



ong Kosal: The young woman behind the Youth Against War Treaty.

Mines Action Canada and Youth Against War

by Carla Potts and Sophie Nichol Sauvé – Mines Action Canada (MAC)

to raise awareness about the insidious nature of landmines, to unite youth from around the world in a common peace-building initiative and to encourage the United States to sign the Mine Ban Treaty.

As the Canadian component of the ICBL, MAC works with its affiliates and networks, other campaigns and ICBL members to promote the *Youth Against War Treaty*. At the Second Meeting of States Parties in Geneva, September 11 to 15, 2000, each national campaign will be given an action kit to promote Youth Against War in its country. The kits will also be made available to interested Canadians. The initiative will be widely promoted via youth and peace organizations, across the United States, Canada and internationally, and through the new youth web site of the ICBL at www.icbl.org/youth

Mines Action Canada (MAC) has joined forces with a young Cambodian landmine survivor to further promote the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

The pillar of this initiative is the *Youth Against War Treaty* – a simple and clear treaty launched in 1998. It calls for no more war, no more landmines and no more mine victims. Youth who sign the treaty also promise to “work for peace in our world.”

On March 1, 2000, MAC re-launched the *Youth Against War Treaty* with a new focus and purpose. MAC and others in the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) will use the treaty to increase public support for the landmine ban in countries which have not yet signed or acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty.

Signatures to the *Youth Against War Treaty*, collected from all corners of the world, will be presented to the next President of the United States on March 1, 2001. Our goal is

The young woman behind the *Youth Against War Treaty* is an inspirational figure to all of us. When she was only six years old, Song Kosal stepped on a landmine in Cambodia. She lost one leg, but survived. Well before the Mine Ban Treaty opened for signature, Kosal was travelling the world campaigning against the continued use of landmines. She was in Ottawa when the Mine Ban Treaty was signed in 1997 and is currently the Youth Ambassador for the ICBL.

Song Kosal's *Youth Against War Treaty* has already captured the imagination and enthusiasm of

youth around the world. From Brazil to Switzerland, Italy to Cambodia and across Canada, youth are organizing events to raise awareness about the *Youth Against War Treaty* and the devastating legacy left by landmines throughout the world.

MAC is proud to be working with Song Kosal on this initiative. We invite youth from all walks of life to collect signatures to the *Youth Against War Treaty* and to become involved in raising awareness within their own communities.

For more information, please contact Mines Action Canada at macinfo@web.ca or visit the site of the treaty: www.icbl.org/youth ●

Belarus conference breaks new ground

An international workshop on humanitarian demining and stockpile destruction was held in Minsk, Belarus, on March 6 and 7, 2000.

This was the first such occasion for the former Soviet republic to describe its landmine problem to the international community. Belarus is severely affected by mines from the two World Wars and has inherited mil-

lions of stockpiled mines from the Soviet Union.

The Belarus authorities stressed that their country shares all mine-related humanitarian concerns of the international community. It supports the goal of prohibiting the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines, does not produce anti-personnel mines and has extended its moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines to the end of 2002.

The Belarus authorities appealed to the international community to assist in its demining and stockpile destruction programs. They stressed that the country does not have the financial resources or the technical capacity to deal with these historical legacies by itself.

Delegates from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Secretariat of the United Nations participated in broad ranging discussions on the Belarus landmine problem.

Most workshop participants endorsed Canada's opinion, presented at the beginning of the session, that the Ottawa Convention provides the best framework to address Belarus' mine situation. Belarus authorities expressed their willingness to become a party to the Ottawa Convention if they receive assistance dealing with their mine problem. ●

New Landmine Monitor Report to be released September 2000

by Mary Wareham – Human Rights Watch

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines' (ICBL) civil-society based Landmine Monitor will release its second annual report on September 7, 2000 in anticipation of the Second Meeting of States Parties in Geneva later that month.

Landmine Monitor Report 2000, the product of some 115 researchers from 85 countries, features individual updates on ban policy and mine action in every country of the world. Its overview highlights the major achievements and setbacks in ban policy, mine action and survivor assistance since the publication of *Landmine Monitor*

Report 1999 in May 1999.

The entry by the ICBL details the actions of the past year in the campaign to urge universalization and implementation of the mine ban treaty. The appendices feature activity reports from some of the major international actors in the movement to eradicate antipersonnel mines, including United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and key governments such as Canada.

Landmine Monitor Report 2000's Executive Summary will be



published in at least seven languages including Arabic, English, French, Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Most researchers plan to work with their national campaigns and NGOs to release and distribute their country report research in their own language at the same time as the main report is released. Several regional reports and releases are also planned.

The Landmine Monitor's international network of in-country researchers is unique, as the world's only global civil-society based monitoring regime of a major multilateral treaty.

This year's network of 115 researchers from 85 countries is up from the 80 researchers from 50 countries that prepared the *Landmine Monitor Report 1999*.

For more information, visit www.icbl.org/lm

To access the Landmine Monitor Database, visit www.lm-online.org ●