Canada to develop and deliver landmine education programs in their regions. This annual internship includes a field visit to a mine-affected country.

In 2001-2002, seven youth ambassadors worked in St. John's, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. Field visits in August 2001 to either Bosnia and Herzegovina or Cambodia gave each youth ambassador an opportunity to learn first-hand about the landmine problem and mine action programs. The host organizations that supported these ambassadors included the CRC, MAC, Oxfam Canada, UNICEF and the Canadian Landmine Foundation. DFAIT provided \$443,213 to support YMAAP activities during this reporting period.

DFAIT provided \$7,014 to the Canadian Red Cross Society to mount an interactive exhibit on landmines during the

Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) in Toronto in the summer of 2001. This exhibit was facilitated by YMAAP youth ambassadors who communicated to thousands of CNE visitors about how they could become involved in the global movement to ban landmines.

In addition to community-based NGO programming, Canada continues to support the need for sustainable funding for mine action by contributing to the work of the Canadian Landmine Foundation. The foundation was launched in 1999 as a charitable organization with the aim of mobilizing private-sector resources for mine action in an effort to promote the long-term sustainability of this work.

DFAIT contributed \$385,000 to the Foundation in 2001-2002, \$250,000 of which was in support of the *Night of a Thousand Dinners* fundraising initiative. This initiative, seen by many as a new method of increasing resources devoted to mine action through public-private partnership, encouraged individuals around the world to host dinners or events in support of mine action on or around November 30, 2001. Funds raised through this effort went directly to support the United Nations Association-USA Adopt-A-Minefield® program in Bosnia, Croatia, Mozambique, Cambodia, Afghanistan and Vietnam.

CIDA also contributed \$901,000 to support the work of the Foundation from resources outside of the CLF.

Making a Difference in Canada

YOUTH SPEAKING TO YOUTH THROUGH THE YOUTH MINE ACTION AMBASSADOR PROGRAM Since its inception in 1998/1999, tens of thousands of young Canadians have learned about the landmine issue through school and community presentations given by the YMAAP youth ambassadors. Key focal points for YMAAP activities are the commemoration of the December 3 anniversary of the Ottawa Convention signing and the March 1 anniversary of its entry-into-force. During Canadian Landmine Awareness Week 2002, which took place from February 25 to March 3, the youth ambassadors worked in cooperation with Mines Action Canada to facilitate a cross-Canada speaking tour featuring landmine survivors and activists from the mine-affected countries of Peru, Colombia, Pakistan, Kosovo and Cambodia.

Photo: Mélanie Gagnon/YMAAP

