

campaign

Mine action in Sudan

On 26th May 2004, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement resolved the outstanding issues in the long running peace negotiations that have taken place in the town of Naivasha, Kenya. This paves the way for the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement, expected towards the end of the year, bringing an end to Africa's longest running conflict. Mine clearance, risk education and survey work, which have already begun on both sides of the conflict, are likely to significantly increase following a peace agreement – offering hope to the millions whose lives are under threat.

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Photo: Simon Conway/Landmine Action

Internally Displaced Children taking shelter in a church in Yei, area which is riddled with landmines and explosive remnants of war, Southern Sudan.

Mine Action after Diana

Progress in the Struggle Against Landmines



The Rt Hon Hilary Benn (right), Secretary of State for International Development and Malek Reuben Riak, Programme Coordinator (Sudan Landmine Information and Response) at the launch of Mine Action After Diana. Photo: Dylan Mathews/Landmine Action.

Mine Action After Diana – Progress in the Struggle Against Landmines was launched on Tuesday 29 June 2004 at The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund in London.

Mine Action After Diana is written by Stuart Maslen for Landmine Action and The Diana Fund and was published by Pluto Press. The book narrates the history of humanitarian mine action and identifies the key challenges that are faced by the international community as it prepares to review the progress made in five years after the signing of the Ottawa Treaty on anti-personnel landmines. The first Review Conference of this treaty will be held in Nairobi in November 2004. The book examines what has been done well, not so well and what more needs to be done to fulfill the Ottawa Treaty.

Stuart Maslen presented the key findings and Richard Lloyd, Director of Landmine Action, spoke about the significant challenge it lays down to both governments and NGOs. Richard Lloyd

said that in order to meet the obligations of the Ottawa Convention for member states to clear all mined areas within 10 years, Landmine Action believes that a larger percentage of available funds must be directed towards

practical clearance activities. To improve cost efficiency in mine action, he suggested that

- Funding should be sustainable and must be structured to cover realistic multi-year periods to achieve the best return on training and initial capital investment.
- Mine clearance agencies should be funded bilaterally by the donors, as funding via the UN has consistently proven to be costly and slow to the detriment of mine affected communities.
- Expatriate staffing should be limited in number and proportionate to the size, complexity and maturity of the national programme. Many UN mine action personnel undergo little or no training and have little or no humanitarian experience.

The Rt Hon Hilary Benn, MP, Secretary of State for International Development responded to the above issues on behalf of the UK Government. Malek Reuben Riak, Programme Coordinator (Sudan Landmine Information and Response) spoke about the humanitarian mine action linked to peace building and community development in Sudan. Mine Action After Diana – Progress in the Struggle Against Landmines is available from the Pluto Press.

● **For UK and International orders, please phone 01264 342832 or fax 01264 342788, or e-mail pluto@thomsonpublishingservices.co.uk**



Cover page of "Mine Action After Diana"

The NGO Perspective

With just five years left to clear the mines on their soil, many states face a huge task ahead and it is therefore imperative that available funds are focused on clearance efforts.

On 28 August 2003, five leading mine action operators (Danish Church Aid, Danish Demining Group, Handicap International France, Norwegian Peoples Aid and The HALO Trust) convened in Lyon as "The NGO Perspective on the Debris of War" to examine the overall issue of the UN/NGO relationship and produce specific recommendations for improved implementation of mine action. On that occasion the "NGO Perspective" issued the following statement:

"Victims and communities affected by the debris of war deserve better support than they are currently getting from the mine action community. The mine problem is finite, straightforward and relatively simple to solve. However, mine action processes are becoming over-complicated and, as a consequence, unjustifiably expensive.

We, five experienced NGO mine action operators, are concerned that under the current circumstances the obligations of the Ottawa Treaty cannot be met".

Richard Lloyd, the Director of Landmine Action, has endorsed this statement and adds that "Landmine Action welcomes recent dialogue between the UN and mine clearance agencies on tackling these problems and we hope this will lead to changes on the ground."

Landmine Action also welcomes the British government's recent announcement to change its funding policy for mine action and fund mine agencies directly rather than channelling the money through the UN. At the time of the announcement Richard Lloyd said that "the additional time and money spent working through the UN can now be better spent ensuring that mines and other explosive remnants of war such as cluster bombs can be cleared as quickly as possible so that mine affected communities can live their lives in greater safety."

Landmine Action and the NGO Perspective firmly believe that good coordination of mine action is a necessity and is best achieved when simple manageable solutions are found in cooperation between local government structures, mine action agencies, affected communities and other development actors.

Bush Administration mine ban policy

In 1998, President Clinton committed the US to cease using anti-personnel mines and join the Ottawa Treaty by 2006, provided that alternatives had been identified and fielded.

In June 2001 the Bush administration announced that it would conduct a review of landmine policy and Human Rights Watch reports that in November 2001 the Department of Defense recommended that the US abandon the objective of joining the treaty. Finally, on 27 February 2004, the Bush Administration released the results of its mine ban policy. Under the new policy, the use of self-destructing mines will be permitted without geographical restrictions and long-lived mines may be used until 2010.

As the previous promise to join the Ottawa Treaty by 2006 has been broken, campaign members issued press releases denouncing the administration's decision and generated considerable media coverage around the world. Mine action NGOs sent letters to and met with US diplomatic officials in their countries.

Added to the above efforts to get US to join the treaty, the mine action groups are also encouraging countries in the Europe (Poland, Finland and Latvia) and the Gulf States (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) that remain outside the treaty to accede as soon as possible.

Soaring scrap metal prices and raising mine deaths – Cambodia

Due to soaring scrap metal prices, more people are being killed by mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) across Cambodia. According to the figures released by the Cambodian Red Cross and Handicap International's Mine Victim Information System, deaths soared 85 percent to 119 in the first six months of 2004 compared to the same period last year. Injuries and amputations also grew over the six months jumping from 22 to 46 percent. Last year 113 landmines related deaths were recorded.

In Cambodia, the market price for scrap metal had risen from 200 Riel (5 US cents) per kilogram to 500-700 Riel, luring more impoverished population to undertake dangerous searches for scrap.



A scrape metal yard in Cambodia.
Photo: Simon Conway/Landmine Action.

"Of great concern to us is that the number of people collecting scrap metal, to sell, is increasing" Chhiv Lim, project manager of Handicap International's Mine Victim Information System shared with AFP, adding that this was the main reason for the increasing casualties.

"Many people in Cambodia regard UXO as a viable income generator, it is shipped to the border towns where it piles up because the Thais do not want to accept it. In Poipet over a six week period in late 2003 HALO Trust cleared 35,136 potentially hazardous items and found 9,434 which still contained explosives. The problem of poor people scavenging for ordnance will not end until they have viable alternate means of income generation. While their fields are still mined they have no choice but to seek other means of feeding their families" – said Richard Boulter, Programme Manager, The HALO Trust.

North-western Battambang province, which saw some of the worst fighting during Cambodia's more than two decades of war that only ended in 1998, was the badly hit area with just over a quarter of all the casualties this year.

Along with Afghanistan and Angola, Cambodia remains one of the world's most heavily mined countries.

In brief

Estonia & Papua New Guinea join the Ottawa Treaty

Estonia and Papua New Guinea became the 142nd and 143rd State Parties to the Ottawa Treaty after their accession on 14 May and 28 June 2004 respectively.

According to ICBL, Estonia accession will send a strong International signal that it is committed to tackling humanitarian problems and recognises the value of collective action and domestically, the move will boost efforts to clear the unexploded ordnance left behind from World War II and the Soviet era.

Estonia's accession turns the spotlight on the three countries in the EU that remain outside the treaty. They are Finland, Latvia and Poland. It is hoped that these and other non-members will join the treaty ahead of the 2004 Nairobi Review Summit of the Ottawa Treaty.

Tanzania destroys stockpile of landmines

Tanzania has destroyed all its landmine stockpile and retained only 1,146 for training and research purposes, which is allowed by the Ottawa Treaty.

According to the Guardian, many diplomats as well as government and military officials witnessed the destruction of the fourth and last batch of 3,177 anti-personnel mines in Tabora on 30 July 2004. Tanzania's Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Abdulkader Shareef said that his country has become landmine free nine months ahead of the schedule. Tanzania, which destroyed its 19,664 anti-personnel mines in three batches before the Friday's operation, is among the 143 countries that have signed and ratified the Ottawa Treaty.

Desert sown with death

By Toby Shelley

Journalist, the *Financial Times* and author of *Endgame for the Western Sahara*.

Western Sahara is a territory the size of France on the Atlantic coast of North Africa. A former Spanish colony, it was partitioned between Morocco and Mauritania in 1975 when Spain staged a summary withdrawal. The people of Western Sahara have never been consulted on its future, and the territory is the last in Africa to remain as an active file for the UN's decolonisation committee.

A large proportion of the Sahrawis, the indigenous inhabitants of the Western Sahara, fled to southern Algeria in 1975 and 1976 and 165,000 remain in refugee camps there. Inside the bulk of the Western Sahara, which is ruled by Morocco, the population is now 400,000.

The region has witnessed several phases of conflict over the last century, with nomadic Sahrawi tribes fighting against both Spanish and French colonists. In the 1970s, a nationalist movement arose demanding Spanish withdrawal. In 1973, the Frente Polisario (Spanish acronym for Front for the Liberation of the Sagui el Hamra and Rio de Oro) began attacks on Spanish forces and when Morocco and Mauritania occupied the Western Sahara, Polisario fought against them too.

It was in these latter two conflicts that land mines were used, firstly by Spain and then by Morocco and, to a lesser extent, by Polisario guerrillas. From the mid-1980s the conflict was centered on a heavily defended sand wall or berm some 2,500 Km in length that encloses some 80 per cent of the territory built by Morocco. The area around the berm was heavily mined. But while the wall is a clear and prominent military installation around which mines would be expected, for the Sahrawis, particularly the remaining nomads, there is the problem of mines laid and long forgotten in areas not contested for many years.

There have been some de-mining efforts but where these campaigns have been incomplete they have created a false sense of security. Most

of the minefields are not known until someone is injured or killed. There are no risk education programmes for the nomadic population on landmine issues. The highly sensitive political issue means public discussion of the subject in the area under Moroccan control is difficult. Victims are often recovered and taken for medical treatment by military personnel, suggesting that the Moroccan army has more information about the whereabouts of mines than is made public.

The entire nomadic population of the Western Sahara now numbers only a few thousand. While the remaining nomads are most at risk from mines because they live out in the desert. However they are not the only potential victims. The Sahrawis are deeply attached to their land and very many families return to the desert for several weeks or months a year. Others take their children on expeditions to pass on survival skills while yet more go for picnics in the desert.

One man lost his father to a landmine explosion 90 Km northeast of El Aaiun. He says that Minurso, the UN monitoring body in the Western Sahara, has recorded 35 types of anti-personnel and 21 types anti-tank mines in the territory.

Some 500km to the east of El Aaiun, inside Algeria, lie the four Sahrawi refugee camps. Here there are more land mine victims who include military and also many civilians. Some of the civilians were injured in the days when Moroccan control over the bulk of the Western Sahara was more tentative and it was possible to travel into the territory. Others were nomads living in the slice of territory outside of Morocco's fortified berm. In a military museum maintained by Polisario there is an exhibition of captured ordnance that includes 15 types of land mines, anti-personnel and anti-tank, manufactured by the US, Belgium, Italy, Israel, France and the UK. There are also the remains of US cluster bombs.

In recent years the territory has



suffered from drought and that has forced nomads to search for pasture, sometimes going into areas that are known to be dangerous. Camp residents say injuries to people and livestock from mines and remaining cluster bomblets are regular.

Mohamed Mouloud Abdel Fattah now works at the telephone office in Smara Camp. He lost a leg in 1978 when he joined a group of civilians who went back into the Western Sahara to help a group of refugees reach the camps. On the way back his landrover hit a mine in the Tifariti area. His companion was killed. In a savage coincidence, he heard that his brother who remained in the Moroccan held zone was injured by a mine in 1980.

Abdel Wadoud Mohamed now runs an accommodation center at Smara Camp. He suffered shrapnel wounds to the body and face, lost one eye and has fragments lodged behind the socket. That resulted from a blast in March 1979 between Oum Dreiga and Guelta Zemmour, when he returned from the camps into the Western Sahara to round up livestock left by refugees. He remembers trying to dive out of his vehicle and then waking up in the field hospital to which his companions took him.

He says: "As a victim and a native of the Western Sahara, I want to ask the world to do something about land mines and not to make them any more."

Both men are sure there will be more Sahrawi land mine victims.

Mine action in Sudan

Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative (SLIRI)

In December 2003, Landmine Action took over the management of the Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative (SLIRI) programme from one of our network partners, Oxfam GB. As reported in previous issues of Campaign, SLIRI is a cross-conflict programme funded by the EC which is gathering data on the extent on the landmine and UXO problem in the former conflict zones throughout Sudan as the basis for a sustainable indigenous response to the needs of mine affected communities. By encouraging local people to report mine/UXO incidents or suspected mined areas to local SLIRI offices now, in advance of a peace agreement, a picture of the main problem areas in the country is already beginning to emerge which is assisting with the prioritization of appropriate mine action responses in places like the Nuba Mountains. In line with our

- The war, in which the Government of Sudan has been fighting the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/SPLA), began in 1983 and has led to the deaths of over 2 million people.
- According to UN, Sudan is believed to be one of the ten most heavily mine affected countries in the world.
- UN World Food Programme estimates that the food security for around 2 million people is threatened by landmines and ERW.
- Sudan is home to the world's largest internally displaced population, estimated at over 4 million people, as well as 1 million refugees.
- Community-based mine incident data gathering, funded by the EC, is beginning to reveal the extent of the problem in former and current conflict zones of the country.
- In the event of a peace agreement, humanitarian mine action, especially clearance is expected to increase significantly.
- In October 2003, the Sudanese government ratified the Ottawa Convention. The SPLA has also twice signed the Geneva Call 'Deed of Commitment' pledging not to use land mines under any circumstances.



SLIRI staff in front of the Yei Sector Operation Centre. Photo: Simon Conway/Landmine Action.

emphasis on local capacity building, Landmine Action is aiming for SLIRI to be established as an independent indigenous cross-conflict NGO by the end of the year.

Nuba Mountains

Landmine Action's mine clearance project in the Nuba Mountains, which became fully operational in August 2003, recently entered a new phase. In April of this year, Comic Relief (UK) announced additional funding to support the continuation of our existing programme, whilst the Government of Japan and Jersey Overseas Aid provided grants to extend our work into the mine affected areas of the Nuba Mountains presently controlled by the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM). This will double our demining capacity, enabling us to reach out to many more mine

affected communities. From the beginning of 2004, over 16,000 square metres have been cleared and hundreds of UXOs removed and destroyed. Currently, teams are working in three separate areas of the Nuba Mountains – areas that for years suffered from the shifting front lines in the conflict that engulfed the Nuba Mountains in 1985.

In May, all the staff based in the Nuba Mountains were honoured to have been awarded a medal by Brigadier General Wilhelmsen, head of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) which is responsible for overseeing the ceasefire in the Nuba Mountains, in recognition of the contribution made by Landmine Action mine clearance teams to the JMC's mission.

- To learn more about SLIRI, please visit our website at www.landmineaction.org



A deminer at work in Nuba Mountains. Photo: Simon Conway/Landmine Action.

Country Profile: Kenya

Background

Kenya is hosting the First Review Conference of the Ottawa Treaty in Nairobi from 29 November to 3 December 2004. In the past, Kenya has served as a co-chair of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies. In 2003 Kenya announced plans for destruction of its antipersonnel mine stockpile. As a response to the demands from the local population, the military of Kenya has begun some risk education in the areas contaminated with unexploded ordnance.

Commitment to ending the use of mines

Kenya signed the Ottawa Treaty in December 1997 and ratified it in January 2001. Kenya attended the Fourth Meeting of States Parties in September 2002 and the intersessional Standing Committee meetings in 2003. In November 2002, Kenya voted in support of UN General Assembly Resolution 57/74 which aims at promoting universalization and implementation of Ottawa Treaty.

Production, transfer, stockpiling and destruction

Kenya has never produced or exported landmines. The government reported a stockpile of 38,774 antipersonnel mines of which 3,000 will be retained for training. At the Fourth Meeting of States Parties, Kenya stated that a "large number of developing countries including Kenya are experiencing difficulties in fulfilling their obligations particularly in the technical and financial areas" and urged that those who are able to help to provide such assistance to increase their support. As a response to this request, in September 2002, the British Deputy High Commissioner said that the United Kingdom is willing to assist the Kenya in safely destroying the

stockpile of landmines. This process started in 2003 and hoped to be completed by 2005.

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) and clearance

Although Kenya does not have a landmine problem, the country is contaminated by UXO. Especially in the north of the country where annual military drills by Kenyan military were carried out and in the areas where the 1950s Mau Mau rebellion took place. Added to this, the British military has carried out live-fire training in Kenya for several months each year since 1945. These annual military exercises are carried out around the areas of Samburu district and expose 600,000 people and their livestock to potential danger. A case lodged against the UK Ministry of Defence for damages was settled out of court in July 2002 when Britain agreed to pay US\$7 million to more than 200 Kenyans who were killed or injured by mines and explosives left behind during military training.

The British Army in co-operation with Kenyan authorities, started clearance operations during April 2001. During operations, clearance teams found on average four to five pieces of ammunition per square kilometer.

Landmine/UXO casualties

Since 1945 more than 500 people may have been killed by UXO. In 2002 thirteen people were reported injured and during June 2003 a police reservist was killed and eight people were seriously injured when their vehicle hit a landmine.



Mine/UXO risk education

The Kenyan military has begun to carry out mine and UXO risk education in Samburu district following demands from the local people. The military visits schools and *manyattas* in the district and raising awareness through giving lectures and staging demonstrations.

Survivor assistance

The public health services in Kenya are believed to be adequate, ranging from rural health centers to national referral hospitals. Added to this public services, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) hospital at Lopiding, on the Kenya-Sudan border, continues to provide physical rehabilitation to mine survivors. The Nairobi based Jaipur Foot Project manufactures orthopedic appliances for people with disabilities.

● Source: Landmine Monitor 2003

Power ability not disability

POWER International was founded in early 1994 and is based in High Wycombe. It began its activities as a result of the growing awareness of the need for services to landmine survivors. POWER's founders were closely linked with the Cambodia Trust – hence one of its first programmes, in 1995, being in neighbouring Laos, the other being in Mozambique where we started by taking over 4 orthopaedic clinics from ICRC.



Khanngoun has a prosthetic leg and cosmetic arm from POWER's clinic in Vientiane, Laos. Photo: Giovanni Diffidenti.



Girl asleep: her operation in Laos to correct congenital malformations was paid by POWER's project, and she will subsequently have orthotic treatment to ensure full mobility. Photo: S. Hodge/Power

POWER's focus has tended to be to provide support to government services. In Laos this has meant forming an official joint venture with the Lao Ministry of Public Health, plus 4 other INGOs, and calling this venture COPE (Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise). COPE is funded by all joint venture partners and is now active countrywide through 5 centers in the country treating over 1,200 patients per year, with a target of 1,850 this year and 2,400 in 2005. The current budget is approx. \$2.6m over the 3 years 2003-06 – including upgrading the country's physiotherapy and occupational therapy services thus providing the full range of rehabilitation therapies needed.

Our links with Cambodia Trust remain strong – our Lao technicians are sent on 3-year courses to the Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics to become ISPO (International Society of Prosthetics and Orthotics) Category II qualified professionals. Category I training (i.e. degree level and capable of training others and working unsupervised anywhere in the world) will also be provided shortly, hopefully, in Cambodia, and thus Laos will finally have a fully trained indigenous service.

The technology employed in the centers supported by us in Laos, is the ICRC-favoured polypropylene-based technology. We have found it to be entirely appropriate to local conditions, and cost-effective. So far, the service is provided free, including accommodation, food and transport for patient and a relative/carer.

What about society's attitude to disabled people? This also needs

addressing – in Laos matters such as human rights, rights of disabled people, lag far behind. With funding from The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund and DfID, POWER is developing capacity in the Lao Disabled People's Association.

As our Lao programme and our capacity building programme in Mozambique mature, our next port of call is likely to be Angola, undertaking work similar to Zambia.

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POWER sponsored Sergio Nhandumbo from Mozambique qualified as a Prosthetist/Orthotist and returned to work for the Ministry of Health. Photo: S. Hodge/Power

Landmine Action Week 1-7 November 2004

Anti-Personnel Mines and First Review Conference

Anti-Personnel Mines and Ottawa Treaty

The Ottawa treaty was adopted in 1997 in Ottawa, Canada and entered into force in March 1999. It prohibits the use of anti-personnel mines as well as the production, transfer and trade of this weapon around the world. This treaty defines an anti-personnel mine as “a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person and that will incapacitate, injure or kill one or more persons.” These indiscriminate weapons cannot tell the difference between a soldier and a civilian. States Parties to the treaty are obliged to,

- Destroy stockpiled mines within four years
- Clear mined areas within ten years
- Assist landmine victims

First Review Conference

The First Review Conference of the Ottawa Treaty, which is also known as the “Nairobi

Summit on a Mine-Free World” will take place from 29 November to 3 December 2004 in Nairobi, Kenya. In this conference, the heads of states and governments will adopt a concrete action plan for 2004 to 2009. In this period, the states parties have to complete their mine clearance obligation and the mine-affected states have to increase their efforts of assistance for victims. The biggest challenge for the summit is to secure the necessary political and financial commitment of all states parties for the global fight against antipersonnel mines. These secured funds will be used for mine clearance, mine risk education campaigns and for victim assistance projects. Hence,

Landmine Action is calling on the UK Government to:

- To confirm its commitment to the Ottawa Treaty by increasing the level of funding for humanitarian mine action.
- Re-focus mine action resources away from expensive bureaucracy and

research and development towards mine clearance in order to directly benefit mine affected communities.

Landmine Action Week

This year the Landmine Action Week is going to concentrate on the Ottawa Treaty and First Review Conference. This is a great opportunity for you to get directly involved with the issue and with Landmine Action. You can organise an event in your area, raise money, lobby your MP or simply inform people of this issue.

- **If you are looking for more ideas and inspiration, Landmine Action can provide you with an action pack crammed full of ideas on activities for fundraising and awareness. Contact the office on 020 7820 0222 or email info@landmineaction.org. Landmine Action can also provide you with materials such as leaflets and postcards and can lend videos.**

landmine action

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