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Geneva Diary: Report from the GICHD

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GICHD

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by Pehr Lodhammar

Mechanical project officer with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

Pehr Lodhammar joined the GICHD in February 2008. He is working with mechanical mine-clearance projects with the GICHD.

Summary

Demining machines include various types of mine-detection machines, ground-preparation machines and mine-protected vehicles. There are also crunchers, soil disrupters, mowers, brush cutters, slasher and magnets. There are also combinations of the above-mentioned tools. Cabins are now protected with state-of-the-art armours.

Standards

International standards for mechanical demining include various types of mechanical project officer specializing in explosive ordnance disposal for 10 years. He joined the GICHD in February 2008.

Three more International Mine Action Standards are under development, in addition to IMAS 09-50 Mechanical Demining. The new IMAS will include operator safety, quality management and the application of mechanical demining machines.

The GICHD has recently released a number of new publications. These have included ‘A Guide to Road Clearance,’ which aims to contribute to the development of safer, more efficient and cost-effective road clearance systems. By providing recent examples, data and methodologies to the field. Along with the information gathered in this guide, the GICHD has gathered supplementary technical data through visits to road-clearance projects in four countries.

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This installment of Geneva Diary follows the GICHD and its activities over the past year. Besides organizing both a conference and a workshop for the international mine-action community, the organization has also released two new publications. These publications, which are both filled with a salutary amount of GICHD-researched data, will hopefully assist deminers in the field and make their areas safer for themselves as well as civilians.

Technology Workshop

The GICHD and the United Nations Mine Action Service co-hosted a technology workshop in Geneva from 8–10 September 2008 (see full article on page 78). This meeting was a follow-up to the one held in February 2008, which recommended that a similar meeting be held every two years. The meeting attended the September meeting, representing national mine-action programs, field operators, commercial companies, equipment manufacturers and technology organizations. The major topics discussed were metal detectors, dual sensors and the interdependence of soil on their performance. The workshop also addressed the operational challenges related to road clearance and land release in a technology context. It provided a forum in which equipment requirements could be expressed and recorded. Challenges and experiences in humanitarian demining techniques from some mine-affected countries were presented, as well as exchanges and shared ideas to improve efficiency. Presentations and film clips used during the proceedings of the meeting can be found at http://snipurl.com/45s13.

New Publications

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