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GICHD

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

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Annual Report

2006

GICHD | CIDHG



PROMOTING CO-OPERATION | PROVIDING SUPPORT

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I welcome this new form of the GICHD Annual Report in attractive hardcopy. It will allow many friends in the world to discover – or to go deeper into – the reality of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. I believe that this unique international organization *sui generis* – a foundation under Swiss law, having concluded a special status agreement with the Swiss Government, devoted exclusively to enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in demining in the largest sense of the word – would have to be invented if it did not already exist.

The Swiss initiative to create it in 1998 deserves admiration and particularly warm gratitude should be expressed to all those Governments, NGOs and staff that have allowed – with means according to their capacity – the sound development of the activities of the Centre, with one central point in mind – an essential one – to diminish the suffering of victims of anti-personnel mines and other explosive remnants of war.

Dr. Cornelio Sommaruga | President



FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR

The GICHD was founded to promote international co-operation with mine-affected countries, to create and share knowledge and to provide practical support to mine action programmes worldwide. By fulfilling these aims we hope the Centre can help to make mine action faster, safer, cheaper and more effective.

2006 was a challenging but rewarding year. We worked in 59 countries advising national authorities on subjects as diverse as Ottawa Convention obligations, mine action law, international mine action standards, information management, capacity building and training. We also initiated projects in new areas, including risk management and the links between mine action and development. Our geographic reach expanded as a result of new partnerships with Algeria and Sudan.

Giving practical support to mine-affected countries remains central to the GICHD's strategy. One issue that continues to concern mine action programmes is how to determine whether land, recorded as hazardous, is actually mined. In 2006, we launched a study to look at how to apply risk management techniques to this problem. Our new research into Linking Mine Action to Development is aimed at ensuring that development implications are addressed in mine action programmes. We also updated our information management system, known as IMSMA. The upgraded IMSMA version 4 was developed and released during the year.

The Centre continued to support international treaties dealing with mines and explosive remnants of war, including the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

Our progress over the past year would not have been possible without the continuing support and hard work of a number of organisations, countries and individuals. I would like to thank all of our partners, including the authorities of mine-affected countries, our donors, the United Nations and other international organizations, those who work in the field and also the hard-working staff at our headquarters in Geneva.

Ambassador Stephan Nellen | Director



MINE ACTION | THE CHALLENGE

At least 78 countries worldwide are affected by landmines and other explosive remnants of war, an estimated 15,000 people are killed or injured every year and more than 400,000 landmine victims are living with disabilities.

Landmines and explosive remnants of war can delay reconstruction and development in some of the world's poorest countries, long after conflicts have ended.

They prevent farmers from growing food and their animals from grazing. They make schools and hospital buildings inaccessible and render roads impassable. They disrupt infrastructure, deny access to water sources and basic sanitation.

Since the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention – commonly known as the Ottawa Convention – came into force, significant progress has been made to stop the use of anti-personnel mines. Over 40 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed, large tracts of land have been cleared and fewer people have been killed or injured in mine accidents.

But anti-personnel mines continue to be used in some conflicts. While 153 states have signed the Ottawa Convention, 42 have not yet joined and of these 13 countries retain the capability to produce anti-personnel mines.

Enormous damage is also being caused by other explosive remnants of war, including abandoned explosive ordnance, unexploded ordnance and cluster munitions.

Unexploded ordnance comprises bombs, mortars, grenades and other devices that failed to explode on impact and may remain live and potentially lethal if touched. Abandoned explosive ordnance is the term used to describe weapons that have not been used during an armed conflict, but have been left behind, or dumped. Cluster munitions are conventional weapons, launched from the ground or air, which are packed with hundreds of smaller 'bomblets'. On release the bomblets are scattered over several thousand square metres. These often fail to detonate and may remain highly volatile, and can explode when disturbed. It is estimated that there are nearly three times as many items of abandoned and unexploded ordnance, including cluster munitions, left behind after a conflict as there are anti-personnel mines.



As long as landmines and explosive remnants of war continue to litter developing countries, the United Nations Millennium Development Goal which aims to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, will remain difficult to achieve.

The primary responsibility for taking action against landmines and explosive remnants of war rests with the mine-affected countries themselves. In 2006, the GICHD, together with its partners, continued to assist affected countries to eliminate anti-personnel mines and to reduce the negative impact of other landmines and explosive remnants of war.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2006

- JANUARY** Participants from 15 mine action programmes in Europe, Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa attended conference in Istanbul to introduce IMSMA version 4. Upgraded system was installed in Jordan and successfully field tested in Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala and Uganda.
- FEBRUARY** Road clearance, manual demining, personal protective equipment and surveys among topics discussed at technology workshop, hosted by the GICHD and United Nations (UN): attended by experts from 15 mine-affected countries, six non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and four commercial demining companies.
- MARCH** Afghanistan, Burundi, Colombia, Croatia, Jordan and Mozambique joined Council of Foundation as part of new strategy to give wider representation to mine-affected countries on GICHD's governing bodies. Initiated two-year research project into Linking Mine Action and Development. Signed co-operation agreement with Algeria. Published: *Guidebook on Detection Technologies and Systems for Humanitarian Demining*, *Mechanical Demining Equipment Catalogue 2006*, *Developing Mine Action Legislation - A Guide*, and *A Study of the Role of Survey in Mine Action*.
- APRIL** First International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, 4 April, marked in Geneva at GICHD with a seminar on *Mine Action: Lessons and Challenges*, over 100 people attended. Signed co-operation agreement with Sudan. Published updated edition of the *Guide to International Mine Action Standards* and first edition of "Close-up", quarterly newsletter about the Centre's work.
- MAY** Stockpile destruction, mine clearance and victim assistance among issues discussed by Standing Committees to the Ottawa Convention at meetings hosted and supported by Centre in Geneva. First meeting of GICHD's reconstituted Advisory Board held.
- JUNE** Helped Trinidad and Tobago organise workshop on the *Role of the Caribbean Community in Pursuing the Aims of the Ottawa Convention*. Completed series of regional workshops to explain findings of mechanical demining study. Project involved visits to all major implementers of mechanical demining, including research and development organisations, donors and manufacturers of machinery, as well as 14 mine-affected countries. Sponsored seven participants from mine-affected countries to attend evaluation training workshop in Canada.
- JULY** Hosted Ninth meeting of National Directors and Technical Advisors on behalf of United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), attended by 200 people representing 37 countries. International Mine Action Standards Review Board meeting held at the Centre. IMSMA users' conference held in Murten, Switzerland.
- AUGUST** Recruited National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) specialist to support country programmes – Albania, Jordan, Lebanon, Nepal and Uganda assisted with NMAS development during the year. Awarded 'Special Achievement in GIS' by the Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. for IMSMA work.
- SEPTEMBER** Assisted President of the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention, in Geneva. IMSMA version 4 installed in the United Kingdom to be used in support of operations in Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas), in conjunction with Argentina's system.
- OCTOBER** Presented work on *Linking Mine Action to Peacekeeping* to the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres. Published: *Study on Synergies between Small Arms Light Weapons and Mine Action*, commissioned by the US Department of State. Updated *Training and Advisory Services Booklet* released.
- NOVEMBER** Intervened at the special plenary meeting of the Third Review Conference of Convention against Conventional Weapons (CCW), held to mark the entry into force of Protocol V. Centre invited by CCW to administer its sponsorship programme. Chaired first of three European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) workshops, on Mechanical Applications, in Brussels.
- DECEMBER** Delivered final draft report of Risk Reduction/Mitigation model in Lao PDR to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Vientiane. The model forms key stage in ongoing project to develop and implement risk management methodology to allow a faster and more efficient land release process. Signed co-operation agreement with Danish Coastal Authority to provide technical advice on Skallingen beach clearance project.

OPERATIONS | WHAT WE DO | OUR WORK

The GICHD provides instruments and services to assist mine action programmes worldwide. These include information management, development of international and national standards, training packages, evaluations and specialist expertise in the field.

The Centre also undertakes research and provides technical assistance in areas such as survey techniques, detection methods, clearance, destruction of mines and quality control.

We conduct field-based research into manual mine clearance methods, the use of vapour detectors – such as dogs and rats, as well as into all aspects of the management and application of machines for ground preparation and mine clearance.

Research findings result in the development of international standards, guide books and training workshops. In the area of technology, the Centre acts as an information exchange between those working in the field, and research and development agencies. Emphasis is placed on spreading knowledge and best practices within mine-affected countries.



Our work in 2006 included the following technology missions and activities:

- > supporting detector trials in Laos and Afghanistan
- > assessing the use of mechanical demining equipment in Angola
- > evaluating the Remote Explosive Scent Tracing programme and implementing improvements to the programme
- > restructuring the training programmes for mine detecting dogs
- > assisting in the development of Test & Evaluation standards for mechanical demining equipment and multi-sensor detection systems
- > reporting on the application of technologies through studies and on-site evaluations.

Work also continued on a range of catalogues on commonly used demining equipment, such as machines, metal detectors and personal protective equipment. These catalogues are designed to provide a service to field users, and include test data on the equipment whenever it is available.

In collaboration with UNMAS, the Centre published regular Mine Action Technology Newsletters, highlighting technological advances of interest.

The Centre is conducting an ongoing study into the use of land release and risk management processes to improve mine clearance efficiency. The work includes analysis of existing processes in Cambodia and the development of a new model in Sudan. A model for the mitigation of explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the Lao PDR was completed in December.

MANAGING INFORMATION

Effective information management is essential for a successful mine action programme. The Centre has developed the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) software, to enable efficient reporting and mapping of clearance activity.

IMSMA is currently in use in more than 40 mine action programmes around the world and has become the industry standard in information management.

In 2006, there were three successful releases of the latest version of IMSMA, as part of the ongoing work to update and improve the system. Each release added new functions and improved existing ones.

Having proved successful during field testing at the beginning of the year the new version of IMSMA was installed in a number of countries. The Burundi Mine Action Coordination Centre (BURMACC) began using the updated system, in its French language version, in December. Colonel Remy Bacamurwanko, Director of BURMACC, reported that: *“IMSMA version 4 allowed faster access to maps and imagery and improved the performance of the system’s GIS components, as well as the process used to create local data collection forms. IMSMA is an efficient, time saving system, which allows us to concentrate on the important aspects of mine clearance and spend less time inputting data.”*

During the year work continued on the development of a variety of handheld data collection tools to be used with IMSMA. Our efforts focused on the use of these tools in all areas of survey and field data reporting.



The Centre is also assembling a library of LandSat imagery and other spatial data for distribution to field programmes using IMSMA. The data set, which is being deployed with the latest version of IMSMA, includes the space shuttle radar topography elevation data for each country, LandSat satellite imagery at 30 and 15 metre resolution, and a variety of map sheets and country specific vector data.

Information management training is key to the successful integration of IMSMA into field operations. As well as numerous training workshops held in the field, the GICHD sponsored eight information management training sessions in Geneva during the year, attended by representatives from over 20 mine-affected programmes, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Guinea Bissau, Kosovo, Lebanon and Zambia.

The Geneva Centre distributes IMSMA to the governments of mine-affected countries upon request.

 **GICHD Missions & Meeting | Visit | Seminar**

 **IMSMA**

 **GICHD & IMSMA activities**

- 
- A world map showing the locations of GICHD and IMSMA activities. Red downward-pointing triangles indicate GICHD Missions & Meeting | Visit | Seminar, grey downward-pointing triangles indicate IMSMA, and red and grey downward-pointing triangles indicate GICHD & IMSMA activities. The map includes markers for 65 countries, each with a number corresponding to the list below.
- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|----|--|----|--|----|----------------|
| 1 | Afghanistan | 23 | Denmark | 42 | Mozambique | 57 | Thailand |
| 2 | Albania | 24 | Ecuador | 43 | Nepal | 58 | Turkey |
| 3 | Algeria | 25 | Eritrea | 44 | Nicaragua | 59 | Uganda |
| 4 | Angola | 26 | Estonia | 45 | Peru | 60 | UK |
| 5 | Argentina | 27 | Ethiopia | 46 | Russian Federation
(Chechnya/Ingushetia
/Northern Ossetia) | 61 | USA |
| 6 | Armenia | 28 | Finland | 47 | Rwanda | 62 | Vietnam |
| 7 | Australia | 29 | France | 48 | Serbia | 63 | Western Sahara |
| 8 | Azerbaijan | 30 | Former Yugoslav
Republic of Macedonia | 49 | Sierra Leone | 64 | Yemen |
| 9 | Belgium | 31 | Germany | 50 | Slovenia | 65 | Zambia |
| 10 | Benin | 32 | Guinea–Bissau | 51 | Somaliland | | |
| 11 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 33 | Italy | 52 | Sri Lanka | | |
| 12 | Brunei | 34 | Iraq | 53 | Sudan | | |
| 13 | Burundi | 35 | Jordan | 54 | Swaziland | | |
| 14 | Cambodia | 36 | Kenya | 55 | Sweden | | |
| 15 | Canada | 37 | Kosovo | 56 | Tajikistan | | |
| 16 | Caribbean States | 38 | Lao PDR | | | | |
| 17 | Chad | 39 | Lebanon | | | | |
| 18 | Chile | 40 | Mauritania | | | | |
| 19 | Colombia | 41 | Montenegro | | | | |
| 20 | Croatia | | | | | | |
| 21 | Cyprus | | | | | | |
| 22 | Democratic
Republic of Congo | | | | | | |

GICHD ACTIVITIES WORLDWIDE

In 2006, GICHD experts visited 59 different countries worldwide to deliver training, conduct research, hold workshops or provide professional advice and expertise on mine action. During the year we worked across Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and South America.

The numbered triangles in red show those countries where IMSMA is installed and running. Grey triangles indicate countries that have been visited by GICHD's specialists, including visits by the Director to conclude co-operation agreements.



QUALITY MANAGEMENT | STANDARDS | EVALUATIONS

International Mine Action Standards

Working under a mandate from UNMAS, the GICHD is responsible for preparing and developing International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), in consultation with mine action experts from international and governmental organisations and NGOs.

Most aspects of humanitarian mine action are guided by IMAS. They identify standards and procedures for mine detection, mine clearance, destroying or disposing of landmines, and for mine risk education. There are currently 40 IMAS, including two in draft edition.

In 2006, four new IMAS were developed. They were IMAS 07.20, guide to drafting mine action contracts; IMAS 09.50, mechanical demining; IMAS 02.10, establishment of mine action programmes and IMAS 14.10, evaluation of mine action intervention. The first two have been accepted by the IMAS Review Board and await endorsement by the UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group. The latter two require amendments which will be completed in 2007.

Existing IMAS on accreditation and monitoring of demining organisations, clearance requirements, post-clearance inspections and mine risk education were reviewed and amended during the year. The updated version of *Guide to IMAS* was published in April, and IMAS training and assistance was conducted in Cambodia, Jordan, Lebanon and Nepal. Mechanical demining IMAS were introduced in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Cambodia.

The Centre continued to assist mine-affected countries to establish their own National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), based on international standards. In 2006, Albania, Lebanon and Uganda were helped with preparation and planning for the development of NMAS. These and other countries will be further supported in 2007.

We also started working with the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) to develop widely accepted agreements – or standards – for testing and evaluating personal protective equipment, follow-on processes after the use of demining machines, and methods for quality control after mechanical demining.

Evaluations

In mine action, quality management has traditionally focused on safety and efficiency. GICHD evaluations also consider whether a policy, programme, or project is effective, sustainable and relevant to local needs.

The Centre conducts evaluations upon request. We also train mine action practitioners and consultants from mine-affected countries to contribute to the design and conduct of evaluations. In 2006, the Centre provided full or partial sponsorships to seven people from mine-affected countries to attend the International Program in Development Evaluation Training in Canada.

The benefits of this training can already be seen in the field. In Ethiopia, for example, the GICHD was asked by an international organisation to evaluate its work with the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO). After consulting the Director of EMAO – a recent graduate of evaluation training in Ottawa – the Centre expanded the scope of its evaluation to cover the entire national mine action programme. This was the first time Ethiopia's national programme had been formally assessed and the findings demonstrated not only that the international organisation's project was effective, but also that EMAO itself was meeting donor requirements and delivering excellent results. Local input led to a more valuable evaluation for little extra effort, which satisfied all the stakeholders.

Evaluations were also conducted by the GICHD in Angola, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Lebanon, and Vietnam for donors, UN agencies, NGOs and national mine action authorities.

TRAINING | COMMUNITY LIAISON | RISK EDUCATION

The most effective and useful mine action is conducted after consultation with affected communities and governments. What are their priorities? Do they want their roads to be cleared before schools? Farmland before government offices? Are adults being injured, or children?

Local input and responsive decision-making are essential to a successful mine action programme. Adapting mine clearance to the social and economic needs of a community can make an enormous difference to the way people rebuild their lives after a conflict.

The Centre's Socio-Economic Unit assists mine action programmes to develop guidelines for prioritising both clearance and mine risk education. It conducts research and provides assistance to programmes in their efforts to determine the social and economic impact of various operations.



Training is an important part of our work. During 2006, the unit provided basic and advanced level training on social, economic and related themes. These include mine action management, mine risk education, surveys, as well as broad ranging research and assistance on civil, military, and legislative issues in mine action. This assistance is offered to country programmes, the UN and NGOs, with the specific objective of developing national capacity in these areas.

In early 2006, we organised two training workshops on mine risk education and developing national mine action legislation for the Ugandan Government. The workshops, which each ran over five days, were attended by 25 representatives of the UN, the national mine action programme, the Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs and Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. Martin Odwedo, Permanent Secretary to the Office of the Prime Minister, said GICHD's input had been valuable: *"It has considerably enhanced our understanding and appreciation of mine action."*

In May, the unit hired a training co-ordinator to help meet the increased demand for its services, to assist in formalising existing country partnerships, develop new partnerships and strengthen relationships with other organisations. We also began a major revision of training curricula and materials.

The unit provided 21 separate capacity development training workshops in Albania, Armenia, Colombia, Guinea Bissau, Jordan, Laos, Nepal, Peru, Puntland and Uganda during the year.

NEW ISSUES IN MINE ACTION

Linking Mine Action and Development

In March 2006, the GICHD initiated a two-year project into Linking Mine Action and Development, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In the past, mine action was generally considered part of short-term, emergency assistance. Mine clearance was conducted quickly and efficiently, but often in isolation from development planning.

Increasingly however, mine clearance organisations consider development priorities when planning and consulting with government, donors and mine-impacted communities. This has led to a growing international consensus on the need to establish more systematic links between mine action and development.

Working with key partners such as the UNDP and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, and their Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (CPDC), the Centre's project focuses on the following areas:

- > researching the links between mine action and development co-operation
- > strengthening capacity within mine-affected states on how to link mine action and development through training and advice
- > providing input and guidance to the CPDC on mine action to development organisations, including the DAC
- > providing coordination and facilitation support to the Ottawa Convention's informal Contact Group on Linking Mine Action and Development.

Mine Action and Small Arms Light Weapons

In October 2006, the Centre published the results of its study on the synergies between mine action and efforts to redress the humanitarian impact of small arms and light weapons.

The two-year study, commissioned by the United States Department of State, found few examples of existing synergies between the two sectors, but it identified areas of possible integration, such as disposal of small arms and light weapons and explosive remnants of war, awareness of small arms and light weapons and mine risk education, victim assistance, programme management, and rule of law and export control legislation.

Other research

In September 2006, the Centre published the preliminary results of its research into the role of mine action in peace building. The report, *Mine Action in Support of Peace*, concluded that mine action has the potential to make a significant contribution to peace building in post-conflict areas. Mine action can provide economic security by, for example, employing large numbers of local people, including former combatants. Mine clearance also represents investment in development and helps people to return to their homes and live normal lives, by destroying stockpiles of weapons which could otherwise be used to reignite a conflict.

Work also continued on the following research projects: *Guide to Capacity Development in Mine Action*, *Guide to the Creation of Local Organisations in Mine Action*, and *The Role of Fencing and Marking in Mine Action*.

SUPPORTING THE OTTAWA CONVENTION

Since 1999, the GICHD has supported the Ottawa Convention by hosting meetings of the Standing Committees established by the States Parties to the Convention, administering a delegate sponsorship programme, and providing technical and operational input as an observer delegation at the Convention's meetings.

In 2001, the GICHD was mandated by the States Parties to establish the effective secretariat for the Convention, the Implementation Support Unit (ISU). The ISU provides States Parties with professional advice, support and information concerning all aspects of the Convention's implementation process.

The ISU serves as the principal support for the Convention's President and Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees and advises the Sponsorship Programme's Donors' Group. In 2006, this support involved the ISU Manager being appointed as the President's Executive Coordinator of the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties and ISU assistance helped ensure that the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees were able to convene successful intersessional meetings, attended by over 500 delegates in GICHD premises in May 2006.

The Unit also continued to serve as the authoritative information source on all matters that concern the Convention, in part by taking steps to enhance the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Documentation Centre.

In 2006, many States Parties expressed their formal satisfaction with the efforts undertaken by the ISU in accordance with its mandate. This was demonstrated by the fact that more States Parties than in any previous year made voluntary contributions to the ISU Trust Fund.

Moreover, the Unit was entrusted to manage projects consistent with its mandate and funded on a voluntary basis by States Parties. These included supporting inter-ministerial planning processes of States Parties which have responsibility for the care, rehabilitation and reintegration of significant numbers of landmine survivors. The ISU also managed a project to help address the special implementation needs of small States Parties.



AND HELPING TO REDUCE THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF OTHER LANDMINES AND ERW

The GICHD also has observer status to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) – a framework convention that aims to ban or restrict the use of various types of weapons deemed to cause unnecessary human suffering.

The Convention has five protocols, two of which deal with the use of landmines and ERW. Amended Protocol II restricts the use of landmines, booby traps and other devices, while Protocol V sets out obligations and best practice for the clearance of ERW.

The Centre's input during meetings of High Contracting Parties has focused on the humanitarian impact of certain types of weapons, including cluster munitions. We also provide technical input, when required. The GICHD's President, Dr. Cornelio Sommaruga, intervened at the Third Review Conference of the CCW during the special plenary meeting marking the entry into force of Protocol V.

In November 2006, at the Convention's Third Review Conference, the GICHD was asked by the States Parties to administer the newly established CCW Sponsorship Programme, which aims to provide financial support to High Contracting Parties with limited resources.

GOVERNANCE

In 2006, the GICHD implemented a number of internal reforms, aimed at giving better representation to mine-affected countries and donors on the Centre's governing bodies.

New members from Afghanistan, Burundi, Colombia, Croatia, Jordan and Mozambique were appointed to the Council of Foundation. The Council, which consists of 21 members from donor governments, mine-affected countries and international organisations, is chaired by the GICHD's President. It meets twice a year to allocate resources within the Centre, review its performance and supervise activities.

The Advisory Board, which advises both the Council of Foundation and the GICHD Director, was also reconstituted to involve more representatives from mine-affected states. In 2006 the board, which is made up of 12 mine action field practitioners from international organisations, commercial companies and NGOs, included members from Afghanistan, Cambodia, Croatia, Ethiopia and Jordan, as well as the United Nations. The board was asked to provide feedback on the Centre's work, to ensure that we continue to be useful and relevant to the mine action community.

Our recruitment policy was also amended, to reflect the emphasis on including mine-affected countries in the Centre's activities at all levels. Staff were appointed from Afghanistan, Albania and Mozambique.

Other innovations implemented during the year included formally linking our annual workplan to our 2006-2008 Strategy for the first time.

Our website and publications were redesigned and improved, to make them more accessible and easier to read. "*Close-up*", a quarterly newsletter designed to provide regular updates and information about the GICHD's work, was launched in April.

WORKING TOGETHER | WORKING WITH PARTNERS

The GICHD works in partnership with mine-affected countries, as well as donor governments, relevant UN organisations and other international and national mine action groups.

Constructive working relationships with the national authorities of over 40 mine-affected countries remain central to our strategy. During 2006, the Centre worked hard to strengthen existing relationships and also to develop new partnerships. We continued to offer practical support and advice to national mine action programmes – providing operational assistance and expertise where needed.

The provision of these services is made possible by the generosity of donor governments: Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

We also work in co-operation with the European Union as well as with a number of international organisations, including: UNMAS – hosting directors' meetings and centralising standards, the UNDP – providing assistance with capacity building, and the United Nations Children's Fund – Mine Risk Education Best Practice Guidebooks.

We have collaborated with the International Committee of the Red Cross – drafting an internal training manual – and NGOs such as Handicap International, the Afghan Mine Dog Centre, Mines Advisory Group, Norwegian People's Aid and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre.

COUNCIL OF FOUNDATION

Members as of 31 December 2006

The Council of Foundation is the governing body of the GICHD. It defines the general orientation of the Centre, supervises the activities of the GICHD and decides on the allocation of the resources made available to the Centre. Under its President, the Council of Foundation unites 20 members nominated by States contributing significantly and/or participating in the Centre's immediate activities.

President

Dr Cornelio Sommaruga

Members of the Council

Afghanistan | **Ambassador Assad Omer** | Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

Burundi | **Ambassador Paul Mahwera** | Permanent Representative of Burundi to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

Canada | **Ambassador Paul Meyer** | Permanent Representative of Canada to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

Colombia | **Ambassador Clemencia Forero Ucros** | Permanent Representative of Colombia to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

Croatia | **Mrs Dijana Plestina** | Advisor on Mine Action to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Croatia

Finland | **Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto** | Permanent Representative of Finland to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

France | **Ambassador Jean-François Dobelle** | Permanent Representative of France to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

Geneva | **Professor Claude Le Coultre** | Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Medicine | University of Geneva

Germany | **Ambassador Bernhard Brasack** | Permanent Representative of Germany to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

Italy | **Ambassador Carlo Trezza** | Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

Japan | **Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki** | Permanent Representative of Japan to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

Jordan | **His Royal Highness, Prince Mired bin Raad bin Zeid al-Hussein of Jordan** | Chairman of the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation

Mozambique | **Ambassador Frances Victória Velho Rodrigues** | Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

Netherlands | **Ambassador Johannes Landman** | Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

Norway | **Ms Susan Eckey** | Deputy Director General, Department of UN, Peace and Humanitarian Affairs, Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sweden | **Ambassador Elisabet Borsiin Bonnier** | Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

Switzerland | **Ambassador Jürg Streuli** | Treasurer of the Council of Foundation, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

Switzerland | **Ambassador Raimund Kunz** | Secretary of the Council of Foundation, Head of the Security Policy Directorate, Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport | Berne

United Kingdom | **Ambassador John Duncan** | Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the Conference of Disarmament | Geneva

United States of America | **Ambassador Warren W. Tichenor** | Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

Observer

UNMAS | **Mr Max Gaylard** | Director, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) | New York

ADVISORY BOARD

Members as of 31 December 2006

The Advisory Board provides advice to both the Council of Foundation and the management of the GICHD. It consists of twelve eminent persons being in charge at various levels of the international mine action community. The Advisory Board is chaired by the Director of the GICHD.

Mrs Paula Claycomb | Senior Project Officer | United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Mr Steinar Essén | Deputy Director | Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

Mr John Flanagan | Deputy Director Operations | United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

Mr Etsay Gebre Selassie | Director | Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO), Ethiopia

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