

REDUCING NEW MINE CASUALTIES AND ASSISTING VICTIMS

The number of new mine victims is decreasing in many states. In Bosnia, monthly incidents in 1998 dropped from 90 to 18, in Cambodia incidents have dropped from 230 per month in 1996 to 100 per month in 1998, and in Nicaragua in 1998 there were only two deaths. Mozambique and the Middle East have also shown great progress. This progress has been realized through the onerous and time-consuming process of mine clearance, as well as through more cost effective and targeted programs of mine awareness and minefield marking.

Some challenges remain. We cannot single out mine victims for support in countries where people are as likely to be disabled by polio or other diseases and where public health structures are often strained to provide the most basic treatments. Even more important, increased emphasis needs to be placed on the reintegration of survivors into social and economic life: the number of prosthetics created in a program is an insufficient indicator of success. The international community is establishing goals and standards for victim assistance which should improve the delivery of programming in this area.

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REDUCING THE TRADE IN MINES

Almost all traditional exporters of mines have ceased these activities – the once-flourishing legal trade in mines has all but vanished. Since the Second World War, more than 50 countries have been producers of anti-personnel mines. Today, fewer than half that many countries continue to produce mines, and most of these states have agreed not to export the mines they produce. Even countries that have not signed the Ottawa Convention – such as Russia, China and the United States – have instituted moratoria on the export of all or certain types of mines. This is the best evidence that a norm has been established which is challenging all states to curtail their involvement with mines.

There are fewer than 10 mine-producing countries that do not support a comprehensive moratorium or de facto ban on the export of anti-personnel mines.

INCREASING RESOURCES FOR MINE ACTION

More donors are engaged in mine action than ever before. They are collaborating in joint ventures and through multilateral institutions, and co-ordination has become a priority. Canada and Norway have together developed joint-venture projects in Jordan, Bosnia and Nicaragua. The UN Voluntary Trust Fund for