

# THE MARSHALL LEGACY INSTITUTE

# The Development of a Mine Action Non-Profit Organization

by Amy Eichenberg [ Program Manager, K9 Demining Corps, Marshall Legacy Institute ]

**T**he Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) celebrated its eighth anniversary in March 2005 as a successful mine action non-profit organization. The goals and focus of the organization have evolved over time to help war-torn countries help themselves.

MLI was founded in 1997 by General Gordon Sullivan, following his retirement as Chief of Staff of the United States Army. The Board of Trustees of the Marshall Foundation asked General Sullivan to commemorate the life and work of George C. Marshall for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program). General Sullivan decided to establish a non-profit organization to carry the vision of the Nobel Peace Laureate into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As George Marshall had engineered the remarkable effort to help Europe rebuild itself after World War II, MLI would extend this legacy by helping emerging democracies create conditions that would promote social-economic growth and development.

General Sullivan and MLI co-founder Daniel Layton were determined to apply technological, educational and informational skills to build indigenous capacities in developing nations through action-oriented initiatives to alleviate human suffering, restore hope and nurture stability. While focusing its initial efforts on telemedicine and related medical activities, MLI sought to coordinate its humanitarian work with like-minded organizations to leverage resources through the formation of public-private partnerships. An early project was the assessment of education and training requirements worldwide to treat landmine injuries.

The 1990s presented a spurt of complex crises

in northern Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda and Haiti that highlighted the need for partnerships and close cooperation between military and civilian organizations responding to these emergencies. MLI asked recently retired Colonel Perry Baltimore to organize a conference at Harvard University to review civil-military relations in humanitarian crises. An outgrowth of this conference was a renewed focus on landmines, which present major obstacles for growth and stability in war-torn countries. The untimely death of Princess Diana and the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) further heightened awareness of the landmine issue during the formative years of MLI.

As a 36-year military veteran, General Sullivan was well-aware of the deadly effects of landmines and UXO. Daniel Layton had previously worked as Director of the Office of International Security and Peacekeeping Operations at the U.S. Department of State, where he had oversight of demining programs in 14 countries. With its Board of Directors steeped in international peace and security issues, MLI resolved to focus on the development of technology, information and operational programs to mitigate the effects of the global landmine problem. MLI committed itself to helping severely contaminated countries in establishing affordable and sustainable mine action programs to free the land from the scourge of mines, while also assisting landmine survivors and precluding injury through community-based mine risk education (MRE).

MLI engaged in victims' assistance and landmine awareness projects in Central America following the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch. In collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and the

Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI), MLI provided medical support for a young Nicaraguan boy named Julio Tinoco Perez, whose medical needs exceeded the capacity of local doctors. MLI also sponsored a two-year MRE program in the heavily mine-infested areas of Nicaragua to teach threatened populations, especially children, how to avoid landmine injuries and how to help mine

victims. Additionally, MLI has provided management training to national leaders charged with mine action responsibilities in Mozambique, Nicaragua and Zambia.

Following a trip to Africa in 1998 sponsored by the United Nations Association of the USA to engage the private sector—business executives, media representatives and non-governmental organizations—in the landmine issue, MLI became interested in the role of mine detection dogs (MDDs). The mission participants observed dog teams at work in Rwanda, sniffing for landmines. When asked by the head of state of Eritrea for dogs to find plastic mines that were virtually invisible to metal detectors, the delegation expressed great interest and wanted to learn more about the use of dogs in landmine clearance operations. MLI subsequently conducted a global assessment of MDDs on behalf of the U.S. Department of State. After traveling to breeding facilities, visiting MDD trainers and handlers, observing dog teams in the field, and meeting with demining operations managers and scientists in Africa, Europe and North America, MLI produced its report and became a strong advocate for highly trained dogs as a valuable and versatile component in the deminer's tool kit. MLI began a program to provide MDDs to the neediest countries around the world.

## Challenges Met

One of MLI's chief challenges has been fundraising—getting Americans to understand the seriousness of global landmine problem and to take action. Not faced with the everyday reality of stepping on a landmine, most Americans are unaware of the issue. In 1996 and 1997, Princess Diana brought attention to the horrific scourge of landmines during her travels to Angola and Bosnia, when she became an advocate on behalf of landmine survivors. More recently, the former Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State for Mine Action and the Partnership Office at the U.S. Department of State, as well as the ICBL and prominent celebrities such as Her Majesty Queen Noor, Sir Paul McCartney and singer Sheryl Crow have helped to educate the public about this international humanitarian issue.

The unfortunate loss of life and limbs of U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq caused by landmines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) has also heightened awareness about these hidden killers that strike without regard to nationality, age or gender. Most Americans will never have occasion to visit a severely or even mildly landmine-contaminated country, let alone know first-



*George C. Marshall, author of the Marshall Plan, soldier and statesman.*

hand what it is to live with the daily threat and effects of these weapons.

MLI has found that man's best friend, the canine, is not only an important resource for finding landmines, but is also a valuable asset in generating support for the landmine issue because of the widespread appeal of dogs. Prospective donors often become interested in helping with the mine problem when they learn how dogs are part of the solution.

Following its global assessment of MDDs in the fall of 1998, MLI realized that few people outside the humanitarian demining community knew of the role that dogs can and do play in mine clearance operations. While many people knew that sniffing dogs were used to find drugs or agricultural products in airports, few knew anything about MDDs.

Fully appreciating the potential value of dogs in landmine clearance operations, MLI launched its K9 Demining Corps (K9DC) Campaign in 1999 to increase both the quantity and quality of MDD teams worldwide. MLI found campaign partners in the U.S. Department of State, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), DC Comics, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and HDI. The U.S. Department of State supported formation of the Campaign Task Force and production of a video documenting the work of MDDs to promote awareness and education of the legacy of landmines, human-dog partnerships and the activities of the U.S. government in global humanitarian demining. HDI provided funding to meet the Eritrean request for six dogs. HSUS endorsed the Campaign and use of MDDs after its president, Dr. Paul Irwin, visited dog teams in action in Bosnia. MLI served on the Advisory Board for the Mine Dog Study conducted by the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to improve the quality of operations and establish international standards.

MLI travels extensively throughout the United States to raise private funding to give highly trained dogs to the neediest of countries. MLI has visited businesses, churches, civic organizations, foundations and philanthropists in California, Florida, Massachusetts, New York, New Hampshire, Texas, Virginia and Washington to deliver landmine presentations and dog demonstrations, illustrating the significant impact of people and dogs working together to make a safer world for all people and animals. Most recently, MLI Business Manager David Berlan was the keynote speaker for a dinner hosted by Lipscomb University students who raised over \$11,000 (U.S.) for landmine action.

MLI has been pleased to witness the growth of MDD teams working worldwide from 150 dogs in nine countries in 1998 to over 800 dogs in 24 countries today. In the past several years, MLI has provided highly trained MDDs to Armenia, Eritrea, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State has trained local handlers to

employ these dogs effectively in landmine clearance operations.

## Developing Partnerships

In 2003, under the leadership of Diana Enzi, wife of Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), MLI developed an initiative to involve American youth in the fight against landmines. The Children Against Mines Program (CHAMPS) is an education and outreach project to inform schoolchildren of the landmine issue and to foster global citizenship. CHAMPS provides students an opportunity to make a difference by sponsoring their own MDD. CHAMPS links the resources of MLI, the U.S. Department of State, participating schools and neighboring civic organizations to learn about an important humanitarian issue and to take action to help others.

Students are naturally eager to learn about children in far away places and typically love dogs. CHAMPS helps schoolchildren realize that they can have an impact on improving the lives of other people and animals. By sponsoring an MDD named for their city or state, children receive photos and updates on their dog and its work as well as information on the beneficiary country in which it is sniffing out mines and returning land to productive use. The schoolchildren of Wyoming have set the standard in successfully placing "Wyoming," a female Belgian Malinois now working in Sri Lanka.

MLI reaches out to other mine action organizations to work together for the common good. Clear Path International (CPI), a Vermont-based non-profit that provides assistance to landmine survivors and their families in southeast Asia, recently joined Director Kimberly McCasland and MLI's CHAMPS team visiting schools throughout Vermont. The kick-off event in Montpelier featured Governor Douglas and Mrs. Marcell Leahy, wife of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT). Tom Vajda, Foreign Service Officer in the Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, also participated. The CHAMPS tour in Vermont raised funds for dogs and landmine survivors. By coordinating activities such as this, the mine action community as a whole becomes stronger.

The development of a funding base is a challenge typically faced by all non-profits. MLI has found a successful strategy in focusing on international businesses and expatriate communities to



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MLI

*Khoder Shreif and Rex, a mine detection dog team supported by MLI in Lebanon.*

help free their homeland of mines. For example, the well-organized Armenian-American community responded overwhelmingly to MLI's appeal. The community disseminated information on the landmine threat and canine demining through its own publications. MLI co-hosted a donor recognition event at the Armenian Embassy and appeared on Voice of America's Armenian broadcast. These efforts resulted in funding for 12 dogs for the Armenian Humanitarian Demining Center to free land for agricultural use in Armenia. The Sri Lankan embassy and expatriate community also generously supported MLI's efforts to provide lifesaving dogs to Sri Lanka. The embassy hosted awareness dinners. Also, the Sri Lanka Association of Greater Washington sponsored an MDD named Hannah to help the island nation of Sri Lanka recover from two decades of civil war, and has an additional dog, George, in training. The Defense Attaché from the Sri Lankan embassy frequently traveled with the CHAMPS Team to describe life in a mine-affected country.

## Conclusion

By working with international businesses that operate in mine-contaminated countries, MLI links business sense with corporate responsibility. By providing support for demining activities, MLI demonstrates global citizenship while

*Continued on page 54, MLI*

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining provides operational assistance to mine action programmes and operators, conducts research and provides support to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention.



# GENEVA DIARY

*Report from the GICHD*

by Ian Mansfield [ Operations Director, GICHD ]

## Evaluation of Mine Action Programmes

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has recently initiated a range of activities designed to improve the standard and effectiveness of mine action evaluations. The Centre is following a two-track approach. One aspect is to develop a range of tools available to all, which will assist in improving the standard of evaluations, and the second is to undertake a range of evaluations itself where appropriate.

In August 2004, the Centre appointed an officer to guide this work. To date, an evaluation handbook has been drafted and internal training has been conducted at the GICHD. Now the Centre has combined with the World Bank and Carleton University in Canada to offer a mine action evaluation module as part of its annual training course offered to developing countries. The GICHD will be sponsoring a number of attendees at this course in the summer of 2005 (contact [t.paterson@gichd.ch](mailto:t.paterson@gichd.ch) for details).

In addition to this work, the Centre has been undertaking a series of evaluations itself, both to prove the methodologies being developed and to fill a gap in the market. To date, the Centre has undertaken project and programme evaluations for France, Germany, Sweden, the United Nations and soon for the European Union. In addition, the Centre will establish a repository of evaluations and expand on the lessons learnt from them.

## Ongoing Work at the GICHD

An extensive outreach programme has commenced in support of the *Study of Mechanical Application in Demining* that was reported in the last edition of the *Journal of Mine Action*.<sup>1</sup> Briefings on the study findings have been made to the United Nations, a number of non-governmental organizations and people in mine-

affected countries; these briefings will continue throughout the year. Follow-on work is also continuing in areas such as the use of rollers, route clearance, residual hazards and the use of machine-mounted magnets to remove metal fragments. This last technique looks particularly promising.

*The Study on Manual Mine Clearance* is under way and aims to address the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of manual demining. Specific study areas include average clearance rates, cost, safety and techniques, as well as the management and organization of demining teams. Results of this work should be available in mid-2005.

The GICHD has an ongoing programme to help mine-affected countries take the International Mine Action Standards and develop them as national standards. A training package has been produced and workshops held in a number of countries. Most recently, the GICHD has helped the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan develop a comprehensive set of draft national standards. These national standards will be available on the GICHD website (see contact information below).

Finally, the GICHD publication *A Guide to Mine Action* has recently been released in Arabic and Russian language versions, to complement the English, French and Spanish editions. All GICHD publications can be ordered online at [www.gichd.ch](http://www.gichd.ch). ♦

See "References and Endnotes" on page 105

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## Charges Against ICBL Activist Dropped

The Bangladesh district court in charge of the case against peace activist and advocate for landmine awareness Rafique al Islam has ordered the charges against him be dropped. A *Landmine Monitor* researcher and member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), al Islam had been charged with smuggling ammunition and explosives in August 2004, which he and the ICBL denied all along. The case was dismissed for lack of evidence. Al Islam described the court's resolution as "a victory of the nonviolence work, the peace movement, the ICBL community and of the people who believe in the work for peace." The ICBL consists of over 1,300 groups in 90 countries and works toward the goals of having landmines banned and educating people about landmine risks.

## » MLI, continued from page 37

enhancing its visibility and corporate image in the beneficiary country. In Thailand, for instance, MLI received funding from Shell Oil Company to provide six MDDs to the Thailand Mine Action Center to sniff out landmines and save lives along the Cambodian border. MLI has had a challenging but productive history with many lessons learned and looks to the future with great hope and optimism, wishing great success for all mine action organizations and mine-affected countries. ♦

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