



NEW ZEALAND
CAMPAIGN AGAINST LANDMINES

CALM newsletter

Part of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)
Winner of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize

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On the right side of history

When New Zealand signed the Mine Ban Treaty on 3 December 1997 we joined like-minded governments in what was to become a global effort to rid the world of anti-personnel landmines and increase human security through multilateral action. In signing the Treaty and pursuing its full implementation, we knew we would be on the right side of history.

Today, the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) remains one of the best examples of what can be achieved if governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work cooperatively in the interests of humanity. Implementation of the MBT continues to deliver results on the ground, in the places it is most needed.

This work has been supported by the tireless efforts of volunteers around the world, including our own John Head QSM, the former Convenor of CALM. For many years John has lobbied governments and helped spread the message about the indiscriminate nature of mines and the need for a global ban. The news that Papua New Guinea has now acceded to the MBT is a testament to John's work. John has now retired and CALM extends its sincere thanks to John for the years of voluntary service he has so willingly offered to this important humanitarian cause.

By working collaboratively with governments, people like John have helped bring about the positive trends evident under the Mine Ban Treaty.

This edition of the CALM newsletter illustrates some of the efforts Kiwis are making around the world to assist these positive trends, eliminate the risks associated with mines and maintain the momentum towards a mine free world. These stories serve as a reminder that the work of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, and domestic campaigns like the NZ CALM must go on.

Please join CALM and help to spread its campaign message through these newsletters. These cost about \$10 per person per year to prepare and despatch so donations to the CALM Treasurer, PO Box 17 195, Wellington would be appreciated.

The CALM website is www.calm.org.nz

As we approach the First Review Conference under the MBT in November, and the international community reflects on the progress to date there is certainly reason to celebrate. But the Review Conference will no doubt demonstrate that we must continue to urge our political leaders to keep working towards universalisation of the MBT and a world in which no children face the prospect of death or a loss of limbs due to mines.

Together, we can make a difference ... so let's keep up the good work.

Two New accessions to the Mine Ban Treaty!!

With a goal of 150 states parties by the First Review Conference in Nairobi in November, the news that two more states had acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty was welcome indeed.

But perhaps the best news was that one of those states is in our region. Papua New Guinea acceded to the MBT on 28 June 2004.

The other state to accede was Estonia, which

joined the MBT community on 12 May, making it the first accession for 2004.

Let's keep working towards that goal of 150 states parties!

In our region, we still need ratifications from Vanuatu, the Marshall Islands and the Cook Islands. Accessions are required from Tonga, Tuvalu, Palau, and Micronesia.

\$5 weapons of mass destruction

Global Coordinator of the Landmine Monitor, Mary Wareham, visits New Zealand

Working out of Human Rights Watch in Washington DC, Mary Wareham's name is synonymous with the civil society initiative *Landmine Monitor*. Mary coordinates the global network of researchers who scrutinise government policies and actions under the MBT and produce the country reports published in *Landmine Monitor* each year since 1999.

As if coordinating the *Landmine Monitor* isn't enough of a challenge, Mary has recently been traveling to mine-affected countries around the world to film footage for a full-length documentary she's producing. Her film, *Disarm* will premiere at the Mine Ban Treaty's Review Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, in November this year. *Disarm* will look at the scourge of the \$5 weapon of mass destruction, anti-personnel landmines, and efforts to eliminate the weapon.

While in Wellington recently, with sponsorship from Soroptimist International (A Global Voice for Women), Mary spoke about the MBT saying there is now less use of mines, the number of mine producers has reduced from 55 to 15, trade of mines is now limited to the black market, 70 governments have destroyed 52 million mines, and mine casualties have declined from 26,000 to between 15-20,000 each year.

These facts provide a graphic illustration of the potential for positive progress when there is sufficient political will and cooperation by the international community.

Mary says the Mine Ban Treaty is a stunning example of what can be achieved multilaterally and small states like New Zealand, Australia and Cambodia played a central role in helping achieve negotiation of the Treaty text in record time.

With 143 states parties, more than three quarters of the world's governments have signed up to the objectives of this international humanitarian law. However, Mary is quick to point out that efforts to convince the hold out governments (USA, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia for example), to accede to the MBT are becoming more difficult, especially in the Middle East.

Other difficulties include the retention by governments of 230 million mines in stockpiles. Although it says it no longer produces mines, China has stockpiles of 110 million of the weapon.

Mary says the majority of mine producers are state-owned enterprises and mines have often been thrown into larger arms deals as 'sweeteners'. To clamp down on small arms trading requires strong international and domestic law, as well as demanding end-user certificates to monitor where arms eventually end up.

Mary draws attention to another challenge: the uneven application of funding for mine action (clearance). US\$1.7 billion is spent on mine action each year, with much of it going to places such as Afghanistan and Iraq, while countries like Uganda and Angola receive much less.

Mary believes there is a need to protect the advances made in multilateralism so evident in the MBT process. She says that while some governments want to restrict NGO access to such processes, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines has brought considerable additional expertise to the table.

Quoting ICBL Ambassador Jody Williams, Mary says "peace comes from hard work, not hope." Mary's work is an example of the hard work Kiwis are doing around the world to bring about a more peaceful world.

Mary addressed the Soroptimist International's South West Pacific Conference in Wellington, where many of the attendees were surprised and embarrassed to learn that their governments had not yet acceded to the Treaty. Some left determined to lobby their governments to take action. The Conference brought together representatives from nations as diverse as the Solomon Islands, Samoa, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Hong Kong, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Fiji, and Australia.

Mary also spoke to an audience at Victoria University on the topic *\$5 Weapons of Mass Destruction*, an event organised by CALM.



John Head, Mary Wareham and Deborah Morris at the Soroptimist International Conference following Mary's speech.

Kiwis working on Mine Action in Sudan

The history of conflict in Sudan is long and tortuous. The dispute between the Arabized North and the African South goes back Centuries. Since gaining independence from Great Britain in 1956, there has been almost continuous war in Sudan which has resulted in one of the most devastating humanitarian disasters of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Huge areas of land have been ruined through fighting: traditional tribal areas for grazing and pastoral agriculture have been denied and the forced migration / displacement of peoples have created economic havoc. The World Food Programme (WFP) and other associated humanitarian agencies (both UN and NGO) have maintained a presence in south Sudan since the early 1980s in an attempt to reduce the massive shortage of food in the region.

During the internal fighting between the Government forces (from the north) and the rebel movement (in the south) considerable numbers of landmines were laid (by both sides) around the garrison towns and at various tactically important areas (airfields, bridges, canals etc). But, neither sides left the landmines in one place. It was common practice to lift mines from one location and re-lay them in other areas. But, as often happens, records of where mines were lifted from and relaid were not kept. Over such a long period of conflict, the perception is that there are vast areas of landmine contaminated areas in south Sudan. In reality, there are not that many large scale minefields, but there are many areas where access to or use of areas is denied because of the belief there is a mine threat.

This perception of mined areas has had an effect on the delivery of essential food and humanitarian relief supplies into south Sudan. The WFP, as an example, spends in excess of \$US12million per year on air transport to deliver food supplies within south Sudan. The cost of a 44 gallon drum of diesel, in south Sudan, exceeds \$US450. Half of that cost goes to pay the air freight charges. The size of the country is immense, to the extent that all inter provincial travel is done by air. This includes the redeployment of personnel (and vehicles) if necessary.

The Problem:

The problem of landmine contamination in south Sudan is one of identifying where the mine threat is real and then conducting the appropriate clearance action to remove that threat. Since November 2003, the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) has been involved in the conduct of General Survey, limited Technical Survey and "spot" Explosive Operational Device (EOD) demolition tasks in south Sudan. There are two quite distinct FSD projects (funded by different donors) conducting surveys in south Sudan. One project is funded by the WFP and is operating in Eastern Equatoria (primarily east of the White Nile) while the second project (funded by United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)) is operating in the Nuba mountains and in El Buheyrat (west of the White Nile).

Survey Tasks:

The geographical areas in which the FSD survey teams have to operate are vast and inhospitable. Each survey team deploys from their base camps (WFP project is based in Lokichoggio in northern Kenya and the UNMAS project from either Kadugli in the Nuba or Rumbek in the south) in their vehicles, for 23 days at a time. They deploy on survey patrols completely self sufficient in everything except water. The opportunities to purchase food and fuel are extremely limited, so it is better to be prepared for the worst situation.

Communications with the base camps are maintained by HF radio, satellite telephones and satellite computer. Navigation is difficult given the lack of accurate maps and so the teams produce their own maps, using GPS and (for some) the traditional methods of compass and protractor.

Each team consists of an international team leader, national surveyors, drivers and medics. All national staff have been trained by FSD international staff to the standards required by IMAS. As a side issue, of the nine international FSD staff involved in the two projects, five of them are New Zealanders.

In addition to the task of conducting surveys, there are significant numbers of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and old ammunition stockpiles found throughout south Sudan. Many of the UXO and ammunition stockpiles are inside village areas and present a threat to life. So, each team is capable of conducting spot demolitions where there is a direct threat to life.

Other Mine Action agencies in the region:

There are other mine action agencies in the region, conducting clearance tasks. In Eastern Equatoria there is one commercial company conducting mechanical clearance (out to 12 m from the road centre line) in preparation for road reconstruction for emergency relief supplies. There is also a NGO conducting manual clearance in the southern part of Eastern Equatoria.

In the Nuba mountains, there is one NGO conducting Mine Risk Education and limited survey, a second NGO conducting manual clearance and a commercial company conducting limited clearance and survey using manual teams and Mine Detection Dog teams. There are also a number of Sudanese NGOs conducting mine risk education throughout the region.

There is a National Mine Action Office in Khartoum which coordinates the survey and clearance activities of the various NGO and companies and there are two Regional Mine Action Offices, in Rumbek in El Buheyrat and in Kadugli in the Nuba mountains.

Dhafor:

Recent media reports have highlighted the plight of the refugees in the western Sudanese province of Dhafor. The extent of the landmine and UXO contamination in that region is not known as no survey action has been permitted by the Government. It is expected that there will be a threat of contaminated areas and the FSD is able to redeploy survey teams to the region if necessary. The media reports of the scale of the human suffering have not been exaggerated.

The future holds much promise for reducing the mine and UXO threat in Sudan - providing the Government and the rebels can agree to solve their differences and to sign a peace treaty - which has been under negotiation for some years now. But until that treaty is signed, there can be no cross border survey or clearance action. So, the problem of identifying the dangerous areas cannot be completed until the peace treaty is finalised.

There is a requirement for more survey assets, with Mine Detection Dogs and mechanical ground preparation machines in support of the survey teams. Essential clearance assets to assist with road and airfield reconstruction are also required.

By Anthony Connell
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CMC update

The Cluster Munitions Coalition is now operating out of the office of Mine Action Canada and is being coordinated by New Zealander Thomas Nash. Thomas has previously worked in the New Zealand mission to the UN, in Geneva.

The CMC continues to promote international responsibility for clearing up explosive remnants of war. An active group of NGOs is in regular contact on email groups and new documents are developed and posted on the Internet for use and information.

As governments gear up to start signing the new Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, under the UN Convention on Conventional Weapons, New Zealand is presented with another opportunity to stand on the right side of history. We hope it will be among the first twenty states to sign, and thereby assist in bringing the Protocol into effect.

For more information on the Cluster Munitions Coalition and ERW, visit www.minesactioncanada.org.

A government on the right side of history

The Disarmament Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade advises the Government on disarmament and arms control issues, including the anti-personnel mine ban. It also represents New Zealand at international meetings together with the Ministry's overseas posts and ensures that New Zealand's international legal obligations are fully implemented at the national level.

The division had the primary responsibility for preparing the Anti-Personnel Mines Prohibition Act 1998, for example, implementing the Ottawa Convention in New Zealand. The division coordinates and supports the work of the Ministry's officers overseas who are involved in negotiating and representing New Zealand's positions in the disarmament and arms control organisations based mainly in Geneva, Vienna, New York and The Hague. A steady stream of meetings takes place in the United Nations centres, in treaty-specific frameworks and within the export control regimes. The Ministry's posts in Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, the Pacific and southern Africa also engage in bilateral discussions with their host governments on key issues, including Ottawa Convention universalisation from time to time.

New Zealand continues to be a steadfast supporter of the Ottawa Convention. The Government attaches importance to its cooperation with NGOs working within the Convention's framework. Disarmament Division maintains close contact with CALM and values the regular exchange of information and ideas. Over the next one and half years the Government's Ottawa Convention agenda will be full, given New Zealand's role firstly as co-rapporteur with South Africa of the Convention's Standing Committee on General Status and Operation for 2004, and then co-chair with South Africa of the Committee in 2005 and the Review Conference in Nairobi towards the end of this year.

By Paul Roberts, Disarmament Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Recent CALM activities:

- Committee meetings were held on 7 April and 2 June
- A fundraising sub-committee has been established
- Monitoring of developments in the South Pacific has continued and Landmine Monitor research on 16 Pacific states is being finalised
- A speaking event and media interviews were arranged for Mary Wareham
- Meetings were held with the Canadian, Fijian and Singapore High Commission
- A letter was sent to the Vietnam Embassy in Canberra urging accession
- Liaison with the ICBL regarding the proposed trip to the South Pacific by ICBL Ambassador Tun Chunnareth has continued
- Communication was undertaken with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the delegation travelling to Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Solomon Islands
- Correspondence was sent to the Government regarding the Cluster Munitions Coalition and Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War
- Information and resources were provided to school groups and individuals working on landmine-related projects.

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