Comprehensive Medical Assistance for Landmine Survivors in Nicaragua

The victim-assistance component of the Acción Integral contra las Minas Antipersonal program was established in Nicaragua in 1997, and similar programs were set up across Central America. In Nicaragua, the AICMA victim-assistance element aims to help landmine victims obtain physical and psychological care, and provides them access to medical specialists they could not otherwise see. With many victims unable to pay for their medical treatment, the AICMA is coordinating funding and removing the financial burden of travel and lodging for treatment.

by Cecilia Bustamante | Organization of American States |

...Continuing Services

While other components of mine action in Nicaragua near conclusion, victim-assistance services need to continue. The number of survivors in Nicaragua is too large to abandon when mine clearance concludes and the accompanying mine-risk education campaigns wane. This is also true of Honduras. Landmine survivors in Central America will continue to need assistance; the AICMA program will ensure that they are helped, thereby fulfilling the program’s vision of reestablishing a society that will ensure that they are helped, thereby fulfilling the program’s vision of reestablishing a society.

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More NSAs Join Geneva Call’s Deed of Commitment

Two armed non-state actors in the Middle East and one in India, as well as the Somailand House of Elders in Northeastern Africa, have recently signed the Geneva Call’s Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personal Mines and Cooperation in Mine Action. The Zomi Reunification Organization in India and the Somaliland House of Elders signed the document in March 2009. The next month, the “Komalah–The Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran” and the “The Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan,” signed the document. By signing the document, all parties involved agree to ban anti-personal mines, as well as take part in necessary mine action.

Both the Komalah–The Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran and the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan are located in Iran and have used anti-personal mines in the past. According to a press release by Geneva Call, both groups recognize the devastating effect anti-personal mines have had on the country, particularly in the Kurdish provinces of Iran.

The ZRO, an armed non-state actor based in northeast India, became the 36th NSA to sign Geneva Call’s Deed of Commitment. The ZRO is the third NSA in northeast India to sign the commitment, pledging to ban anti-personnel mines and execute and contribute for necessary mine action. Before it signed the Deed of Commitment, the ZRO reported that it was able to complete destruction of its stockpiles and clear mines it had laid after completing dialogue with Geneva Call in 2009.

Despite their repeated interests, Somailand has not been able to join the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, as they are not an internationally recognized state. However, the law recently passed in the House of Representatives and House of Elders is modeled on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and includes consequences for noncompliance as well as provisions for monitoring implementation.

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