Chile

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the program is anonymous, and the government offers economic incentives for handing over personal firearms. According to Andrés Mestriner, Director of the National Arms Registry (RENAR), while men make up 97 percent of gun users in Argentina, women are far more likely to hand over firearms.10 RENAR reports that women have thus far been more receptive to the awareness campaign. The challenge will be to reach out to more men.

At an event co-hosted by RENAR and the Argentine Network for Disarmament in October 2007, more than 20,000 of the collect ed weapons were melted down at a steel plant in Campana, a city in the province of Buenos Aires.11 The destroyed weapons were collected from local RENAR posts throughout the coun try. The national disarmament program has been widely hailed as a success since the end of 2007. RENAR has collected close to 100,000 voluntarily surrendered weapons.

Looking Ahead

Despite existing landmine-contamination problems on the disputed Falkland/Malvinas Islands, the Argentine government remains committed to weapons reduction both domest ically and on the international stage. The country’s cooperation with international initiatives against cluster munitions and the illicit SA/ LW trade are evidence of a multi-faceted approa ch to minimize the legacy of conflict.

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Chile

Chile is a member of the United Nations Humanitarian Demining Initiative (UNDICI). UNDICI, sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is an international organization dedicated to reducing the hazards of anti-personnel landmines and unexploded ordnance. UNDICI’s goal is to reduce the number of casualties and victims through the sharing of best practices.

New Report on U.S. Humanitarian-Demining Efforts Published

The Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs recently released the eighth edition of To Walk The Earth In Safety, a comprehensive report on U.S. activities related to mine action and conventional-weapons destruction. The report covers efforts in 43 countries by the interagency U.S. Humanitarian Mine Action Program and the more than 60 partner organizations the State Department collaborates with to raise awareness and resources.

The latest edition of To Walk The Earth In Safety also includes information on U.S. efforts to destroy excess small arms/light weapons, ongoing efforts with physical security and stockpile management, and the menace of man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS).

Landmine Overview

By December 2005, Chile completed the destruction of 59,000 stockpiled mines with help from Chilean Army and Navy through the Organization of American States’ mine action program, the Asociación Interamericana de Minas Antipersonal (Comprehensive Action Against Antipersonal Mines) (G) by 2005. This goal was completed about two years before the Ottawa Convention (Comprehensive Action Against Antipersonal Mines) required, proving Chile’s commitment to landmine removal.1 Chile signed the Convention in 1997 and became a State Party in 2007. By 2008, the Government of Chile has completed the destruction of all anti-personnel mines.

Chile’s national landmines eradication program includes a joint effort of military personnel and non-governmental organizations, with financial support from the U.S. government through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Swiss government.

Victim Assistance

There were 88 landmine casualties between 1979 and 1991, 12 of which resulted in death. Of the 25 deaths and 53 of the casualties were among military personnel.1 According to the 2008 Landmine Monitor Report, there have been two landmine-related deaths since 2008. There is no conclusive evidence on how many injuries have been sustained in 2008, as a part of CNAD’s remunerative initiatives, a survey concerning injuries due to mines and other explosive remnants of war12 was sent to individuals living near minefields to provide better survivor assistance and compensation,1 and to determine how many injuries have occurred. Police de Investigadores (the Chilean investigatory police), has been given the responsibility of locating landmine victims and discovering incidents that have occurred since the Pinocchio dictatorial regime. Although its results have been widely questioned by non-governmental organizations,5 CNAD, along with the Chilean government, has given monetary assistance to mine-accident victims and the communities affected by landmine explosions. Recently, Chile drafted a “law of reparations,” which focuses on standardizing compensation given to victims and their families.13

Landmine Education

Chile has made many strides to educate its citizens on the prevention of further landmine casualties. CNAD has distributed pamphlets containing preventive procedures for those who reside in or transit through affected areas, while also marking existing minefields as a precautionary measure. This year, Chile’s mine-action goals include instituting the Campaign for Prevention and Mine Risk Awareness in the school system.

Further reading

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Profile Chile

Mine Action

Advice from the Ottawa Convention, Chile is also a member of the Humanitarian Network, where AP mine action is of great importance. Chile has ratified Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapon s,1 which restricts the use of mines, booby traps and other devices. In 2008, Chile promised to put US$9 million toward resolving its last 123,000 landmines, with a projected end date of 2016, some reports stated 2012 as an early end date. CNAD works with the President of Chile and serves as the Interministerial Coordinator for activities pertaining to the Ottawa Convention. CNAD’s main objective is to deter the use and production of landmines, working with organizations international to eradicate Chile’s landmine problem.5 Despite most landmines having been emplaced in difficult terrains with varying weather conditions, the remaining landmines are being removed in a timely manner. To do this, Chile has received financial assistance from Canada, the European Union, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United States and the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining.14 During 2007, Chile received $420,000 from international sources and put $1.2 million of its own money toward demining. In September 2008, Chile used this money to purchase two MineWolf machines, as well as to fund a training workshop and buy spare parts for the machines. MineWolf provided training for one mechanic in Chile, who were ready to work in March 2009.11

Variants

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Education in schools in close proximity to minefields, which CNAD, local NGOs and the Ministry of Education are running, has been introduced to all students in order to sensitize them to the dangers of IEDs and landmines. 2

Conclusion

Colombia

Colombia, a country overwhelmed by four decades of war, has the highest concentration of contamination from landmines and other explosive remnants of war in the Americas. 1 The conflict, which has continued to be waged between the Colombian government and various non-state actors, reached its peak during the early 1990s. 2 The use of improvised explosive devices, anti-personnel landmines and other forms of explosive ordnance has rapidly increased in Colombia since then, due to heavy usage by NSAs such as the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia. 3 In the past, the Colombian government laid landmines around 14 military bases to protect key infrastructure, but it renounced its use since 1997. Landmines are primarily used by NSAs to protect their home bases and illegal drug crops, which fund the conflict. The Landmine Monitor Report observes that landmine usage may not be limited to use by NSAs against the Colombian government, but may also be employed by different non-state actors against one another. 4 The use of landmines has become increasingly common; during 2005 and 2006, over 1,100 landmine victims were reported each year, about three victims a day. Since then, the number of non-casualties has decreased, yet the rate remains at an alarming level, with 769 victims for 2008. 5

Casualties

Reported casualty rates due to landmines, IEDs and other ERE are higher in Colombia than in any other part of the world. The majority of these casualties are attributed to IEDs, however, rather than traditional landmines. 6 The prevalence of IEDs is due to training that the two Colombian rebel groups, FARC and Eln, receive from specialized training with the NSAs, greatly disrupting their ability to provide care to victims of landmine accidents. 7

Cinamex’s work in Colombia is somewhat new. IEDs usually do not create as much attention, as landmines do. However, they are a serious problem, as they are very difficult to detect, and cause immense injuries,” said Vinicia Arciniegas, Proico’s Country Director. 8

Survivor Assistance

The Colombian government works alongside the United Nations, the Organization of American States, various non-governmental organizations, international organizations and local authorities to combat the problem. The government of Colombia also receives financial contributions for its mine-action program from donors, including the European Union and the governments of Canada, Japan and the United States. Colombia became a State Party to the Ottawa Convention on 1 March 2001, after signing the Convention on 5 December 1997. 9

In October 2001, the Comisión Nacional Intersectorial para la Acción contra las Minas Antipersonal was created in order to execute the Convention in Colombia. CINAMAX’s responsibilities are varied, including development of a national plan, policy decisions and coordination of international assistance. 10 It also has committees dedicated to the implementation of victim assistance and mine clearance activities. 11 By 2010, the Colombian government plans to have 14 demining teams from the military forces deployed. In order to complement that national capacity, an accreditation system is under construction to allow national and international NGOs to work in Colombia. 12

Minemadness

Although mine-risk education began to expand in 2004, it is still insufficient throughout the country. The government of Colombia also receives financial contributions for its mine-action program from donors, including the European Union and the governments of Canada, Japan and the United States. Colombia became a State Party to the Ottawa Convention on 1 March 2001, after signing the Convention on 5 December 1997. 9

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