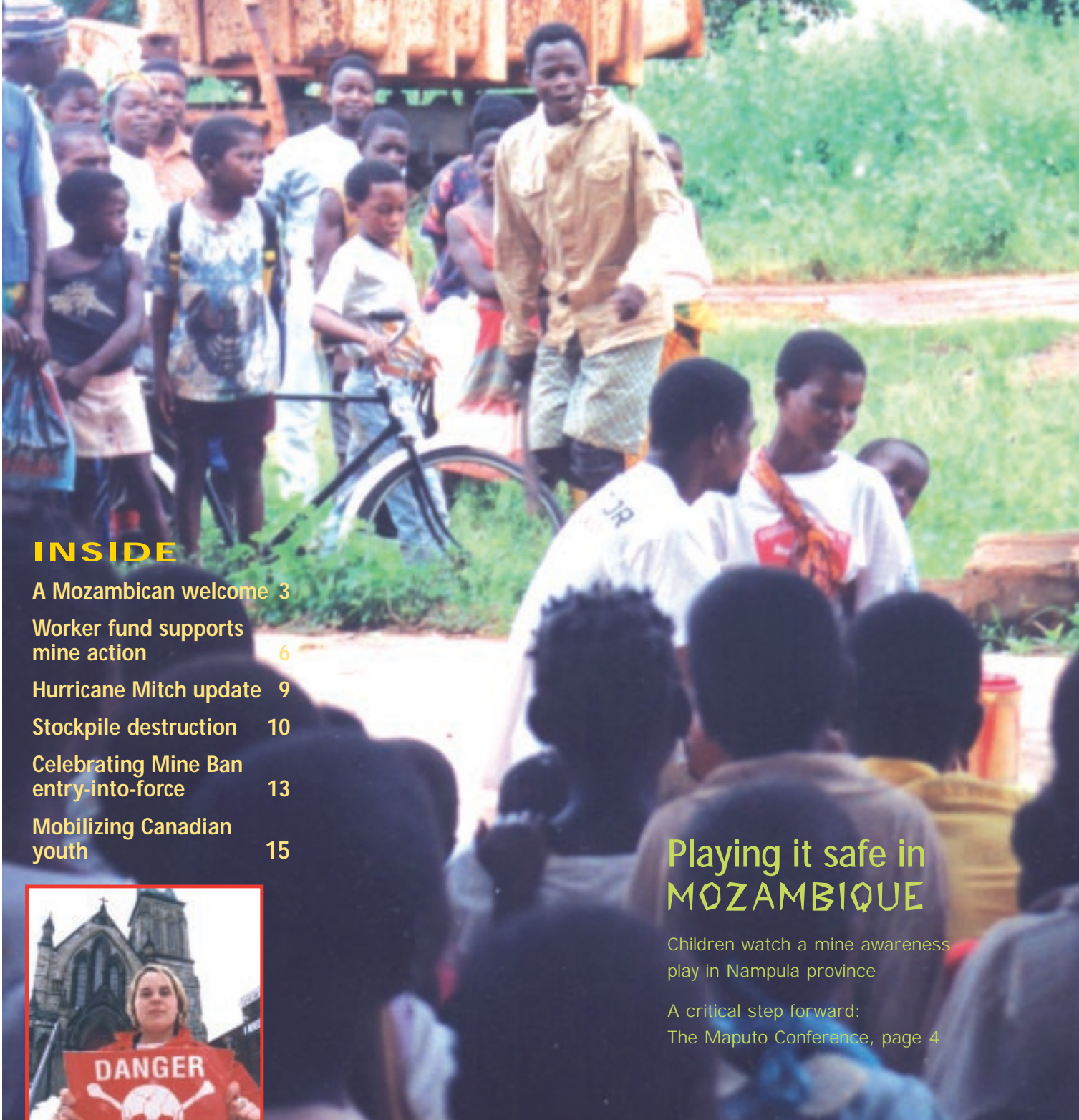


SAFE LANE

Spring/Summer 1999 Number 9

CANADA'S LANDMINE BAN REPORT



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Playing it safe in MOZAMBIQUE

Children watch a mine awareness play in Nampula province

A critical step forward:
The Maputo Conference, page 4



Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Ministère des Affaires étrangères
et du Commerce international

Canada



RESOURCES

DFAIT materials can be ordered by calling: Tel: (613) 944-4000 or 1-800-267-8376

Fax: (613) 996-9709

For other materials, dial the numbers provided below.

Unless otherwise indicated, all materials available in French and English.

Print

*Ban Landmines**

Pamphlet explaining how you can be a part of the global movement to ban landmines. Provides Youth Mine Action Ambassador contact information: DFAIT

*Monthly Progress Report**
(3 pages): DFAIT

*A Global Ban on Landmines**
(4 page backgrounder on the Ottawa Process): DFAIT

One Year Later: Is the Ottawa Convention Making a Difference?

* (December 1, 1998 report to Parliament - Available in Spanish): DFAIT

Information Kit (Includes the above items marked by an asterisk (*), as well as a Q&A on the landmines ban, *Safelane* #8 and #9, a signatory and ratification list, and a speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.): DFAIT

Banning Anti-Personnel Mines - The Ottawa Treaty Explained (11 pages; available in Spanish): International Committee of the Red Cross Tel: (613) 740-1949 Fax: (613) 740-1911

Preamble on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction: "The Ottawa Treaty" (23 pages; available in all six UN languages): DFAIT

To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines (491 pages)

Cameron, M., Lawson, R., and Tomlin, B., ed.; Oxford University Press; Toronto: 1998. (English only.)

Available through bookstores or by contacting Oxford University Press at (416) 441-2941 or 1-800-387-8020 or by fax at 1-800-665-1771

Electronic

Videos:

In Years, Not Decades (An 8-minute presentation-length video - Available in English, French, Arabic & Portuguese): DFAIT

One Step at a Time (A 24-minute, broadcast-length documentary - International broadcasting rights have been obtained for stock footage; licensing fee for airing can be donated to NGOs. Available in English, French, Russian & Spanish): DFAIT

CD-ROM

Ban Landmines! The Ottawa Process and the International Movement to Ban Landmines: DFAIT

Websites:

DFAIT's "SAFELANE":

www.mines.gc.ca

Mines Action Canada:

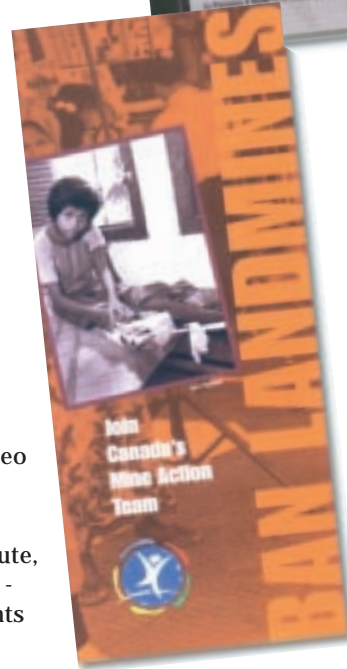
www.minesactioncanada.com

International Campaign to Ban Landmines:

www.icbl.org

International Committee of the Red Cross:

www.icrc.org



SAFELANE

CANADA'S LANDMINE BAN REPORT

Spring/Summer 1999, Number 9

Safelane is published quarterly by the Mine Action Team, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Submissions are invited from governmental agencies and NGOs active in the campaign against landmines. Please send articles of 400 words or less; *Safelane* editors reserve the right to condense and adapt text. Captioned, print-quality photos much appreciated.

Send submissions, along with clear contact information, to:

Outreach and Communications, Mine Action Team (ILX), Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1A 0G2
Fax: (613) 944-2501

Deadline for next issue: July 1, 1999.

Cover photo: Courtesy of CAW Canada

MOZAMBIQUE

welcomes the world



*Dr. Leonardo Santos Simão,
Minister of
Foreign Affairs
and Cooperation,
Mozambique*

The government of Mozambique is honoured to host the First Meeting of States Party (FMSP) to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We look forward to welcoming the world to Maputo from May 3 to 7 for this historic meeting.

I believe that this meeting will have special resonance because it is held in Mozambique. Though we are one of the world's most mine affected states, we have shown a very

positive recovery. We are now one of the region's strongest emerging economies and we enjoy an unprecedented social and economic stability. Yet the threat of landmines will be with us for a long time, and we will continually strive to meet the challenges of mine clearance and victim assistance.

The work does not stop now just because the Convention has entered into force. A diplomatic conference such as this is an ideal opportunity to examine what we have collectively achieved to address the global landmine problem. It is also a chance to look ahead at the challenges to come and the goals we should work together to achieve.

It is my pleasure to offer Mozambican hospitality to all participating delegations.

A Maputo Conference Primer

What: The First Meeting of States Party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Where: Maputo, Mozambique

When: May 3-7, 1999

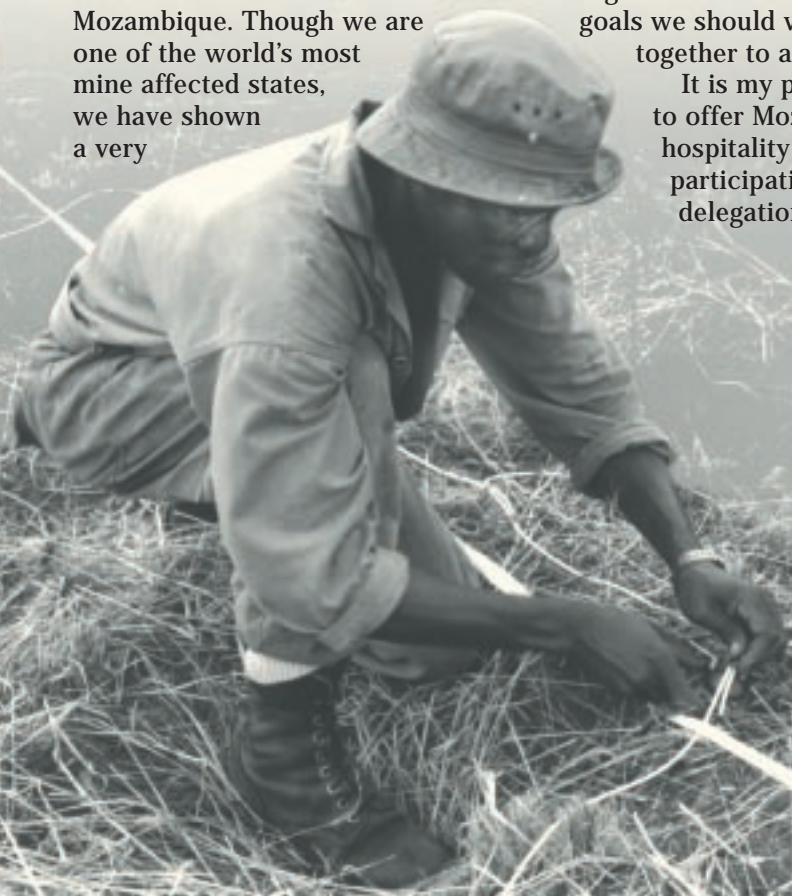
What is the Maputo Conference?

The Maputo Conference will be the First Meeting of States Party (FMSP) to the AP Mine Ban Convention. According to Article 11 of Convention, meetings of States Parties will consider any matters related to the application or implementation of the Convention including, for example, issues related to international cooperation and assistance in the implementation of mine action programs in the field.

What is a State Party?

States Parties are countries for which the Ottawa Convention has entered-into-force. The Convention enters-into-force for a state six months after that state has deposited its instrument of

Continued page 4



A Maputo Conference Primer

Continued from page 3

ratification with the United Nations Secretary General. Since the Maputo Conference will take place at the beginning of May 1999, the 55 states that ratified the Ottawa Convention by the end of November 1998 will be States Parties in time for the Conference.

Who can attend the Maputo Conference?

All states and international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) supportive of mine action are welcome to attend the Maputo Conference. According to Article 14 of the Ottawa Convention, states not party to the Convention, the United Nations, other relevant international organizations and institutions, regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and NGOs can participate in the meeting as observers. Every participating government or organization will have an opportunity to speak in the opening two days of general statements and be able to contribute to all other discussions during the FMSP.

THE MAPUTO CONFERENCE

A critical step forward for the landmine ban

The gathering of the world's nations in Maputo for the First Meeting of States Party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention will be a critical step forward in our efforts to rid the world of an indiscriminate killer. The selection of a severely mine-affected country to host this critical meeting underlines the need for this new Convention to make a real difference to those who live with the daily terror of landmines. The challenges that face Mozambique are a reminder of our obligations to mine affected states, and the determination of the Mozambican people to overcome this man-made scourge is an inspiration to us all.

This treaty has in many ways broken the moulds which routinely shape international agreements – it is a most unconventional convention, if you will. Forged outside the norms of interna-

tional diplomacy, it was built on an unprecedented alliance between uncommitted civil society actors and middle powers who shared a common vision and an unshakable determination to deal urgently with the landmine issue.

Our Convention is still young, having entered into force on March 1st just fifteen months after first being opened for signature. In many cultures, there are collective rituals that mark the passage from youth to maturity: For our Convention, the Maputo Conference will be such

This child's scars are a reminder of why nations are gathering in Mozambique.



John Rodsted

THE MAPUTO CONFERENCE

A critical step forward for the landmine ban

a rite of passage. Now is the time for us to set in stone the pillars of our success, to transform an innovative, ad hoc diplomatic initiative into a humanitarian disarmament convention which will stand the test of time.

What does this mean in practical terms?

It means first of all, entrenching the openness and transparency of the Ottawa Process into our way of doing business as we implement this new Convention. The Maputo Conference is first and foremost an opportunity to exchange information within the mine action community – to make good our commitment under Article 6 to ensure full international cooperation in providing assistance to mine affected communities.

It also means welcoming to the table all who share our vision. Article 11 opens the door to states not party to the convention – as well as to a range of relevant international and non-governmental organizations such as the UN, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Campaign to

Ban Landmines. There is a great deal of work before us, and all who will help in this noble effort should be welcomed.

As with any document, the Convention's obligations can be seen either as a "floor" by those who take them as a starting point, or as a "ceiling", by those who wish to fulfil only the precise minimum that is required. I encourage all of us to keep in mind the humanitarian objectives which inspired this Convention. This incredible process has been driven thus far by a genuine commitment to see an entire class of indiscriminate weapons removed from the world's arsenal. It has been shaped by a vision of a terrible wrong being undone – well within the lifespan of today's landmine survivors. Such an ambitious goal will not be achieved by those who fall back on minimalist interpretations of the treaty's obligations, but rather by those who fully embrace their responsibilities to the global community.

— *Lloyd Axworthy,*
Minister of
Foreign Affairs,
Canada

Mozambique Mine Facts*

Population: 15.7 million

Per capita GDP: US \$134

Per capita spending on healthcare: US \$6.82

Treaty status: Signed December 3, 1997

Ratified August 25, 1998

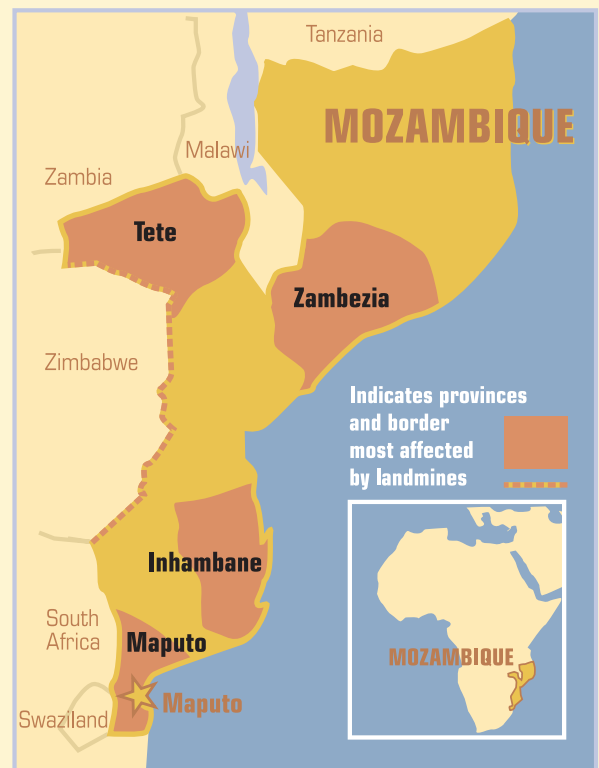
Mine infestation

Estimated total number of mines:
approximately 250,000 to 500,000

Areas most affected: Along Zimbabwean border in the west; Zambezia and Tete provinces in the centre; and Maputo and Inhambane provinces in the south.

Casualties: Approximately 10,000 victims since signing of 1992 peace accord. Handicap International estimates that the annual incidence of new mine accidents has fallen from 600-720 in 1995 to 83 in 1998. A lack of adequate health resources contributes to a high fatality rate among victims.

*All figures, 1998



What can I do to help?

Government and NGO representatives working on the landmines issue hear one question from Canadians more often than any other - What can I do to help? Mines Action Canada (MAC) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) think they have an answer. Working together, MAC and DFAIT have established a fund to accept donations from Canadians who want to support Canadian Mine Action programs. Announced by Minister Axworthy on September 21, the Canadian Landmine Action Fund is jointly managed by MAC and DFAIT. Donations directly support the delivery of Canadian Mine Action programs in the field such as mine clearance and mine victim assistance. All donations are tax deductible.

Call toll-free 1-877-321-0860

What Can You Do to Help?

Give generously to the Canadian Landmine Action Fund. Please send to:

The Canadian Landmine Action Fund
 Department of Foreign Affairs and
 International Trade, Cashiers Office
 125 Sussex Dr. Ottawa, ON. K1A 0G2

I'd like to donate \$ _____

Method of payment (please check one)

Cheque (*made out to Canadian Landmine Action Fund and enclosed*)

Visa Mastercard

Card# | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Expiry date | | | | | |

Cardholder name: _____

Signature: _____

If you require an official receipt for Canadian Income Tax purposes, please provide the following information:

Full name: _____

Address _____

_____ Postal Code _____



John Rodstved

Canadian workers support mine action in Mozambique

In 1998, the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) committed \$1.25 million to mine action in Mozambique

through its Social Justice Fund, a fund financed through the collective bargaining process. With matching funds from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), a relationship between the CAW, CIDA and Cooperation Canada Mozambique (COCAMO) was formed to concentrate on mine action in one of the nations hardest hit by this international plague.

As of spring, 1999, the core projects within CAW's continued involvement in mine action in Mozambique include: proximity de-mining, survivor assistance, mine awareness, and advocacy through partnerships with NGOs. There has been significant progress in a number of these areas.

Proximity demining in Inhambane Province is on-going in collaboration with Handicap International (HI), and forms the largest component of the CAW's efforts in Mozambique. The innovative demining model used by HI stresses community involvement and participation.

Survivor assistance is also an integral part of what the CAW is attempting to achieve in Mozambique. Survivors need support on a variety of levels, not the least of which is provision of prostheses.



CAW Canada

In collaboration with HI and the Mozambique Ministry of Social Welfare, COCAMO is supporting work being done in Nampula and Inhambane provinces with transit centres that provide prostheses and on-going support for survivors. Centres have been renovated to provide improved care; and transportation to and from the centres is available to survivors so they can access services. The Nampula Orthopaedic Centre has an improved exercise area and storage facility.

At the community level, COCAMO's network of local NGOs is working on a number of exciting initiatives, including mine awareness in Nampula, where a project using video and educational toys is bringing landmine awareness to community members, especially children.

As with all demining activities, post-clearance development is a major concern: once mines have been removed, communities require assistance to re-habilitate their living conditions. A study conducted in three communities in Nampula province helped to determine what they need in the aftermath of

mine removal. The findings included construction of wells, school rehabilitation and small scale development projects to assist residents with a return to normalcy.

Although there is an enormous amount still to be done, the CAW, in partnership with COCAMO and CIDA, has made huge strides in the global effort to ban landmines – and to assist in the restoration of communities that have suffered from their proliferation.

— *Mike O'Connor, COCAMO*



Above left:
Mozambican children waiting for mine awareness workshop

Above right:
A deminer in Inhambane province displays his tools.

Mexico City seminar brings the Americas together on mine action

A regional seminar on anti-personnel mines, co-hosted by Mexico and Canada in Mexico City on January 11-12, 1999, marked the first time states in the region have

port the border clearance as part of the peace agreements between these countries. Canada's contribution will be used to purchase equipment to improve the speed

was key to the speed and success of the Ottawa Process and the treaty banning anti-personnel (AP) mines," said Mr. Axworthy. "Action is needed to help this region as it continues to cope with the deadly legacy of the conflicts and instability of another era."

"The catastrophic devastation of Hurricane Mitch in the Central American region has not only created enormous human suffering, but has completely changed the mine situation of the region," said Madame Marleau.

There was hemispheric agreement on the importance of the OAS role in mine action and the need to double its resources. Countries were urged to contribute to the OAS registry as well as comply with article 7 of the Ottawa Convention. A push for rapid stockpile destruction was made as well as the announcement from various countries that they would indeed begin destroying their stocks prior to the 4 year deadline.

Seminar participants also pushed for early ratification in the region: Since the seminar, Costa Rica and El Salvador have ratified, bringing total ratifications in the region to 17 among 33 signatory states.

The seminar, entitled "Affirming our Commitments", brought government and NGO representatives from throughout the hemisphere together with international organizations and key donor countries. Mexican Foreign Minister Rosario Green and her Canadian counterpart, Lloyd Axworthy, inaugurated the meeting along with OAS Secretary General Gaviria, PAHO Director General Alleyne, and ICBL Ambassador Jody Williams.

ICBL Ambassador Jody Williams, PAHO Director General George Alleyne and Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy at the Mexico City Regional Seminar on AP Mines.

come together to focus on mine action and mechanisms for practical cooperation.

Among the concrete outcomes of the seminar was an announcement by Peru and Ecuador that they would begin mine clearance along their shared border. This news was welcomed by regional partners and greeted with contribution announcements by donors. Canada pledged \$100,000 to sup-

port the border clearance as part of the peace agreements between these countries. Canada's contribution will be used to purchase equipment to improve the speed

and safety of Peruvian and Ecuadorian demining efforts. Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy and Minister for International Co-operation and Minister responsible for La Francophonie Diane Marleau also announced a further \$1 million to support mine action projects in Nicaragua.

"The support of these countries, and this region in general,

CIDA



ICBL Ambassador Jody Williams, PAHO Director General George Alleyne and Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy at the Mexico City Regional Seminar on AP Mines.

Hurricane Mitch reverses progress on landmines

A detector works at locating mines displaced by Hurricane Mitch flood waters and mudslides.



OAS

Among the devastating effects of Hurricane Mitch last November was a dramatic disruption of ongoing efforts to remove landmines in Central America.

The flooding and mudslides displaced a yet undetermined number – potentially thousands – of the more than 80,000 mines yet to be destroyed. This will certainly delay Central America's drive to free the region of mines by the year 2000.

In the last few years, the Organization of American States (OAS) had coordinated an extensive, internationally funded program to support the countries of Central America in their efforts to remove landmines left over from conflicts in the region. Hurricane Mitch has destroyed a substantial portion of the equipment and infrastructure used in this demining program.

In the aftermath of the storm, the OAS began a thorough re-eval-

uation of the landmine threat in the region. The forces of nature moved many mines down mountain slopes and riverbeds, and added large quantities of mud and debris to an already challenging

detection and destruction scenario. Until located and marked off, the displaced mines will continue to pose an immediate threat to public safety in the region.

– OAS

British Army landmines destroyed

On February 23, British Defence Secretary George Robertson announced the completion of British Army AP landmine destruction. The last five deactivated mines were presented to Care International, the HALO Trust, the Mines Advisory Group, the British Red Cross and the Imperial War Museum.

In announcing the destruction, Mr. Robertson said, "I hope the accelerated destruction of British Army mines will send another clear and concrete message to those nations who have not yet

signed the Ottawa Treaty. The legacy of anti-personnel mines is a modern plague."

While the total number of mines destroyed was unreported, MAG UK estimates there were between .9 and 1.2 million AP mines prior to the destruction of the British Army Stocks. The British Ministry of Defence has set January 1, 2000 as a target for the destruction of all remaining British AP mines. A supplementary RAF JP233 stock of mines remains to be destroyed by this date.

Ukraine stockpile destruction

Great progress on Ukrainian stockpiles has been made since our last report.

On January 28, 1999, Canada

and Ukraine signed a Memorandum of Understanding: Ukraine agreed it would sign the Ottawa Convention, and Canada

stated it would provide appropriate financial, technical and material assistance to a Ukraine anti-personnel mines stockpile destruction program, and facilitate the same from other donors. Ukraine subsequently signed the Convention on February 24th.

Meanwhile, following the Canadian visit in October, Ukrainian officials had prepared a mine destruction technology proposal and a mine destruction program proposal. Both proposals were sent to Canada in January. The number of mines to destroy is slightly less than expected – 9.6 million instead of 10.1 million. A review meeting with Ukraine took place in early April.

Canada is confident that both nations are eager to start the anti-personnel mines destruction program. Our team is offering suggestions to simplify the destruction program, reduce its costs and hasten the debut of mine destruction. About half a dozen other nations have expressed interest in joining the assistance project.

— *Lieutenant-Colonel N. Levert, DND Liaison Officer to DFAIT*



Queen Noor tours Jordan Valley after 1998 Middle East Conference on Landmine Injury and Rehabilitation.

DFAIT

Four-way partnership in Jordan Valley demining

In support of Jordan's signature of the Convention on August 12, 1998, a four-party mine action program for demining in the Jordan Valley has been developed among Jordan, Canada, Norway, and Israel. A Canadian contribution of \$300,000 is providing mine detection equipment and protective gear, helping to ensure safer, faster mine clearance

The Jordanian Royal Engineer Corps has the lead on mine action in Jordan, particularly on

demining. The Ministry of Interior and Social Development is responsible for the rehabilitation and care of AP mine victims. Queen Noor has taken on the role of Patron of the Landmine Survivors Network. The Jordanian Red Crescent Society and the Hashemite Charitable Society also seek a role in mine action. There are hopes that Jordan's signature will have a positive effect on other governments in the region.



Commander Rick Williams, Canadian Forces

Canadian official examines case of stockpiled AP mines on recent Ukrainian tour.

ICBL targets MIDDLE EAST/ NORTH AFRICA and RUSSIA/CIS

Since December 1998, the ICBL (International Campaign to Ban Landmines) has focused its treaty promotion efforts on two key areas – Russia/ CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) and the Middle East/ North Africa.

Several events took place in the Middle East in January and February as part of this strategy including a workshop on landmines in Tunis attended by NGO representatives from throughout North Africa; a conference in Beirut; a visit to Egypt by ICBL Ambassador Jody Williams and Liz Bernstein, ICBL Co-coordinator; and a visit to Israel and Palestine to meet with NGOs interested in becoming active in the campaign.

Williams also travelled to Georgia to meet with government and NGO representatives to promote and support the mine ban campaign.

Tunisia, January 26-27

A two day regional meeting on landmines was hosted in Tunis by l'Observatoire des transferts d'armaments (France) and l'Institut Arabe des droits de l'homme (Tunisia). Human Rights Watch, an ICBL member, used the occasion to call upon North African countries to embrace the AP Mine Ban Treaty. North Africa is a heavily mined region, with all countries affected.

Mary Wareham of Human Rights Watch urged Tunisia and Algeria – the only signatories in the region – to start destruction of their stockpiled antipersonnel landmines, to accelerate their demining programs, and to provide assistance to landmine survivors. She also called on them to comply with the treaty's requirement to report on their progress in implementing the treaty.

The meeting was attended by NGO representatives from human rights, development, women's, environ-

ment, medical, children's and disability organizations, as well as the Red Cross/ Red Crescent Societies from throughout the Maghreb. Media were also present.

Several participants committed themselves to increasing their involvement in the landmines campaign, particularly in Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania, and contact points were

established to maintain communication. The final recommendations from the seminar included a call for all Maghreb states to sign, ratify and implement the treaty, and to work with civil society in doing so.

Georgia, February 7-9

Jody Williams and other ICBL delegates met with high level government officials, including President Eduard Shevardnadze, along with members of the Georgian, Azerbaijan and Armenian campaigns against landmines.

Officials were generally receptive to the ICBL briefing on the mine ban campaign and, while expressing support, outlined their concerns about territorial control.

NGO representatives visited the site of a Russian base with a barely marked and poorly protected mined

Continued next page





*Continued
from page 11*
perimeter. In
later meetings,
the decision was

made among NGOs to coordinate regionally. Overall, the regional campaigns seemed pleased and energized by the visit.

Beirut, February 11-12, 1999

The Regional Conference on the Menace of Landmines in the Arab Countries which took place in Beirut, was a very positive step in this region. It was organized by an unusual but productive pairing of the Lebanese Army and the Landmines Resource Centre at the University of Balamand.

There were approximately 200 participants from Lebanon and the region, including regional NGOs; representatives of the armies of Egypt, Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, and Palestine; and representatives from the Norwegian, Canadian and British embassies. New faces included delegates from the Libyan and Kuwaiti Red Cross/ Red Crescent Societies.

Much of the discussion focused on the actual impact of the weapon in these countries and local mine action, with little digression into regional politics. The final statement of the conference included recommendations for a more active role on the issue by the Arab League of Nations and calls for more financial assistance.

Cairo, February 13-16

The ICBL's mid-February visit to Egypt resulted in a frank and productive dialogue with government officials and a rare opportunity to engage with the Egyptian Army.

The schedule included a meeting with the Minister of Social Affairs and the Deputy Director of Disarmament at the Department of Foreign Affairs along with other government officials, Mrs. Mubarak, NGOs and media. The Canadian embassy also hosted a reception with members of the diplomatic community. When we arrived we were informed that the Ministry of Defense had invited us to El Alamein, a rare, if not unique invitation to see demining operations there.

The meetings went well, and there was open and frank dialogue with all. There was also very good press coverage, including press briefings, media accompaniment on our tour of El Alamein, and several television interviews.

Many people cited the main impediment to Egypt's embracing the treaty as their position that the allies should demine the western desert, heavily mined in World War II. There was little sign of awareness on the part of journalists and NGOs of Egypt's role in the humanitarian landmines crisis since then, as many seemed genuinely shocked at learning of Egypt's production, export and use.

Representatives from the Ministry of Defense said that Egypt no longer exported and when asked, promised a statement to that effect in writing. No such claim was made with respect to production.

Local NGO representatives reported feeling positive about the Egyptian campaign, and felt that the talks, the public debate and subsequent media coverage the trip engendered had been a "turning point" for them.

— *Liz Bernstein, ICBL*

MINE BAN ENTRY-INTO-FORCE:

Global celebrations

On March 1st, 1999 the Ottawa Convention banning AP mines became international law, effectively establishing a new international norm against landmines.

This date marked the treaty's entry-into-force only 15 months after being opened for signature – a pace virtually unmatched in the history of international treaties.

Around the world, entry-into-force was celebrated by a wide range of official and grassroots initiatives. The ICBL led an enormously successful campaign which saw both the joy and grief of the occasion marked by global bell ringing. Many also observed the day with prayer, and in Washington, landmine survivors removed their prostheses in front of the White House. The message: Why not US?

Mines Action Canada rings in the treaty

Mines Action Canada (MAC) worked with about 40 organizations across Canada to organize bell-ringing to welcome the entry-into-force of the Landmine Treaty. The result was a cacophonous greeting for the treaty on March 1st across Canada: Ship's horns sounded in Atlantic harbours; elsewhere, town-criers, air raid sirens, taxi horns and church bells chimed in, with prayers also broadcast from mosques in the west.

In Ottawa, local stations were set up with gongs for people to sound their own approval of the

ban. Local organizations distributed a MAC pamphlet on the work ahead to achieve an effective ban; in addition, some groups held public information sessions. For more information on Mines Action Canada, contact us at: 1210 - 1 Nicholas St., Ottawa ON K1N 7B7, Canada, tel: 613 241-3777 fax: 613 244-3410

— *Mary Foster, MAC*



Robin Collins, MAC

Joseph Ramlochand enjoyed making noise on Parliament Hill to welcome the entry-into-force of the Mine Ban Treaty.

Countdown begins on Treaty commitments

With entry-into-force, the clock begins ticking on several important treaty deadlines: four years to destroy stockpiles, ten years to remove anti-personnel mines from the ground. The Ottawa Convention also provides a framework for international cooperation encouraging States Parties to provide technical and financial assistance to mine-affected countries.

The Convention's fortieth ratification (Burkina Faso) on September 16, 1998, triggered the countdown – the treaty would enter into force on the first day of the sixth month after the fortieth ratification was deposited. The 45 countries that ratified before the end of September 1998 thus became States Parties on March 1st. For each signatory state, the Convention enters into force on the first day of the sixth month after its ratification date.

ENTRY-INTO-FORCE

Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy unveil a plaque commemorating the entry-into-force of the AP Mine Ban Convention. Close to 200 diplomats, parliamentarians and NGO representatives gathered at the Lester B. Pearson headquarters of the Department of Foreign Affairs for the occasion.

Youth Ambassador Kate Colwell waiting for the bells to ring at Holy Rosary Church in Saint John, NB.



J.M. Charisse, PMO



Youth Ambassadors focus on mobilization

Since September 1998, the Youth Mine Action Ambassador (YMAA) Program has worked nationwide to educate youth and to harness their interest and activism in ridding the world of landmines. Based in Ottawa, Montréal, Winnipeg, Vancouver and St. John, the five Youth Ambassadors have visited schools and community groups. Key issues and the complex effects of landmines have been introduced through interactive presentations, speaking events, simulation games and role plays, and volunteer training.

Since our last report, the YMAA Program has focused on mobilizing youth to actively participate in the global campaign against landmines. The Ambassadors have concentrated on two key activities: Dance Without Fear, a nationwide awareness and fundraising event; and Regional Youth Conferences planned for May.

To date, Dance Without Fear events have taken place in Ottawa, Montreal, and Vancouver, with upcoming dances planned in Winnipeg and Saint John. In Ottawa on March 5, students from 21 area schools held a gala ball at the Museum of Civilization with the assistance of Youth Ambassador

Sophie Nichol Sauvé. All funds raised through Dance Without Fear ticket sales go to the Canadian Landmine Action Fund to support demining and victim assistance.

Youth Ambassadors were also active in organizing local celebrations of the March 1st entry-into-force, with several of the Ambassadors supporting a Landmine Awareness Week. Landmine facts were broadcast during school announcements, displays were set up, video and simulation games were presented over lunch hours.

In Montreal, Youth Ambassador Melanie Gagnon participated in a press conference at City Hall, at

which the Mayor reaffirmed the city's support for the mine ban.

As the first year of the YMAA Program draws to a close, the year's work will culminate with five Regional Youth Conferences in May, entitled, Youth Working For A World Free of Landmines. The goals of the conference are to connect young people from all regions to build a national anti-landmines network.

For more information about the YMAA Program and the upcoming Regional Youth Conferences, contact the Secretariat Office at 613-241-4141 or by email at ymaap@sympatico.ca.
— Gail Zboch, YMAAP Secretariat

Right: Poster for anti-landmines benefit dances organized by Youth Ambassadors



Youth Ambassador Melanie Gagnon and Montreal Mayor Pierre Bourque.

