The European Commission: The Future of Mine Action From A Donor’s Perspective

Margaret S. Busé

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal

Part of the Defense and Security Studies Commons, Emergency and Disaster Management Commons, Other Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons, and the Peace and Conflict Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol6/iss1/13

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction by an authorized editor of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.
The European Commission: The Future of Mine Action From A Donor's Perspective

An interview with Daniela Dicordrado-Andreoni, Principal Administrator of the European Commission, highlights the goals of the European Commission and the role and future of donor funding.

By Margaret S. Busé, Editor

Margaret Busé (MB): What is the current policy for the European Commission (EC) when it comes to funding mine action?

Daniela Dicordrado-Andreoni (DA): The EC is a very unique body. It is an executive body that launches and carries out the processes of legislation. The EC community competence manages a large part of the budget of the European Union. The budget for landmines is under the community pillar, therefore under commission responsibility. The legal basis of this budget is a specific API regulation, which was initiated as a follow-up to Ottawa.

In 1996, in the wake of the Ottawa process, the European Parliament created a new initiative, an API budget line. Before that, demining was done by the commission through development or rehabilitation projects. Demining was considered a prerequisite for other major policies. Mine action was not considered for its own specificity and did not benefit from tailor-made policies and measures. Since July 2001, this gap has been bridged: a legal instrument and a reinforced budget will thus allow the European Union to play a stronger role. The Ottawa process has the merit to establish a target and ambition and therefore to coagulate the wheels of all the Suizet Parties and donors and integrating institutions towards one common goal.

We think that now the moment is ripe to focus on the mine-affected countries and to make efforts to empower the local authorities to properly manage their mine problems (e.g., to make their own plans, develop their own program and establish their own priorities).

MB: Do you encourage countries to develop and establish their own priorities through the setting up of Mine Action Centers (MAC), or do they have a centralized body to help them with their decision making process for that specific country? Can you take it from a broader perspective than an organization like the UN or the EC can give them the parameters to follow similar to the Organization of American States (OAS) and South America?

DA: I would like to propose a "hands off" process whereby you provide all ingredients that are necessary for the mine action program to run properly and provide the financial aid that can support the best practices for each mine action field. Donors can provide the financial aid to let the countries create their instrument by themselves and to tell the donors, "This is the situation, our needs, and you can help us in these areas." Measurement of the operations and related Performance Indicators in another area where the commission wants to play a leading role. Assessment systems are being elaborated in order to provide the donors with a clear understanding of how the money has been used and if the money has been used properly.

MB: How do you show donors that the money is used properly? How can that be measured completely?

DA: We do know that if certain amounts of food aid or rice have been delivered under the Marshall Plan, but we do not know how this money has been used or that the rice has been used properly. The donors are very interested in funding capacity building or mine action towards capacity building.

MB: Do you think the funding priorities have changed in the last five years? You mentioned that now donors are very interested in funding capacity building or mine action towards capacity building.

DA: In the past, the European Union and the European Community has spent an incredible amount of money for demining, but without a rationale. We have only a few years ahead of us to eradicate APL. Financial resources will not increase, but we can only increase efficiency and improve the use of limited resources. Donors' coordination at local level is one of the challenges we are faced with if we want to make a quantum leap in efficiency and rational use of resources. It might be useful to have some regional coordination mechanisms built-in in existing coordination mechanisms for development policies.

After years of "mine action practice," lessons have been learned. I think that the culture of mine action is changing. The Kosovo example is a leading light.

MB: What is ahead for the EC for mine action funding? Are there specific funding goals?

DA: The EC is preparing a Multi-annual Strategy for Mine Action 2002-2004 and a related Multi-annual Programming. This strategy has been closely coordinated with the UN and the U.S. and takes into consideration the portfolio of possible cooperation activities between the EC and Canada. The Strategy further foresees a budgetary envelope of EUR 40 million per year for mine action.

MB: Do you expect donor funding to change?

DA: I have some concerns on the continued funding level of a few donors; but in general, I do not expect any visible drop before the Mine Ban Treaty revision conference.

Contact Information
Margaret Busé
E-mail: busem@jmu.edu

Fourth Mine Detecting Dog (MDD) Advisory Group Meeting

Lubango, Angola
January 20-23, 2002

A group of mine dogs were housed by the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) in Lubango, Angola, in January continuing their work on standards, studies and assessment of global mine detecting dog programs, policies and procedures. The Advisory Group is administered and chaired by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and is composed of mine dog users, trainers, animal behaviour, working dog specialists and a small group of experts and advisors. Work is focused on a update of the MDD Self-Studies being administered by the GICHD and a report on those completed projects, the working dog and those being planned such as the parallel look at African Pouch Rats by the Belgian-funded project APOPO in Tanzania. The participants visited the NPA training facility outside Lubango and also visited the Remote Explosive Scint Scanning (REST) vapor sampling test facility. Terms of reference were also approved for an Assessment Committee to represent the mine dog community and enhance the credibility and professionalism of MDD teams and organizations. A more detailed report of their activities will appear in the next issue of the Journal of Mine Action that will focus on Landmines in Africa. For more information about the Advisory Group, contact Czarny Ackermann at the GICHD at c.ackerman@gichd.ch or Tel: +41-22-906-1660.

A Vapor test demo c/o MAC

Published by JMU Scholarly Commons, 2002