Peru

Country Profile

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Available at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol13/iss1/34

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Colombia considering the high level of civilian casualties. ‘The International Committee of the Red Cross and UNICEF have expanded their Mine Risk Focus, incorporating the Colom- bia Red Cross, in conjunction with PAICM, various Colombian NGOs and U.N. agencies into the process. Children make up a high percentage of landmine casualties in Colomb- ia, and in response, those organizations place special emphasis on incorporating MRE into the educational system, particularly targeting at-risk children. Those organizations provide MRE learning materials to schools and train teachers to help educate children on the risks of landmines and other ERW. According to PAICM, indigenous populations in Colombia may likely be more at risk from landmines than other populations. Efforts are being made to develop an MRE program specifically targeted toward indigenous groups. This program aims to take into account the cultural differences that make other MRE programs less effective among these groups.’

The Future
Despite being a State Party to the Octa- va Convention, Colombia’s problem with landmines persists as the conflict between the Colombian government and the FARC continues. The Colombian government and the international community are making efforts to combat the problem, and improvements in security have been observed in many re- gions of the country. The ongoing conflict has undoubtedly hindered efforts to eradicate Colombias dangerous legacy, yet it is encour- aging to witness the Colombia government’s effort, as well as that of other actors, to resolve landmines and other threats posed by the ongoing conflict. See Endnotes, Page 114

Peru

by Lauren Hill and Cory Kulick
[Center for International Stabilization and Recovery]

Situated between Chile and Ecuador, next to the South Pacific Ocean, Peru faced a decade of military rule in the 1970s and internal conflict in the 1980s when democracy was reestablished. Those periods of conflict, as well as a border dispute with Ecuador in the 1990s, have resulted in landmine problems. The Ottawa Convention went into force for Peru in 1999, meaning its deadline for total mine clearance should be reached in 2009. Peru requested, and was granted, a deadline extension through 2017, citing a lack of funding.

History of the Mine Problem
The majority of the landmine contami- nation in Peru is located near its border with Ecuador, an area known as Condor. This area was heavily mined during the border dispute between the two countries. Electricity towers and public infrastructure are also heavily mined in Peru. Internal con- flict during 1980–92 led Peru to use anti-per- sonnel landmines as a defense against the Maoist guerrilla organization Sendero Lemu- noso del Perú (Shining Path) and other revolution- ary armies, making explosive remnants of war the greatest concern for the country.

Mine Ban Policy
By 1998, Peru had signed and ratified the Ottawa Convention, and in 1999 it became a State Party when the Convention went into effect. In 2008, the Peruvian Congress passed a law making the manufacturing, use, storage, sale, transfer or trade of AP mines punishable by five to eight years in prison. That same year, Peru formally expressed the challenges it faced regarding mine clearance and victim assistance at the Seventh Meeting of States Parties in Geneva, Switzerland. The Peruvian Armed Forces General Directorate of Humanitarian Demining is responsible for demining in all regions of the country.

Landmine Clearance
Peru requested a 10-year extension to its original 1 March 2009 clearance deadline, set in place by Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention to diminish the estimated 50,000 remaining mines. Preparing for the completion of demining, Peru set a 12-year plan for 2007 through 2019, its proposed 10-year extension date. However, the plan’s mine-clearance strategy concerning Peru’s border with Ecuador was deemed inadequate, and Peru’s 10-year extension request was rejected. Peru then requested an eight-year extension until the money was available. In 2007, it was reported that there were 48 new landmine/ERW and improvised explosive device casualties—two caused by AP mines and the rest by other ERW and IEDs. Since collection of casualty data is difficult due to the remoteness of the affected areas, a total number is not known. Victims of landmines and other ERW include both deminers and civilians, including children.

Progress
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Peru and Pakistan have joined together on a project in the Concor region coordinated by their respective national mine-action programs. The Centro de Desminado del Ecuador and the Centro Peruano de Acción contra las Minas Antipersonal will work in coordination with the OAS program, Acción Integral contra las Minas Antipersonal, to ensure the commitments to the Ottawa Convention are followed. The OAS–AICMA program assists with these goals by overseeing the allocation of funds from international donors and gathering contacts to help coordinate programs. A single regional coordinator directs the OAS– AICMA offices in Quito and Lima, making effective communication possible between the countries. Funded by countries such as the United States, as well as the European Commission, OAS–AICMA supports both national mine-action centers to ensure that goals are reached in a timely manner and efforts to help clear mines in the Cordillera del Condor region are initiated.

News Brief
Humanitarian Demining Workshop Held in Bogotá
From 9 to 12 June 2009, the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement hosted the Taller de Planificación del Desminado Humanitario en Colombia (Colombia Humanitarian Demining Planning Workshop) in Bogotá, Colombia. The workshop was facilitated by the Mine Action Information Center at James Madison University, and was attended by representatives from the U.S. and Colombian government, international organizations, and key stakeholders in Colombia’s work against landmines.

More than 40 participants worked together to draft a plan of action for Colombian humanitarian demining activities. They will use the plan as a guiding document for developing future mine-action activities. The plan emphasized integration and cooperation among military forces, national authorities and international partners.

The workshop opened with speeches from Colombian Vice President Francisco Santos Calderón and Andrés Darríol, Director of the Programa Presidencial de Acción Integral contra las Minas Antipersonal (PAICMA, the Presidential Program for Comprehensive Action against Antipersonal Landmines). Presentations from international counterparts from the Organization of American States, Jordan’s National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation, Mines Advisory Group, the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Southern Command and the Colombian military forces followed.

Working groups discussed ways forward with command-and-control models for mine action, and how to best manage information gathered by survey and demining teams. The groups developed a 13-day Plan of Action, which was presented to a closing session of about 100 dignitaries and representatives from mine-action organizations, diplomatic missions to Colombia and landmine survivors.

The closing session was addressed by the Honorable William Brownfield, U.S. Ambassador to Colombia, and Sergio Jaramillo, Colombian Vice Minister of Defense. COL (ret) Dennis Barnie, Director of James Madison University’s Mine Action Information Center in the Center for Stabilization and Recovery, and representatives from PAICMA also spoke.

P R O F I L E S

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Published by JMU Scholarly Communities, 2009
Venezuela: The Human Rights Watch Film Festival

Since October 1999, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has been a State Party to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, which it signed 3 December 1997, and ratified 14 April 1999. Upon ratification of the convention, the document became a national law of Venezuela. At the U.N. Conference on Disarmament in 2006, Venezuela announced that it had fulfilled its duties to the Convention in 2003, destroying 51,189 AP mines and keeping 5,000 landmines for military training. The country also announced that it had enacted the Disarmament Act in 2003, which seeks to eliminate the illegal possession of small arms/ light weapons from the public sector.

Despite complying with certain aspects of the Ottawa Convention by ratifying it and meeting deadlines for stockpile destruction, the Venezuelan military continues to violate the Convention by using landmines around several military bases. Venezuela laid 1,074 AP mines from 1993–97, surrounding six of its naval bases on the border shared with Colombia. 

Venezuela cites threats from Colombian guerrilla forces, stating that until the country develops a replacement form of an early detection warning system to use in their place, the mines will continue to be utilized for this purpose. The Intelligence Center for Mine Actions stands in opposition to this military usage, officially stating that "Venezuela has in essence said that it is purposefully deploying AP mines in order to derive military benefit from them, and in doing so, has violated the treaty, to clear them as soon as possible, or possibly even by the 10-year deadline." However, Venezuela continues to be committed to the objectives and spirit of the Ottawa Convention.

Survivor Assistance

Venezuela’s Article 7 report does not include information on provisions for landmine survivors. The Venezuelan government did, however, provide survivor assistance to the victims of the 1996 and 2004 military mine incidents. The victim from the incident in 1996 received medical aid and psychological assistance. A survivor in 2004 was not informed of the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander. Concerning the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander. Concerning the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander. Concerning the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander. Concerning the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander. Concerning the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander. Concerning the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander. Concerning the victim of the 2004 incident, who was told to go into the minefield by a commander.

Venezuela has a national health-care system in place that includes "specialized services" in hospital locations. Rehabilitation services are one of these services available. Venezuela is not a signatory to the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, but it does have national laws that protect disabled persons from discrimination.

Conclusion

Venezuela is a State Party of the Ottawa Convention, and while it has complied with some of its precepts, it continues to violate the terms of the convention by refusing to remove the landmines laid for defensive purposes around its naval bases bordering Colombia. There is a high level of drug-related violence along the border, necessitating some form of an early-scare system for the nation. However, there are other early alert systems that can be used in place of landmines. Furthermore, Venezuela has requested its original 2006 Article 5 deadline to be extended to 2014. Although casualty rates are extremely low, Venezuela remains one of a handful of non-signatory nations that continue to deliberately violate the convention.

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