The United States Aids Danish Humanitarian Mine Action in Lebanon

News Brief

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Cluster munitions, landmines and other unexploded ordnance have long polluted Lebanon.\(^1\) During the 2006 Lebanon War between Israel and Hezbollah, 34 days of rocket fire and cluster bombs further contaminated the country with unexploded cluster bomblets and UXO. The United Nations estimates that 40 percent of these cluster munitions failed to detonate during the conflict.\(^2\) Altogether, the conflict left Lebanon with an estimated 60 million square meters (23 square miles) of contaminated land. Of this amount, 40 million sq. m. (15 sq. mi.) of land contain approximately 425,000 mines, while the remaining 20 million sq. m. (8 sq. mi.) contain cluster munitions in 556 strike areas.\(^1\) According to the Lebanese Armed Forces Regional Mine Action Centre, these cluster munitions have caused 408 Lebanese casualties in the last five years, 115 of whom were children.\(^2\)

The U.S. is helping Lebanon achieve its goal of creating a safe environment by preventing cluster munitions from becoming *de facto* landmines. In September 2011, the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA) granted US$338,665 to the DanChurchAid Humanitarian Mine Action Programme for the continued clearance of cluster munitions with the coordination of the Lebanese Mine Action Centre. This contribution will allow one clearance team to continue working until May 2012.\(^2\) In addition to this grant, DCA will also continue work on manual mine-clearance activities in areas affected by the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1977).

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