

MASG

Mine Action Support Group Newsletter

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations

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1. Unofficial Minutes: MASG-Meeting 15 December 2004

1. After the introduction by the Chair, Martin Barber (UNMAS) gave his appreciation of the Nairobi Summit. There was a strong focus on Africa: Nigeria on behalf of the AU made a very persuasive statement encouraging the 4 remaining African countries who did not yet ratify the Ottawa Convention, to do so. The documents that have come out of Nairobi are good and forward-looking. According to Martin Barber the following challenges remain to be addressed in the coming years:
 - To bring major non-state parties on board;
 - To obtain and monitor commitments from armed non-state actors to ban the use of mines;
 - To clear priority high and medium-impact areas rapidly and thereby significantly reduce the incidence of new mine victims;
 - To speed up clearance to enable states parties to meet the Treaty deadlines;
 - To focus much more on the comprehensive needs of landmine survivors, an area in which the movement has so far been least effective, with a few exceptions.
 - To mainstream mine action into broader development efforts.
 - To expand the mine action agenda, to include mines other than anti-personnel mines and ERW, to better reflect the realities of post-conflict settings.
2. The Chair then gave a review of the year 2004 and a preview for 2005: When taking up the chairmanship of the MASG, Switzerland had proposed to structure the monthly meetings around 4 subjects (Development, Peace Processes, Evaluations and Funding needs) and the MASG had accepted this suggestion. The main concern of the Chair is to provide the group with useful meetings. Some informal consultations conducted in the weeks before the December meeting have shown that some MASG-members did appreciate the thematic debates while others had indicated that they would like to go back to more operational, country-specific briefings from the field. In trying to bring these different views together, the Chair made the following proposal for next year:
 - Combination of country-specific briefings with thematic discussions: A given MASG meeting would have a strong country-focus and a related thematic area. Example: Country profile on Sri Lanka or Sudan linked with a thematic presentation on non-state actors. Other thematic areas include ERW, Good humanitarian donorship, Public-private partnerships as well as Peace Processes and Development (as in 2004). The Chair also mentioned the possibility to establish a contact with the DAC (Development Assistance Committee) of the OECD in Paris in order to sensitize the development specialists for the importance of mine action.
 - Shorter monthly meetings
 - Possibility of upgrading the RMASG to a special event with more visibility that attracts key policy thinkers from capitals. The newly created Forum of Mine-Affected Countries (FOMAC) could be associated to parts of the RMASG.
 - Venue of the April meeting: Geneva (on the margins of the UN Programme Directors meeting).
 - UNMAS workshop for newcomers to brief them on mine action. This event would be independent from the regular MASG-meetings and could also be opened to delegates from non-MASG countries.

3. Several members reacted positively to the Chairman's proposal: The delegate from the Netherlands welcomed the Chair's proposal as a good way forward. He stressed that the countries outside the MASG have to be involved more in our discussions in order to facilitate the GA negotiations on mine action. Two possible tracks are: a) open the briefings for newcomers to non-member countries and b) invite the concerned countries to the monthly MASG-meetings. Belgium called the Chair's proposal a good compromise between countries and themes. Belgium also raised the question whether the timing of the RMASG should be reconsidered, since everybody is very busy during the GA. The UK also agreed with the proposal of the Chair and stressed that for them the UN-presentations should not only focus on operations, but should also provide information on where the gaps and problems are in the field. Considering the RMASG, a key policy issue should be on the agenda in order to secure the presence of policy-makers from capitals. New Zealand also stressed that the UN's country-presentations should highlight the challenges, priorities and gaps in a given country. The UK also drew the attention to the fact that with next year's 60th session of the GA, there would be a lot of other events happening at the UN. The European Commission endorsed the proposal of the Chair, as well as the comments made before on involving the mine-affected countries more as well as to present the gaps and overlaps. Portugal and Japan also welcomed the Chair's proposal. Japan suggested including the following theme in next year's agenda: research and development of new technology. China also supported the new approach by the Chair and agreed that outreach efforts to non-members would be good to strengthen the mutual understanding in view of the GA negotiations.

The Chair concluded that there was consensus on the proposal and that a Calendar would be presented to members before the end of the year. He also suggested that in view of the support for the idea to associate FOMAC, he would invite the chair of FOMAC (Angola) systematically to the MASG-meetings, as an observer. This proposal as well as the idea to invite the concerned mine-affected countries to the meetings did not encounter any opposition. The Chair also asked members to seek guidance from capitals on the format, timing and content of the next RMASG meeting. The Chair would like to raise this issue again at the January MASG-meeting.

Martin Barber (UNMAS) would like to see the policy-makers from capitals coming to New York once a year. To achieve this, the program of the RMASG has to be attractive and the RMASG might be linked to another event. Martin Barber also agreed that the UN country-presentations should contain the gaps that occur in the field. He suggested that there should be a standing item on the MASG-agenda to address urgent needs and shortfalls when they arise.

Sayed Aga stated that UNDP encourages a mutually inclusive relationship between MASG and FOMAC. The idea to seek a link with the DAC was also commended. The specialists represented at the DAC had to be sensitized for the fact that development funding going to mine action doesn't count in terms of ODA, if it isn't coded accordingly.

4. On the Fieldtrip, the Chair pointed out that his general intention was to organize another fieldtrip next year, but only if there was enough interest from donors. The Chair invited members to comment on the purpose of a fieldtrip, should it mainly serve for the evaluation of programs in a given country or is it to learn about a new context where there are funding needs (e.g. Sudan) or is it merely an introduction to mine action for newcomers? Canada thinks that MASG-fieldtrips are useful and that next year's fieldtrip might focus on mainstreaming. Development specialists should thus be engaged and new potential donors could be invited along (other States as well as public-private partnerships). The purpose should not be evaluation. Germany supported the idea of linking public-private partnerships to the fieldtrip. The Chair concluded that there was no opposition to the fieldtrip and took note of the comments made by Canada and Germany. The Chair invited members to give more feedback at the January MASG-session so that he could then make a concrete proposal for a fieldtrip taking place in May.

On the Newsletter the Chair gave an initial evaluation based on the first questionnaires that were filled out by members. The Newsletter is considered to be very useful and practical especially because it contains information that isn't covered at MASG-meetings. Some think that it is a bit long and that it lacks prioritization (in terms of funding needs). New Zealand considers the Newsletter an important tool for information sharing. Updates don't have to appear necessarily every month, but the Newsletter as an avenue should be maintained. Portugal thinks that the format is useful and that it should not be summarized too much. UNMAS suggested that its own technology Newsletter might be attached to MASG Newsletter. The conclusion of the Chair was that only items that have truly newsworthy information would be included in the monthly newsletter, rather than giving a country update every month.

5. Under AOB Sayed Aqa (UNDP) mentioned that the recommendations from the mainstreaming study commissioned by UNDP were available. Martin Barber (UNMAS) suggested that the Chair might extend a new invitation to the United Arab Emirates, to join the MASG, since they are major UN mine action donors. There was no opposition by members to this suggestion.
6. Presentation by Lukas Einsele (see attached summary in this Newsletter). The German artist is planning an exhibition at UN headquarters in New York in November 2005. UNMAS suggests organizing side events, panel discussions around it. This could happen in a MASG-FOMAC cooperation. Germany supported the idea of side events. The presentation reminded Belgium of the challenge brought up by Martin Barber at the beginning of the meeting: focus on mine victims and survivors. Belgium suggested that this could be a good theme for the MASG in 2005.

The meeting was closed at 12:15 p.m.

2. ONE STEP BEYOND – The Mine Revisited (OSB)

ONE STEP BEYOND (OSB) is an artistic investigation by Lukas Einsele that reports on land mines and their victims by bringing them into a visible and traceable relationship.

For OSB, Lukas Einsele travelled to the world's four most heavily mined countries: Angola, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Cambodia.

OSB is based on memory and stories: People injured by mines recount the events leading up to the accident, and some make rough sketches of the incident's location. Einsele makes a black-and-white photo portrait of each participant with a field camera, and also gives him or her a Polaroid photo. Finally, in a public forum, the victims' stories, drawings, and portraits are set against documentation about the specific type of land mine that may have been responsible for their accidents.

OSB explores the interrelationships between land mines and their victims against the backdrop of global politics. Through the specific cohesion between the various materials (photos, graphics, interviews, documentary material) and the project's various presentations (the website www.one-step-beyond.de, lectures, publications, and installations), Einsele strives to articulate a new aesthetic and political space in which a wide range of information and visual material can be disseminated to the public in a unique way.

Upcoming and planned events for 2005 and later are:

January 27 – March 27: Presentation at the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, Netherlands

February 20 – May 5: Exhibition at Museum Haus Esters, Krefeld, Germany

23 March – May 15: Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe, Germany

April 28: *One Step Beyond* book publication

June – October: Return visits, with the exhibition, to Angola, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Cambodia.

November: Exhibition at the United Nations Headquarters Visitor's Center, New York, USA

November: Exhibition at the Goethe-Institut New York, USA

[No specific date]: Educational outreach: materials encompassing the four countries: Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Cambodia.

Technical details and requested financial support:

1. Publication of *One Step Beyond* book

Two volumes (each 17 x 23 cm) will be published. The first, 188 pages in full color, includes the material from the project plus contributions from eight authors, who discuss different aspects of the issue, such as demining, surgery, political philosophy, journalism, and personal practice.

The second volume, 96 pages in black-and-white, can be used as a reference/index to the first volume. It contains information on the images, topics, authors, and other material mentioned in volume one.

Both volumes have flexible plastic covers and are joined through a folded binding.

It is possible to *subscribe* to the publications—that is, to pledge to purchase multiple copies, and, in return, to be recognized by being mentioned as a supporter of the project. When subscribing to one hundred or more copies, the price per copy is \$36. When subscribing to more than 500 copies, the price per copy is \$33.

2. Return visits

Return visits are planned to Angola, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Cambodia, with the exhibition. Total cost is approximately \$45,000, of which \$15,000 is already covered.

3. Exhibitions in New York

Two exhibitions are planned, one at the UN Headquarters and one at the Goethe-Institut New York. The cost will be approximately \$65,000 to \$75,000, depending on the size of the presentation and the various materials that will be used (images, text, video, sound). \$32,000 will be contributed by the Goethe-Institut New York. The costs for the opening (\$13,000 to 17,000) must also be considered (including \$2,000 for security).

4. Educational outreach

A brochure of 24 pages will be published in an edition of 8,000 copies, if funding is assured. Total cost \$21,000.

5. Website

The website for OSB, www.one-step-beyond.de, has been in operation since October 2004. The text is in English and German, and another language could easily be added. Therefore, the texts must be translated and edited in collaboration with the webmaster, David Promies. For the hosting and traffic of the website, an estimated \$5,000 per year is needed.

Since 2001, OSB has managed to secure more than \$250,000. The total sum requested, to cover both the outlined gaps in funding and the new projects, is \$144,800, not including possible subscriptions to the publication. The Goethe-Institut New York has already offered to contribute \$32,000 to the project, including a contribution for the return visits. Another \$15,000 for the return visits has been secured from other sources. This leaves approximately \$98,000 to be matched.

OSB is supported by:

Bundeskulturstiftung
Goethe-Institut New York
Hessische Kulturstiftung
Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen
medico international
Mondriaan Foundation
Kunststiftung NRW
Akademie Schloß Solitude

OSB is sponsored by:

Grieger GmbH Düsseldorf Professionelle Bildtechnik
Just Big-Großdruck Berlin
OCE Germany
Linhof Präzisions- und Systemtechnik GmbH

Rebecca was eight years old when she stepped on a land mine nearby Luena. She lost her foot and still more than 4 years after the accident (November 2001) her wound hasn't healed properly.



The drawing she made during the interview.



3. Agenda MASG Meeting 19 January 2005

1. Welcome address by the Chair
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Country Briefing: Afghanistan (UNMAS)
4. Discussion
5. Thematic Presentations: Public-Private Partnerships
 - Stacy Bernard Davis, US Department of State
 - Heidi Kühn, Founder, Roots of Peace
 - Nahela Hadi, Executive Director, Adopt-a-Minefield
6. Discussion
7. AOB

4. Updates

4.1. Update from UNMAS

1 THROUGH 30 NOVEMBER 2004

POLICY, TREATY IMPLEMENTATION, INFORMATION AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

GENERAL POLICY

The Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action met at the principals' level on 16 November 2004, under the chairmanship of Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno. The group endorsed the revised Framework for Mine Action Planning and Rapid Response (referred to as the Rapid Response Plan (RRP)). An operational manual containing deployment guidelines, standard working procedures and logistics guidelines for a mine action coordination team is now being drafted. The principals also endorsed the draft Gender Guidelines for UN Mine Action Programmes, and discussed a close-to-final draft of the revised document entitled "Mine Action and Effective Coordination: the UN Policy" which will be considered by principals for final endorsement in January.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND PORTFOLIO

The 2005 E-Portfolio went on-line on 19 November 2004, featuring more than 300 project proposals and analyses of the landmine and explosive remnants of war situations for 30 countries and three territories. See www.mineaction.org, and click on "Portfolio of Mine Action Projects" from the home page for further details.

UNMAS HQ conducted resource mobilization meetings with local embassies in Khartoum and the League of Arab States in Cairo, Egypt.

TREATY IMPLEMENTATION

Nairobi Summit

The First Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty (or *Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World*) was held from 28 November to 3 December at the UN Offices in Gigiri, Nairobi. Under the presidency of Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch of Austria, the event was attended by over 1,200 participants from 109 of the 143 States Parties, one ratifier (Ethiopia), 25 states not parties, and over 350 representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The UN was represented at the Summit by the key agencies involved in mine action globally, including: DDA, OCHA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNMAS, UNOPS, WFP, and WHO. The President of Kenya, Mr. Mwai Kibaki, presided over the opening ceremony and opened the high-level segment of the Summit. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan addressed Summit participants during the closing ceremony through simultaneous video-link from New York.

The meeting recognised and celebrated the achievements of the Convention and looked forward to its implementation over the coming five years. In this regard, discussions during the first three days of the Summit led to the adoption of the following documents: 1) *Declaration*; 2) *Review of the Status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: 1999-2004*; 3) *Ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines: Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009*; and, 4) *Programme of meetings and related matters to facilitate implementation, 2005-2009*. Alongside the plenary discussions, numerous side events and exhibitions showcased a wide range of global initiatives and programmes aimed at addressing the humanitarian challenges posed by anti-personnel mines.

The UN hosted a side event focused on the challenges of national planning to meet the Convention's objectives. The event was chaired by the head of the Mozambican National Demining Institute, Mr. Gamiliel Munguambe, and featured presentations by UNMAS, the EC and Norwegian Peoples' Aid. Twenty States Parties presented their five-year national plans at the event, and donors were invited to discuss the plans with national representatives.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

UNMAS participated at the 9th Session of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) to the CCW, the 6th Annual Conference of States Parties to Amended Protocol II to CCW and to the Meeting of States Parties to CCW, held in Geneva between 8 and 19 November 2004. UNMAS took the occasion to reiterate some of the elements in the common IACG-MA position on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM). The Meeting of States Parties to CCW adopted a mandate for the work of the GGE in 2005, including in areas relevant to mine action, such as ERW, cluster munitions and MOTAPM.

Non-State Actors

At the invitation of Geneva Call, UNMAS participated at the First Meeting of Signatories to the Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment, entitled "An inclusive approach to armed non-State actors and international humanitarian norms", held in Geneva between 31 October and 1st November, 2004. UNMAS delivered a statement calling for a strategic approach to armed non-State actors.

INFORMATION

UNMAS led a fact-finding mission for journalists to mine and ERW-affected areas of southern Sudan from November 22 to 25. Journalists visited minefields, observed demining operations, and interviewed officials from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and several NGOs working around the road from Lokichoggio (Kenya) to Kapoeta, Sudan. Media stories highlighted that mines and ERW block roads that would allow people and commerce to travel freely throughout the country, and that they restrict access to infrastructure and agricultural land, preventing people from regaining their livelihoods. Media represented on the trip: Agence France Press, ARD radio (Germany), Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (radio), Newsweek magazine, Reuters television, and the UN's Inter-Regional Information Network (IRIN).

UNMAS coordinated public information activities among UN organizations participating in the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World, November 29 through December 3. In the lead-up to the summit, UNMAS' outreach included briefings for the press, NGOs and UN staff; production and dissemination of information materials; pitching stories to the press; and development of a video news release and b-roll, which were shared with broadcasters. At the event itself, UNMAS organized two press briefings. Information materials were distributed at a UN display developed especially for the summit and were given directly to journalists covering the event. UNMAS officials also gave interviews to the press.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE

UNMAS HQ visited the Mine Action Co-ordination Center (MACC) in Burundi from 21 to 27 November. A comprehensive national victim assistance strategy and terms of reference for a victim assistance associate were produced based on consultations with government officials, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The MACC is hiring a victim assistance associate, as well as, one or two mine risk education assistants.

New confirmed pledges in the VTF 1 through 30 November 2004

7-Nov-04	Estonia	\$4,000	Unearmarked
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New contributions in the VTF 1 through 30 November 2004

03/11/2004	Denmark	\$ 858,663.92	Coordinations (P04-AF02).
12/11/2004	Czech Rep.	\$ 15,944.40	TBD

TECHNOLOGY

UNMAS attended a working group meeting of the UK/German dual sensor detector group, at which plans to deploy a prototype detector into the field for parallel live trials were confirmed for early 2005. At the same time the GICHD Mechanical Study team visited UNMAS and briefed on the wide range of follow-on studies and work they will be doing.

PROGRAMME SUPPORT

PROGRAMME MANAGERS/CTA MEETING

UNMAS, UNDP, UNICEF and UNOPS co-sponsored a meeting of Programme Managers and Chief Technical Advisors in Sarajevo from 8 to 10 November. The meeting was the first of its kind to be co-sponsored and attended by the four agencies. HQ and field personnel discussed policy and operational developments, including the review of the document entitled "Mine Action and Effective Coordination: the UN Policy," the integration of Task Assessment and Planning (TAP) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a review of lessons learned from individual programmes. The Bosnian mine action center briefed on its activities during a reception. On 11 November, the UN agencies attended a Survey Working Group (SWG) session which followed the Programme Managers and CTA meeting. Topics under discussion included the new EC policy on mine action, draft protocols, and the new software called "LIS Explorer" developed by SAC for the user-friendly navigation of existing LIS data. A 12 November meeting of the Steering Committee on Mine Action (SCMA) closed the week in Sarajevo with a discussion of topics including the recently completed gender guidelines for mine action, the CCW's Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), and the re-engineering of IMSMA.

AFGHANISTAN

The UN Mine Action Center in Afghanistan (UNMACA) commenced consultations and planning with its partners to develop a workplan for the 2005-6 Mine Action Programme. The Centre has supported NGOs to develop their proposals for continuation of their mine action projects as of the start of the Afghan new year in March 2005. Planning is also continuing with the Government of Afghanistan for the conduct of the Programme Strategic Review which will take place in late February 2005. UNMACA also presented a progress report to the Government of Afghanistan as part of the national mid-term review process. The Government expressed its satisfaction with the outputs achieved and the plans for the forthcoming period.

CYPRUS

During the week of 15 November, demining operations carried out under the auspices of the UN mine action cell began in the UNFICYP-monitored buffer zone in Cyprus. Armour Group is carrying out the clearance operations, utilizing both manual and mine detecting dog means. Mines Advisory Group (MAG) is providing quality assurance. The initial phase of clearance will focus on eight National Guard minefields in the buffer zone, while work continues to gain access to the remaining suspect areas in the buffer zone. The project is supported by the European Union through the UNDP Partnership for the Future (PFF) programme, as well as, the Governments of Canada and Slovenia through the International Trust Fund (ITF).

4.2. Update from UNDP

December 2004

The following is a summary of key achievements, challenges, objectives, and funding issues for UNDP-supported country programs, presented by region:

NEW YORK

- During the *Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World*, UNDP hosted the very successful 'launch' of key recommendations for the mainstreaming of mine action into development. Speakers included Julia Taft, Assistant Administrator of UNDP and Director of UNDP's Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), as well as representatives from Afghanistan, Canada, and the World Bank. Copies of the recommendations are available from UNDP. Contact mineaction@undp.org.
- UNDP was pleased that the Summit Plan of Action and the Final High Level Declaration recognized landmines as a serious challenge to sustainable development.
- In a number of bilateral meetings held in Nairobi, UNDP discussed the "Completion Initiative", which proposes clearance of at least ten mine-affected countries within the next 3-4 years. UNDP will be contacting donors in the coming months with more information on the Initiative and each of the targeted countries.
- UNDP mine action has recently deployed regional mine-action advisors, one each for Africa and Asia. They will provide support to UNDP Country Offices and other interested parties, assist countries in meeting their international treaty obligations, and promote regional cooperation. Mine-affected countries have already acknowledged the value added by these experts. UNDP is seeking funding for the continuation of their services to mine-affected countries from the second half of 2005 to end 2007.

AFRICAN REGION

Eritrea

Key Achievements

- Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams were deployed and began operations. This has increased the ability of the Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) to address the nation's unexploded ordnance (UXO) problem.
- The Mine Action Team assisted EDA in planning for 2005, including the creation of six additional technical Manual Clearance Teams, one Post Clearance Impact Assessment (PCIA) team, two regional offices (RO), and evaluation of mechanical requirements.
- The UN Certification Committee certified the Eritrean Landmine Impact Survey Report. The release of the report is expected before the end of 2004.
- Drafted an agreement with UNMEE Mine Action Coordination Centre for the overall policy, structure, operation, and maintenance for the Mine Action Database.

Key Objectives

- Assist the Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO) in developing and drafting a proposal for funding from Japan.
- Complete an inventory of UNDP-owned equipment at EDA and EDO.
- Begin assembling stores and equipment for three new EDO teams (numbers 6, 7, and 8).

Funding Update

- Norway has provided US\$818,598 and Italy has provided US\$101,798 in support of the Eritrean programme.
- No shortfalls reported.

ASIA PACIFIC REGION

Cambodia

Key Achievements

- The joint donor mission on the future of the mine-action sector in Cambodia has finalized its report to the Mine Action Technical Working Group. Findings and recommendations cover the following issues:
 - Scope of the mine-action problem in Cambodia.
 - Institutional arrangements.
 - Efficiency issues, techniques, cost-benefit analysis, and implications for funding.
 - Development of a long-term government capacity and strategies for the involvement of the police and Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.

The report will be discussed with the Government of Cambodia in January 2005, and an action plan will be developed for the implementation of the future government-donors partnership on mine action.

- The Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA) organized a National Workshop on 9 December 2004 to disseminate the new legal framework on decentralized Socio-Economic Management of Mine Clearance. Provincial and district authorities from all affected provinces attended the workshop and discussed guidelines for implementation. The new framework will start functioning in 2005, with Provincial Mine Action Committees in charge of the prioritization of Mine Clearance tasks, in line with relevant provincial and local development plans.
- The Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) reported a total clearance of 8,915,799 square meters from January to the end of October 2004, corresponding with the target initially set for the period. Productivity has increased 8 percent compared to the same period in 2003, thanks to the implementation of a multi-pronged cost-reduction strategy, which will be further pursued in 2005.

Funding Update

- Contributions received for CMAC in November 2004 include US\$416,000 from Japan and US\$100,456 from Adopt-A-Minefield.
- The CMAC work plan for 2005 is currently being finalized. Funding needs amount to US\$2.5 million, for a total budget of US\$9.8 million.

ARAB STATES REGION

Iraq

Key Achievements

- The National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), a representative from the mine-removal company RONCO, and UN Mine Action Cluster 7 attended a coordination meeting held in Amman, Jordan, 22-23 November 2004. Included on the agenda were: institutional development of the NMAA, provisioning of international technical advisors to NMAA, development of local mine-action operations capacities, extension of the MTI contract, future training of NMAA's operations staff, possible meetings with other mine-action stakeholders, outcome of the NMAA visit to mechanical mine-action machines manufactures, and preparation for the Nairobi Summit.
- In addition to several intra-UNDP Mine Action Team meetings, several meetings took place with mine-action partner agencies working inside Iraq. The purpose of these meetings included enhancing cluster coordination, generating support for mine-action implementation, getting an update on the situation inside Iraq (particularly as regards mine-action projects and activities), and determining the possibilities for UN funding activities. In a meeting with InterSOS, the interest of re-starting their activities in Iraq was discussed. Other organizations involved included Mines Advisory Group (MAG), RONCO, RBC Consultancy, and IHSCO.
- Conducted a meeting with US Department of State (DoS) and RONCO on 6 November 2004 to discuss capacity building, international technical advisors for NMAA, the 2004 funding situation and the availability of funds for 2005, and the way forward for cooperation and coordination of activities among NMAA, UN mine action, and DoS/RONCO.
- UNDP selected an international contractor through a competitive bidding process to establish a local mine-action NGO in Basra. It was expected that the contract would be signed during the first week of December 2004.
- Selection of the contractor and negotiation of the contract have been finalized for provision of seven technical advisors to NMAA. It is expected that the advisors will be deployed to Iraq in early January 2005 through a contract with Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAF), a US-based international humanitarian organization. The advisors will provide effective management and technical support during the institutional development of NMAA and the building of sustainable national mine-action capacities.
- Conducted a Mine Action Coordination Meeting with NMAA, 13-14 December 2004.

Key Challenges

- Deployment of a focal point for UN Mine Action in Baghdad to liaise and coordinate mine-action activities in the field.
- Establishment of a local mine-action capacity.
- Moving mine-action personnel inside Iraq given the security situation.
- Relocation of the UNDP Iraq Mine Action Team to Nicosia, Cyprus.

Key Objectives

- Conduct intra-UNDP MAT/cluster meetings and meetings with concerned mine-action agencies working inside Iraq.
- Continue providing management and technical advice to the NMAA and other stakeholders.
- Continue to improve the concept of operations for the expansion of mine-action operations and the building of local capacities.
- Sign a contract with Danish Demining Group (DDG) for the development of a local mine-action NGO in Basra.
- Sign a contract with VVAF for the provision of seven technical advisors to the NMAA.

Funding Update

- UNDP has received US\$5.99 million (US\$2.5 million from the EC and US\$3.49 from Italy) for 2004 and the first half of 2005.
- As per the NMAA Strategic Planning document, the 2005 funding requirements for all mine action in Iraq totals US\$92 million. Of this amount, US\$44 million will be provided from the Iraq national budget.

Somalia

Key Achievements

Somaliland (NW Somalia)

- 2004 saw the finalization of Mine Action Legislation in "Somaliland," and the policy document is now with the House of Representatives for final approval and ratification into law.
- Somaliland has committed to signing the Geneva Call Deed of Commitment, a formal commitment whereby non-state actors pledge not to use landmines, in January or February 2005. The only impediment is the availability of the Foreign Minister to go to Geneva for the signing.
- Somaliland MAC has conducted a quality control review on 95 percent of all tasks completed to date, and continues to coordinate the Technical Survey efforts of Danish Demining Group and Halo Trust. All high-impact communities identified in the LIS Phase 1 will have technical surveys completed by the end of February 2005.
- Since 1999, over 115 million square meters have been cleared in Somaliland.
- With Handicap International, UNICEF will start an mine-risk education project in early 2005.

Puntland (NE Somalia)

- In Puntland, the LIS Phase 2 is on-going but was delayed by one month in October due to security concerns and should be complete in May 2005.
- Police explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) training has resumed in Puntland (NE Somalia) and Jowhar (south and central Somalia) with the assistance of the Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA), and should be completed in mid-February 2005, when the teams will be handed over to the regional authorities.

Funding Update

- For 2005, mine action is under-funded in Somalia and most of the projects included in the Mine Action Portfolio still require funding. In particular, projects in south and central Somalia need funding, as there is a need for EOD and mine clearance to support reconstruction efforts associated with the on-going peace process and formation of an effective Transitional Federal Government.

EUROPE & THE CIS REGION

Albania

Key Achievements

- An Albanian Delegation, headed by the Deputy Minister of Defense/Chairman of the Albanian Mine Action Center (AMAC), attended the Nairobi Summit. The delegation presented a five-year progress report of the Albanian Mine Action Program and introduced the National Strategic Plan as required by Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention.
- The 13th meeting of the South-East Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC) was held in Tirana on 15 December 2004 with the assistance of the International Trust Fund (ITF) and the attendance of representatives from mine-action centers in the region, various donor representatives, and implementing partners in the country. The subject of the meeting was the adoption of the regional standard operation procedures prepared by the working groups, but it also served to further promote mine-action activities at the national and regional level.
- Clearance operations were concluded in northeast Albania for 2004 in accordance with the priority tasks given by the Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE). In 2004, Danish Church Aid released an area of 423,686 square meters through manual clearance, mine-detection dogs (MDD), and surveys; 2265 anti-personnel mines were destroyed.
- The AMAE quality management team continued the operations of quality control and quality assurance, and a total of 357,143 square meters of cleared land has been handed over to the communities in northeast Albania in 2004.
- MRE activities have continued during this period in mine-affected villages by the Albanian Red Cross and the Victims of Mines and Weapons Association (VMA), a local NGO, in cooperation with local anti-mine committees and peace activists. Leaflets and mine-awareness messages were distributed during these activities.
- UNDP Albania launched the bidding procedures for the restart of the Technical Survey and Clearance Project, funded by the European Commission.

- AMAE organized a six-day community-based rehabilitation training (22-27 November) in physiotherapy, counseling, first-aid, and basic rehabilitation, held in Kukes for 30 nurses residing in mine-affected villages. Four medical specialists (physiotherapist, psychiatrist, psychologist, and a registered nurse) from the Slovenia Institute of Rehabilitation conducted the training.
- X-ray equipment and three orthopedic surgical kits were procured and delivered to Kukes Hospital with a donation of \$100,000 made available from the US State Department through the International Trust Fund in Slovenia. The handover ceremony took place on November 23, with representatives of the ITF, US Embassy, VMA, AMAE, and regional authorities present. This equipment will contribute to the improvement of hospital services to mine victims as well as to other patients.
- As part of a UNDP project aimed at establishing a Prostheses Support Workshop in Kukes Hospital, a prostheses repair technician selected by Kukes Hospital successfully completed a six-week training program at the National Prosthetic Centre in Tirana.

Key Challenges

- Conduct resource mobilization for demining and capacity building for 2005.
- Secure MEDEVAC arrangements in remote areas for next working season.
- Promote national mine-action legislation.

Key Objectives

- Organize with the US Embassy in Tirana a fundraising event, Night of 1000 Dinners, the proceeds to be used for the rehabilitation of sight-impaired mine survivors.
- Update the priorities for clearance for 2005 in cooperation with the local and national authorities in northeast Albania.
- Continue the bidding procedures to select the new operator for the Technical Survey and Clearance Project.
- Start up the Prostheses Support Workshop in Kukes Regional Hospital.

Funding Update

- Total budget for capacity building and coordination for 2004 is US\$450,020 and is funded by UNDP/BCPR, the US State Department through the ITF, and Canada.
- US\$98,000 has been donated by the US State Department through the ITF for MRE from November 2004 to November 2005. The project will be implemented by the VMA.
- No shortfalls reported.

Armenia

- UNDP Armenia is about to start its Mine Action Programme.

Key Achievements

- Key achievements in the past month include the assessment of significant socio-economic impact information, such as numbers of beneficiaries aided, communities affected, etc.).

Key Challenges

- The Ministry of Defense is reluctant to provide existing maps on contaminated communities.

Key Objectives

- LIS training for various groups of the project and MoD, jointly with VVAF, will start in February 2005.

Funding Update

- Total budget for the project, envisaged for three years, is €1.54 million, of which €220,000 will be spent by the end of 2004.
- RONCO/VVAF have agreed to contribute in-kind (international experts on LIS and the Information Management System for Mine Action) to the LIS Armenia.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Key Achievements

- The Council of Ministers approved the nomination of the third member of the Demining Commission. The Commission is now functioning at full capacity.
- The BiH Government/Ministry of Civil Affairs announced a proposal to increase its share of funding of national mine-action operations in 2005 by US\$330,000, which is in line with the 10-20 percent increase envisaged by UNDP's Integrated Mine Action Programme (IMAP).
- BiH mine-action authorities attended the Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World, and BiH was cited as one of the three countries in the world that has integrated mine action into its development plans. BiH's presentation of its community-based planning and prioritization was warmly received.
- BiH's Report of Mine Action Activities in 2004 shows a dramatic increase in mine-clearance productivity in terms of mines found per hectare. Productivity has increased three-fold over the past 12 months as a result of better prioritization and surveys of suspected mined areas. The number of mine victims decreased, another positive sign in the overall mine-action picture in BiH.
- BiH's Mine Action Plan for 2005 has been officially adopted by the Council of Ministers, which provides a good basis for an early start of the clearance operations.

Key Challenges

- Revision of the Mine Action Law, which is the focus of IMAP's activities in the upcoming period.
- Establishment of a national capacity to tender mine action contracts.

Funding Update

- A recent revision of IMAP shows a serious shortfall in IMAP funding. The shortfall is related to financial support for the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMAC) operations beyond 2004. IMAP initially envisaged a complete transfer of financial responsibility for the BHMAC to the government in 2004. However, upon government plea, the transfer is now envisaged to take place gradually by the end of the programme (December 2008). Additionally, the government will be presenting special projects to the donors for the replacement of some high-cost equipment for the BHMAC. The projects will be presented in early 2005, and additional funding will be needed for their implementation.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARRIBEAN

Colombia

Key Achievements

- With the support of UNDP, the National Landmine Observatory, and the Presidential Program for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, the departmental government of Meta concluded visits to all mine-affected municipalities in the region, with the aim of promoting the creation of municipal human rights committees. Members of the municipal committees, which include local authorities, NGOs, and community representatives, received training through two regional workshops. This instruction provided them with the capacity to develop local plans for mine action in support of the departmental mine-action program.
- UNDP and the National Landmine Observatory concluded an agreement with the Antioquia departmental government to support the execution of activities within the Departmental Mine Action Plan. UNDP has committed US\$40,000 for the initial phase, including support for the mine-action focal point within the government department, preparation of local mine-action plans in affected municipalities, and improving information management notably, follow-up on mine victims and educating trainers and local actors in MRE, the latter in coordination with UNICEF.

Key Challenges

- To improve the National Landmine Observatory's technical and managerial capacity at the departmental and local levels. An initial assessment of key priorities for the Chief Technical Advisor includes: 1) accreditation planning for humanitarian mine-action activities; 2) a revision of MRE materials, methodologies, and studies together with UNICEF; 3) strengthening IMSMA data management, including data cleaning; 4) planning basic training for Observatory staff, departmental and regional authorities as well as the armed forces on humanitarian mine clearance; 5) planning priority standards (health and safety); 6) strengthening planning for the decentralization process, including standardization and materials.

Key Objectives

- Help consolidate the National Landmine Observatory as the principal technical and coordinating body for mine action in Colombia, including the development of national standards and accreditation.
- Support the National Landmine Observatory in its efforts to create and strengthen local capacities for mine action, including the local and regional planning processes.
- Advise and support the Colombian Government in developing the capacity for humanitarian mine clearance so that it is able to fulfil its obligations under the Ottawa Treaty.

Funding Update

- No shortfalls reported.