



Peace and Security

Landmine Ban in Sight?

Anti-personnel mines are one of the most destructive legacies of conflicts around the world. Years after hostilities have ended, people are still killed or wounded and large areas are closed to productive use because of mines.



"And so, today, I commit Canada to this goal, to work with our global partners to prepare a treaty [towards a global ban on anti-personnel mines] that can be signed by December 1997 and implemented by the year 2000. I invite and challenge all of you to join with us to attain that goal."

Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy, October 5, 1996, at the International Strategy Conference: Towards a Global Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines.



Canadian soldiers performing land mine removal exercises in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

From October 3 to 5, 1996, Canada hosted an International Strategy Conference on this issue. It attracted 50 participant states, 24 observer states and many international agencies and non-governmental organizations. EU states played important roles in planning the conference and in discussions.

A week before the conference, the EU finalized a Joint Action supporting a comprehensive global ban on anti-personnel mines at the earliest possible date and implementing a common export moratorium. These initiatives helped set the stage for the "Ottawa Declaration," which conference participants adopted supporting an international ban.

The conference also produced an "Agenda for Action" to advance work to ban anti-personnel mines. A number of EU states have offered to host future meeting of the "Ottawa Group," which is continuing to focus on the issue. Belgium has offered to host a follow-up conference in June 1997.

Rebuilding the Former Yugoslavia

The EU and the World Bank are co-ordinating reconstruction in the former Yugoslavia. Canada is supporting that process with humanitarian assistance, social and economic reconstruction and democracy building.

For example, Queen's University has introduced Community Based Rehabilitation to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia. Experts from the university are training nearly 1 000 medical practitioners. They are involved in efforts to help over 60 000 people with war-related disabilities.

Canadian projects have provided money, experts and volunteers for elections. They have dealt with issues as diverse as restoring electrical power systems and support for the UN International Police Task Force. Canada's contingent in the NATO

Peace Implementation Force has been active in community-based reconstruction projects.

The Canadian Government believes that there will be no lasting peace in Bosnia, however, without a serious effort to apprehend indicted war criminals. In a statement given before the Peace Implementation Council on December 4, 1996, Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy brought forward several recommendations to increase the isolation of these individuals, reduce their influence and make their capture more likely. Suggestions included increasing the number of patrols in specific areas, training of forces in the identification and detention of suspected war criminals and initiating information campaigns to publicize persons being sought.



Canadian and French soldiers serving with Brigade Salamandre are joined by Canadian Ambassador Serge Marcoux, Deputy Commander of the French Forces, General Clee, and local students outside a primary school situated in the Mostar region of Bosnia. The school is one of nine repaired through a co-operative effort by the local population and Canadian and French troops with financial support from the Canada Co-operation Fund.

School for Peace

Canada and EU states have been leading contributors to peacekeeping missions ever since former Canadian Prime Minister and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Lester B. Pearson first initiated the concept in 1956. Canada is now supporting this work through the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in Nova Scotia.

The Centre was established in 1994, and is partly funded by Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Department of National Defence. Close to a quarter of all participants have come from Europe. They have taken part in the Centre's extensive range of conferences, seminars, workshops and training courses, many in English and French.

The Centre uses electronic distance learning technologies and mobile training teams to bring programs to many participants. It responds to requests for specialized research and customized training programs.

Information on the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre is available from:

Registrar

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