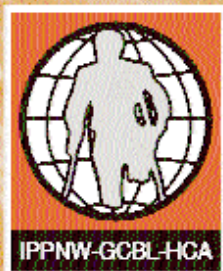


**Report
on the
Second
International
Conference
on Landmines
in Russia and
the Former
Soviet Union**

Peaceful Caucasus:

**A Future
Without Mines**



Tbilisi, 5-7 December, 1999

საგარეო საგანგებო მისიის
კათოლიკოს-პატრიარქი



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**To the participants of "Peaceful Caucasus: A Future Without
Mines," the 2nd International Conference on Landmines in
the FSU, 5-7 December 1999, Tbilisi**

Dear Conference Participants,

There are many "hot spots" in the world today and the Caucasus is just one of them. That is why such a keen significance is attributed to the peace movement in such a complicated region, and to the struggle against such an inhuman weapon as anti-personnel landmines. The main victims of this weapon are not warriors but, on the contrary, civilians, basically aged people, women, and children.

In view of these facts, special attention should be paid to the peace movement, and particularly to the campaign to ban anti-personnel landmines.

Strengthening peace is one of the key issues for the efforts of the Georgian Orthodox Church. The Georgian Orthodox Church would join every human being of good will in efforts to achieve this ultimate goal of establishing peace in the Caucasus and worldwide.

I welcome the participants of this important meeting and wish you fruitful work and success in your difficult and noble efforts.

God save you in peace and prosperity,

Iliya
Patriarch of All-Georgia

Peaceful Caucasus

A Future Without Mines

Report
on the
Second
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Conference on
Landmines
in Russia
and the
Former Soviet Union

Tbilisi
5-7 December, 1999

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Contents

PEACEFUL CAUCASUS: A FUTURE WITHOUT MINES

Authors Message	5
-----------------------	---

OPENING PLENARY

Welcome

Temur Imnadze, Chair, Department for Disabled Persons, Ministry of Social Protection and Labor, Georgia	7
Nana Devdariani, Member of Parliament, Georgia	7
Jemma Asratyan, Coordinator, Armenian Campaign to Ban Landmines, President, Association of Women with University Education, Armenia	8
Marina Sallier, Chair, Women for Life Without War and Violence, Russia	8
Aslambek Aslakhonov, Academician, Chair, Union of Chechen People Living Outside the Historic Motherland, Russia	8

Addresses

Jemma Asratyan, Coordinator, Armenian Campaign to Ban Landmines, President, Association of Women with University Education, Armenia	8
Zarema Mazaeva, Coordinator, Refugees Against Landmines, Chechnya	10
Ashot Melyan, Chair, National League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, Nagorny Karabakh	11
Nikolai Izvekov, Vice-President, Foreign Policy Association, Russia	11

SECOND PLENARY

Elgudza Butzhrikidze, Lieutenant-General, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Georgia	14
Marina Sallier, Chair, Women for Life Without War and Violence, Russia	14
Irina Yanovskaya, Chair, Journalists for Human Rights, South Osetia	15
Ashot Adamyan, Orthopedic Surgeon, Pediatric Hospital of Nagorny Karabakh	15

THIRD PLENARY

Jody Williams, International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) International Ambassador, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, USA	18
Stephen Goose, Arms Division, Human Rights Watch, USA	19
Vladimir Podolin, Chair, Department of Emergency Situations and Post-Conflict Reconstruction, Ministry of Nationalities, Russia	20
Archil Burdzhanadze, Colonel, Chief Physician of Central Military Hospital, Georgia	20
Louis Maresca, Legal Division, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Switzerland	21
Gordon M. Reay, (Rt.) Lieutenant-General, Advisor to Canadian Ambassador for Mine Action, Canada	22
Aslambek Aslakhonov, Academician, Chair, Union of Chechen People Living Outside the Historic Motherland, Russia	23

PANEL 1: Regional security

Landmines on borders (Krasnyi Most) and humanitarian demining

Anzor Maglakelidze, Colonel, Counselor to Commander-in-Chief of United Forces, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Georgia	26
Arif Yunusov, Chair, Azerbaijani Campaign to Ban Landmines, Azerbaijan	26
Albert Kaltakhtchyan, Vice-Governor, Tavush-Marza Province, Armenia	27
Alexander Kobelashvili, Department of State Borders, Georgia	27
Arthur Sakunts, Chair, Vanadzor Office, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Armenia	28

PANEL 2: Mine awareness programs

Geir Bjoersvik, Technical Advisor, Norwegian People's Aid, Norway	29
Nelli Alilova, Armenian Committee, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Armenia	29
Martin Van Harten, International Officer, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, The Netherlands	29
Temur Sakhikia, Mine Victim, Georgian Campaign to Ban Landmines, Georgia	30
Musa Jalalov, Program Coordinator, Azerbaijan Committee of the Red Cross, Azerbaijan	30
Karl Heinz Stirli, Counselor, National Committee on Demining, Azerbaijan	30
Aleksander Russetsky, Coordinator, Georgian Committee, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Georgia	31
Tamara Osmanova, Director, Dербent Center for Socio-Psychological Rehabilitation and Culture of Peace, Dagestan	31

PANEL 3: Joining the Ottawa Process: Obstacles and opportunities

Mikhail Nagorny, Lieutenant-Colonel, Department of Engineer Forces, Ministry of Defense, Russia	32
Yuri Donskoy, Chair, Ukrainian Campaign to Ban Landmines, Ukraine	33
Louis Mareska, Legal Division, ICRC, Switzerland	33

PANEL 4: Landmines on the territory of former Soviet military bases. Cooperation on the landmine problem between military bodies and civil society institutions

Abstracts from round-table discussion	35
---	----

PANEL 5: Landmines in conflict zones and special military/peace-keeping operations in the Caucasus

Chris Hunter, Center for Peacemaking and Community Development, Russia	39
Gordon M. Reay, (Rt.) Lieutenant-General, Advisor to Canadian Ambassador for Mine Action, Canada	39
Yuri Donskoy, Ukrainian Campaign to Ban Landmines, Ukraine	40

PANEL 6: Medical assistance and social rehabilitation of mine victims

James Cobey, Orthopedic Surgeon, Physician for Human Rights, USA	41
Ildar Minnullin and Nikolai Fomin, Military Medical Academy, St. Petersburg, Russia	42
Abstracts from round-table discussion	43

CLOSING PLENARY

Jody Williams, ICBL International Ambassador, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, USA	44
--	----

FINAL STATEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE

45

WORKING GROUP ACTION PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

46

Appendix 1: Appeals from Refugees Against Landmines and Common Action (Chechnya)

49

Appendix 2: Conference Organizers and Financial Support

51

Appendix 3: Conference Participants

52

Peaceful Caucasus: A Future Without Mines

Authors Message

The Tbilisi Conference "Peaceful Caucasus: A Future Without Mines," held on 5-7 December 1999, was the second international conference on landmines to take place in Russia and the Former Soviet Union (FSU).

The Conference was organized by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW 1985 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate), the Georgian Committee of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, and the Georgian Committee of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate). The ICBL and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC 1917, 1944, and 1963 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate) also participated in this conference.

Held in the capital city of Georgia, the Conference's aim was to follow up on the accomplishments of "New Steps for a Mine-Free Future: First International Conference on Landmines in Russia and the CIS," held in May 1998 in Moscow, Russia, and to re-introduce the landmines issue in the context of the Russia/FSU region.

The Caucasus is a region that continues to be plagued by conflict and ethnic tension, and whose territories are vastly infested by a large number of anti-personnel (AP) mines and unexploded ordnances (UXOs). Civilians, the military, peacekeepers, and members of international peace organizations are all highly exposed to the danger of mines. The proportion of mine victims in the Abkhazian conflict alone was as high as 70% of all victims.

The Tbilisi Conference took place during the same time that combat operations and wide-scale mining and mine use were being carried out in Chechnya. These extraordinary circumstances lent an added significance to the Conference, as representatives from governments, the military, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and peace organizations were faced with the challenge of having to overcome barriers and differences, and work together in unison and true partnership on the landmines issue.

More than 170 participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Canada, Georgia, Germany, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the US, as well as the territories of Abkhazia, Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Nagorny Karabakh, and South Osetia gathered to stimulate a constructive dialogue on landmines in the region. Participants included government officials, military generals, parliamentarians, experts in demining, surgical traumatology, orthopedics and prosthetics, activists, mine ban campaigners, landmine survivors, and representatives of regional NGOs.

By the opening of the Tbilisi Conference, 136 nations had signed and 89 nations had ratified the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) that came into force on the 1st of March 1999. All of Europe's nations except for Finland, all NATO countries except for Turkey and the US, and all nations of Central and Eastern Europe except for Yugoslavia have joined the MBT. Ten out of the 15 republics of the FSU, including Georgia, have not signed the MBT, which provides for a total ban on the production, stockpile, use, and transfer of AP mines. Lithuania, Moldova, and Ukraine have signed the MBT, while only Turkmenistan and Tajikistan have ratified it. Among the treaty non-signatories are: Russia the only official manufacturer of mines in the territory of the FSU with estimated stocks reaching 60-70 million AP mines; Belarus with arsenals containing millions of AP mines; and Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, all of which have suffered tremendously from the use of mines during recent military conflicts. The escalation of the mine-war in the Caucasus conflict areas evokes great concern.

The main goal of the Tbilisi Conference was to further build the dialogue between non-governmental organizations, experts, and governmental structures dealing with the military, socio-economic, political, and humanitarian aspects of the production and use of AP mines. A wide range of key issues and problems facing the Caucasus were discussed by conference participants in the course of plenary meetings and workshops, including:

- Regional security and the mine problem in border areas;
- AP mines and special military operations in the Caucasus (Dagestan and Chechnya);
- Mine awareness programs for civilian populations;
- Mine victim assistance, psychological and social rehabilitation;
- Joining the Ottawa Convention: challenges and perspectives.

The Tbilisi Conference stressed the urgent need to immediately cease the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of AP mines. Conference participants expressed their hope that the governments of those states suffering from the landmine epidemic would allocate more funds for mine clearance and mine victim assistance. Participants also called for the further strengthening of regional campaigns and non-governmental organizations struggling to ban mines.

* * *

Presented in this report are the proceedings of the Second International Conference on Landmines in Russia and the FSU, which was conducted in both English and Russian (as well as Georgian, at times). Included are speeches and responses of conference participants. Materials provided by the conference organizers and participants were used to produce this report. The authors have attempted to include all principal issues stated in speeches and touched upon during discussions in the course of the Conference in this report.

The authors would like to express their hope that this publication will promote and facilitate the attainment of the Conference's goals.

* * *

The Second International Conference on Landmines in Russia and the FSU and the publication of this report were made possible thanks to the financial support from the governments of Canada and Norway, the Open Society Institute (USA), and the Ploughshares Fund.

Opening Plenary

Welcome

Temur Imnadze

Chair, Department for Disabled Persons,
Ministry of Social Protection and Labor,
Georgia

Dear ladies and gentlemen, I want to welcome all participants to the Conference and to declare our willingness to cooperate. Military activity, emerging ethnic conflicts and terrorism have increased and reached a menacing level in recent years. The situation in the Caucasus is very complicated. In Georgia alone, several thousands of people have been killed or maimed by landmines during the last 7-8 years.

In 1996, the President of Georgia authorized a state program on the social and medical rehabilitation of all categories of disabled persons, including the victims of military and ethnic conflicts. All initiatives within this program comply with the "Law on social insurance for the disabled." The Constitution of Georgia follows the international humanitarian law, thus the requirements of the 1993 48th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution "On equal rights of the disabled" are introduced in the program. However, the issue of mine-related damage and loss is inadequately studied. Our department is currently in the process of data collection, which is being carried out in compliance with WHO requirements, i.e., all vital needs of the disabled are taken into account. Hopefully, our efforts will ease the suffering of mine victims.

Official opening of the 2nd International Conference on Mines,
Metekhi Hotel Conference Hall, Tbilisi, Georgia.



The estimated number of landmines in Georgia reaches 500,000-700,000, though not all minefield maps or other such relevant information is available.

A landmine is an indiscriminate weapon that often maims innocent civilians, including children, pushing them into a life of suffering and disability. Amputees require very special care and comprehensive rehabilitation programs, including psycho-social rehabilitation. The latter is of extreme importance, taking into account that many operations are made in the field, thus re-amputations are required in most cases. In Georgia, re-amputations were performed in 90 percent of a total of 232 cases.

I want to conclude by wishing success to all your undertakings. I also hope our efforts will draw the attention of all those involved.

Nana Devdariani

Member of Parliament, Georgia

I am not here to remind you that landmines should be outlawed. The responsibility for any delay in the ban of this weapon lies with politicians, who rule the destiny of their people and who should comply with the position they hold.

There is no doubt that the production of landmines should be stopped alongside with their use. Although I belong to the parliamentary opposition, I am sure that no disagreements arise on this issue between the government and any party in the opposition. I hope that this conference will address the governments or adopt a resolution forcing the Parliament of Georgia and of other Caucasian republics to consider the international community's urge to prohibit landmines.

I hope that this Conference will be fruitful. I see people here who will not stay indifferent to the very painful issue of the prohibition of landmines, and who will do everything in their power to launch and complete a successful anti-landmine campaign in the Caucasus.

Jemma Asratyan

Coordinator, Armenian Campaign to Ban Landmines, President, Association of Women with University Education, Armenia

On the eve of the new millennium, mankind is trying to assess the past and forecast the future. It has sacrificed millions of human lives to two world wars, and it has already been 50 years since WWII ended, yet the battles still continue.

Governments and civil society are obliged to ensure all the needs of mine victims. Mines are merciless towards a child or an old person, merciless toward human fate, toward the future. The life of a mine victim turns into a personal tragedy, a misfortune for his/her family, while the state tends to fail to provide adequate care for them. Neglect and social isolation is the sad sentence for a mine victim.

Our future is defined by our mutual effort and struggle for peace.

Marina Sallier

Chair, Women for Life Without Wars and Violence, Russia

This Conference, held in the capital of Georgia, on the eve of the third millennium, is from my point of view, a contribution to strengthening peace.

When we talk about the psycho-social rehabilitation of victims, we should keep in mind all parties to a military conflict. We have just seen a few video-clips titled "Stop Mines." One of them shows a child tearing off a doll's legs and arms. This child is a future terrorist, he is not peace-minded. But people are not dolls, and there are no spare parts to repair a human being.

Aslambek Aslakhanov

Chair, Union of Chechen People Living Outside the Historic Motherland, Russia

The idea of protecting and saving civilian populations from the fury of landmines is a generous act of humanism. It goes beyond human tolerance to see a two-year-old child without legs. The previous war in Chechnya left painful scars. Now there is a new war, mines are dispersed from the air, people are being killed and maimed, or paralyzed by mines, not being able to move, plough, sow, graze their cattle. New types of mines are being developed. The words coming from official information sources inadequately depict the real situation in Chechnya. I hope so much that the Chechen people are strong enough to survive, but still they are not powerful enough to provide all the necessary care to victims, thus they will have to look for international assistance.

Addresses

Jemma Asratyan

Coordinator, Armenian Campaign to Ban Landmines, President, Association of Women with University Education, Armenia

As our planet is on the eve of a new century and a new millennium, mankind evaluates the past and forecasts the future.

The twentieth century was not only the century of scientific progress and space flights, of globalization of the economy and the building of transnational corporations, but it was also the century of global wars, international and inter-ethnic conflicts. The world has lost innumerable human lives during the two world wars; nevertheless, wars and conflicts keep taking place. Within the period 1945-1990 alone, there were 42 minor wars that killed 30 million people, and many of these deaths were due to landmines.

Today, like 50 years ago when WWII was over, our government and our people have to deal with the problems of refugees, disabled and civilian victims of the current military conflicts. Both military and civilians (more than 12 percent of the total population) are the victims of mines.

Landmines are indiscriminate towards age or sex; there are women, elderly, and children among mine victims. Landmines do not distinguish between the military and civilians; mines are merciless towards people, their fate and their future. A mine accident turns one's personal life into a tragedy for himself, his/her family and society as a whole. A mine accident is a life-long socio-economic and psychological trauma, and it often leads to neglect and social isolation in societies where the state fails to provide adequate care to the victims. So the international community has every reason to support the Ottawa process and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Our future will be built by our shared efforts to strengthen peace and guarantee stability. One of those efforts is the peaceful resolution of military conflicts by using all possible means to prevent wars with the inevitable use of landmines, the most inhuman weapon.

Unfortunately, the complicated geopolitical situation still results in military conflicts and the use of landmines.

The formation of sovereign states on the territory of the Former Soviet Union, the restructuring of activities, and the transition to a market economy are accompanied by political instability, economic stagnation, flows of refugees, and poverty, and sometimes even wars and inter-ethnic conflicts in a number of regions.

Erroneous national policies have transformed the Caucasus into an arena of inter-ethnic conflicts, lasting for almost 10 years.

Combatants during military operations in the southern Caucasus have used various types of weapons, including landmines. Mines have been laid chaotically, with no minefield maps or other international rules observed. A natural outcome of this practice has been the increased number of mine victims among the military and civilians, although five years have passed since the cease-fire agreement was signed. According to our data, more than three thousand Armenians were killed during the conflict,

more than two thousand were injured, and every fourth Armenian was injured by a mine, including 12 percent of civilians.

The security of borders and the well being of citizens are the primary national interests of each country as is a pre-disposition to abandon the military resolution of conflicts. Banning landmines is a global and multifaceted process with particular economic, humanitarian, and psychological aspects.

The government and the people of Armenia welcome the MBT signing in Ottawa in 1997 and its coming into force in March 1999. Armenia has also supported the 54th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution on landmines. The government of Armenia cannot ignore the fact that more of the neighboring countries Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Georgia is party to the MBT. The current Armenian border with the former USSR's Transcaucasian southern border and Turkey and Iran is mined by approximately 8,000 landmines along the perimeter, covering an area of 800 square kilometers.

Still uncertain is the issue of landmines alongside the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, as well as the minefields in areas bordering Nagorny Karabakh and Azerbaijan territories.

The signing of the Ottawa Convention would not solve the problem of clearing mines from Armenia unless the conflict in Nagorny Karabakh is politically settled under the OSCE and reliable security guarantees are provided. There are also economic obstacles originating from the continuing economic blockade and stagnation and the lack of financial resources, which means that Armenia will not be able to cope unilaterally with mine detection, minefield mapping, and mine clearance without an additional supply of qualified deminers, modern equipment, and medical experts.

Unfortunately the offer of the US government to train deminers for the two countries was lost due to the refusal of the Azerbaijan party. The medical rehabilitation and social integration of mine victims is another aching problem.

Although there are a lot of obstacles for those willing to sign the Ottawa Convention, it is important that the international community realizes that landmines are a slow-acting nuclear bomb, bringing about vast human losses, death, and injuries.

In January 1999, one-and-a-half years since the first international conference in Russia and the CIS, "New Steps Toward a Mine-Free Future," was held, the Association of Women with University Education, together with six other public organizations in Armenia, launched the Armenian Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Our activity in this field revealed both the inadequate knowledge of the issue and the public's lack of interest in the landmine problem, and exposed the need for systematic work in order to develop the Ottawa process.

In March 1999, the National Campaign took action to mark the day of the coming into force of the 1997 Ottawa Convention.

In July 1999, the problems of women and border security issues were discussed within the framework of a conference "Culture of Peace: Democracy and Dialogue of Cultures."

Members of the National Campaign organized seminars and consultations on mine awareness issues (primarily for women and children) in the Tavushsky and Suniksky Marza areas bordering Azerbaijan, where female leaders of local NGOs participated.

In September 1999, a two-day seminar, "Culture of Peace: Democracy and Development," gathered representatives of bordering areas, who discussed peace and regional cooperation issues, and the activation of peace action through public democracy. Special emphasis was placed on the NGOs' specific role in building and strengthening peace in the region. Useful technologies for cooperation between NGO-members of the Armenian Campaign and national campaigns of the republics of the southern Caucasus and the CIS and international organizations were discussed. The Ottawa Convention and the Maputo Declaration were presented as basic documents guiding the ban movement. Representatives of the Tavush and Syunik regions forwarded a number of proposals aimed at restoring former links among Transcaucasian public organizations in order to jointly monitor the landmine situation in border areas, and to render humanitarian assistance to mine victims.

In February and March 1999, the National Campaigns of the three Transcaucasian republics and the Russian affiliate of IPPNW discussed issues of regional cooperation and adopted an agreement aimed at raising public awareness, and organizing joint activities. A "Red Bridge" action project was developed in order to draw attention to the problems of the disabled mine victims in the related republics.

The participation of the National Campaigns of the three Transcaucasian republics in the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty and the ICBL General Assembly (GA) in Maputo not only provided them with

Press conference at the London Cafe, Tbilisi, Georgia.



access to international expertise on mine issues, but also inspired participating NGOs to re-evaluate their undertaken responsibilities.

To build a worthy future for mankind meeting the standards of dignity means to prevent violence in all possible forms. It is a civilized dialogue aimed at the prevention of wars and ethnic conflicts, and the prohibition of the use of landmines.

During the course of these activities, the necessity to set up a National Information Center, which would accumulate all relevant information on mined territories and mine victims, emerged. The lack of information does not allow us to carry out a proper analysis and provide timely solutions for the existing problems.

NGO members of the Armenian Campaign will concentrate their efforts on the following tasks for the immediate future:

- raising public awareness on issues of the ICBL, the Ottawa Convention, the Maputo Declaration, the meeting of the states parties, and the humanitarian and legal actions of international organizations aimed at helping the disabled;
- forming an NGO coalition in border regions to develop mine awareness and education campaigns in order to prevent new mine accidents;
- broadening regional cooperation between NGOs and National Campaigns in Georgia and Azerbaijan; restoring public links in border regions to jointly resolve existing mine problems and render assistance to the disabled;
- involving mass media in informational activities.

We should draw the attention of our governments to:

- 1) the need to finance demining programs, to address humanitarian issues, and to update the legal basis so that it would provide social insurance to military and civilian mine victims as well;
- 2) the need to monitor border territories in order to reproduce minefield maps and to assess the existing mine problem;
- 3) the need to draw the demining schedule of private territories used for agricultural purposes.

The UN has declared the year 2000 as "The Year of a Culture of Peace" and the next 10 years a "Non-violence Decade." The concept of a culture of peace envisions liberty, justice, democracy, patience and solidarity, and respect for human rights. The right for life is a basic human right. Civil society should strive to ensure a worthy life for every person, and this involves a comprehensive ban on landmines.

Zarema Mazaeva

Coordinator, Refugees Against Landmines, Chechnya

I welcome the participants to the Conference "Peaceful Caucasus: Future Without Mines," and wish them fruitful work and success in reaching their desired results.

The current events in Chechnya are beyond a tolerable tragedy.

The war of 1994-1996 had already left vast lands sewn with landmines, and now the new one aggravates the catastrophic situation with both the danger of new mines and the danger of a physical annihilation of the entire nation.

It is hard to estimate or measure the danger, for no one knows the number of mines in our land those already laid and those being laid with each new minute.

No one knows how many decades and how many resources it will take to clear the territory of Chechnya of this awful, barbaric weapon that maims and kills mostly civilians.

The outcome of remote mining without mapping and minefield marking is countless victims maimed children, women, and elders a tragedy for their families. The number of victims does not reflect the depth of tragedy that befalls on a victim's family, community, the entire society. There is no guarantee for any person in Chechnya that he or his relatives will not step on a mine.

According to unofficial data, the number of mine victims during the last years reached 700, half of them children, yet this was before the renewal of military operations, and now this number keeps growing.

It is difficult to define the primary tasks to start with, but from our point of view the most urgent are:

- to ban the use of landmines;
- to provide humanitarian demining of the territory of Chechnya;
- to provide qualified medical assistance and adequate rehabilitation services for mine victims;
- to provide social and psychological rehabilitation and reintegration for the disabled;
- to draw international organizations into rendering assistance to all aspects of the mine problem: medical assistance, humanitarian demining, and socio-psychological rehabilitation of the disabled.

Russian planes dropped some PFM-mines (so-called butterflies) accidentally for they were intended for the Chechen people over Otalo, hitting Georgian families, bringing pain and suffering.

The current use in Chechnya of weapons that are illegal and prohibited by international law is not the only problem. Even more dangerous is the emerging ecological problem due to the destroyed nuclear waste burials and chemical enterprises, resulting from irregular artillery attacks and bombings. The bombs used in Chechnya will inevitably bring about the radio-nuclear contamination of vast territories.

Yet even more alarming is the mass media discussion of the possible use of tactical nuclear weapons in Chechnya. We hope that this will never happen.

I ask God to enlighten the souls of the people who produce or use landmines the decision-makers so that they realize their responsibility.

We call for a stop to this barbaric, brutal war that uses "surprise mines" that maim children!

We call for doing everything in our power to provide a safe return for the refugees and the displaced to their cities, their villages, their homes!

We call for the application of all possible efforts to prevent the emerging ecological catastrophe!

We call for a stop to the permission to use tactical nuclear weapons!

Ashot Melyan

Chair, National League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, Nagorny Karabakh

The issue of regional security has become a popular topic during the last decade, not only among politicians but also among all people of the southern Caucasus. They are all looking for peace, safety, and stability. All Transcaucasian republics, their neighboring states, the world powers, and international organizations would prefer to see a stable and safe Caucasus. But a stable and secure future in this region is unthinkable without the peaceful resolution of numerous conflicts, provided that all interests of the conflict parties are taken into account and mutual confidence is restored. Building peace in the Caucasus is a multi-aspect effort, requiring willingness, activity, and cooperation among all parties in resolving vital problems.

Our joint struggle against landmines is one of the uniting ideas, the one that could bring together people of the region, considering that mines continue to spoil the peaceful life in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Abkhazia, Osetia, and Nagorny Karabakh.

The efforts and activities of regional NGOs and international organizations have involved our landmines-infested region in a global movement to ban landmines.

From our point of view, a successful anti-landmine campaign in the Caucasus is defined by strictly defined activities, the maximal de-politicization of the process, the correct formulation of tasks, and the large involvement of activists, including veterans of war, medical staff, mine victims, and all those wishing to contribute. We should keep in mind a likely and very desirable "side effect," i.e., bringing together and linking the former conflicting parties through this generous activity.

Mines in the Caucasus could be categorized as mines in abandoned stockpiles, mines surrounding military bases, lost non-detonated mines, and mines used as protective barriers.

The mine problem is one of the most complicated problems for Nagorny Karabakh. During the military conflict about 60 percent of the republic's territory was intermittently occupied by combating parties, and certain villages and entire regions were mined anew with each shift. Consequently, mines continue to trap their victims nowadays, although it has already been five years since the battle ended. Mines keep vast agricultural areas abandoned, mines keep refugees from returning home.

Obviously, Nagorny Karabakh cannot clear mines from its territory without international assistance. It is a pity that purely political obstacles stand in the way of this assistance, and the issue of the recognition of the republic's international legal status seems to prevent relevant international organizations from interfering. The only exception was the Halo Trust organization, which managed to overcome this psychological barrier and carry out a demining program in 1996. Political dialogue can last for years, but mines do not wait; they continue to maim people and to inflict irreparable damage. Therefore, I want to use this opportunity to address international organizations: the people of Nagorny Karabakh are looking for any kind of help in resolving the mine problem, i.e., educational programs, instructors, consultations, material and moral support.

Our state can afford only scarce resources to resolve the mine problem; nevertheless, current operations include a demining group, a special commission working in alliance with the ICRC mission in Stepanakert, and the hot line. The NGO sector also contributes to the campaign, including our National Nagorny Karabakh League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples. We conduct mine awareness programs, involving students of the Arzhkassky State University, who participate in the establishment of a republican rehabilitation center. However, we see our main task as bringing together the efforts of physicians, students, journalists, veterans of war, and mine victims. If they are united into an association, they could achieve more within the republic and contribute to the greater Caucasian campaign to ban landmines.

I have been speaking only of the mines within the territory of Nagorny Karabakh. Mines on the borders with confronting armed forces are still an issue for negotiations in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict in general. Hopefully someday it will be resolved with the participation of international intermediaries.

As for the medical aspect, I want to point out that essential experience in mine victim issues has been accumulated and now is being processed by our orthopedists and psychologists. I believe they can share their knowledge and skills with those in need. Dr. Adamyan will speak about this later at this conference.

There is no doubt that Russian, Georgian and Azerbaijani NGOs have done a lot and have accumulated valuable experience with the support of their international counterparts. I want to stress that we are looking for cooperation with all relevant organizations to get the Caucasus free of mines in the near future.

Nikolai Izvekov

Vice-President, Foreign Policy Association, Russia

[Following is the presentation that Nikolai Izvekov prepared on behalf of his institution and submitted to the conference organizers. He expressed his gratitude for the invitation and his apologies for not being able to participate personally in the Tbilisi Conference.]

The Foreign Policy Association carries out its activities between the official state foreign policy and public diplomacy. Consequently, our presentation on the landmines issue is a synthesis of the official positions of foreign policy and military agencies, as well as public opinion.

I would like to point out that although the International Campaign to Ban Landmines is important in itself, it comes also as part of the greater process of arms control and disarmament. Thus, there should be a complex resolution of inter-linked problems.

Within this context, the problem of terrorism equally important for Russia and for many other countries should be mentioned. Terrorists tend to widely use explosive devices, including landmines. Hence, terrorism could be more effectively curbed globally if the manufacture and transfer of all explosives, not only landmines, were more strictly controlled on national and international levels.

Following the main issue of this Conference, I want to say that both the state and the people of Russia share and support the global effort and struggle to implement a total ban on landmines.

It is not only declarations, but also concrete steps: the moratorium on the export of the most dangerous types of mines is being strictly observed, and was extended in December 1997. The State Duma is likely to ratify Protocol II of the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). Russia has completely ceased the production of fougasse mines. Moreover, in 1998, 500,000 mines were destroyed in addition to those in the previously authorized utilization plans of the Armed Forces of Russia.

Russia's primarily positive attitude towards the Ottawa Convention is known, as is Russia's intention to adhere to it within a reasonable time in the future. However, by virtue of Russia's geopolitical situation, joining the Ottawa Convention is not that simple. The real terms would depend on how successfully Russia would complete certain technical, financial, and other tasks to comply with the articles of the Convention. One of the issues is the functional replacement of landmines.

Russia's conceptual attitude shared by scientific and political circles toward the landmine issue is a realistic approach, taking into account the interests of all members of the international community, including those states that

objectively (historically and geo-politically) have to rely on the use of mines exclusively for self-defense and safety purposes. So in Russia we think that promotion of the global ban on landmines should be executed gradually, step by step.

Based on this approach, the Foreign Policy department strives to make effective and universal the additional Protocol II of the CCW, which came into force in 1998.

Russia also tends to consider the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as the most optimal international forum, capable of producing the most qualified and adequate arrangements concerning the total ban of landmines.

As it was mentioned at the round-table meeting on 23 September 1999 in Moscow, Russia is ready to participate in international humanitarian demining operations, including operations in Georgia.

I want to use this opportunity to express our hope for a favorable and positive development in the Russian-Georgian relationship and the successful resolution of current misunderstandings.

Russia and Georgia have wide historical and geographical links. The map reflects this likely reciprocity between the two states, and that has been confirmed by a mutual historical experience. The wisdom of an old saying "One old friend is better than two new ones" is very helpful.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION: Evolution of Landmines

There were a few stages in the evolution of landmines.

During the first stage (second half of 17th century – second half of 19th century), mines were used per se and as fougasse mines for controlled blasts of groups (multiple targets).

During the second stage (second half of 19th century – beginning of 20th century), automatic fragmentation blast mines were developed. One of the first mines of this new generation was a jumping mine or fragmentation fougasse of Captain Karasev, which was used for the first time in the Soviet-Japanese War of 1904.

This model was used as a prototype for the further development of numerous types of Russian and foreign-produced mines, including German, English, and American. Modifications of this model continue to be used practically in all armies of the world to date.

During the third stage (beginning – mid-20th century), fougasse landmines, hitting solitary targets, and fragmentation mines, hitting both solitary and multiple targets, were developed. The first widespread use of these mines occurred during the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939-1940. Landmines were widely used during the Second World War and in numerous military conflicts after the war was over. The weight of explosive charge used in this type of mines rarely exceeded 200 grams.

The fourth stage (end 1960s – present) has been characterized by a tendency to decrease the explosive charge of landmines, because mines were mostly used to injure and get the infantry out of operation, for which purpose the smaller size of a mine and explosive mass could suffice. For example, the explosive charge of mines used by the US army in the Vietnam War had a mass of only 9-10 grams. A decreased size and weight resulted in a greater number of mines being placed at mine-barriers and loaded into air carriers. Thus, the military opportunity to increase mining capabilities was multiplied a few times.

Modern landmines and fragmentation mines are equipped with self-destruction devices. Mine self-deactivation devices without mine blasting are becoming more popular. Military experts consider these devices as a highly reliable guarantee of minefield self-destruction after a programmed time.

Mines in Modern Armaments

Mine barriers are the basic military engineer barriers. Landmine use is justified by their high battle efficiency and the possibility of quick mass deployment, leaving, nevertheless, a possibility to maneuver in the course of a military operation.

Landmine efficiency is measured by the direct losses of a confronting party and the delays in promotion caused by mine barriers. These two factors provide the repulse of the enemy's attacks or failure in promotion.

As estimated, the losses of US army troops caused by mines during the Vietnam War amount to 70 percent of general losses. In the Korean War the figure was 50 percent. Mine-caused losses both in personnel and equipment were predominant as well (67 percent) during the "Mine War" in the mountain routes of Afghanistan for both combating parties, especially at the initial stage of the military operations. The troops could not move faster than 3-5 km/hour on mined roads.

The invention of new types of mines and the development of new modes of military use provided the fast growth of mine-barriers efficiency. Systems of distant/remote mine-deployment have radically changed the existing theory and practice of the use of mine barriers.

The main features of distant/remote mine-deployment are:

lack of readiness for the enemy's order using aircraft and missile-artillery systems, and possibility to protect troops and military objects by minefields;

controlled and regulated (by mine self-destruction time) terms of deployed mine-barriers, allowing maneuver for own troops, i.e., expanded mine-barrier functionality.

According to Russian classification, mine barriers are categorized as anti-tank, anti-personnel, anti-transport/vehicle, anti-landing, and river barriers.

Barriers can be installed on land, in water, or on the seashore.

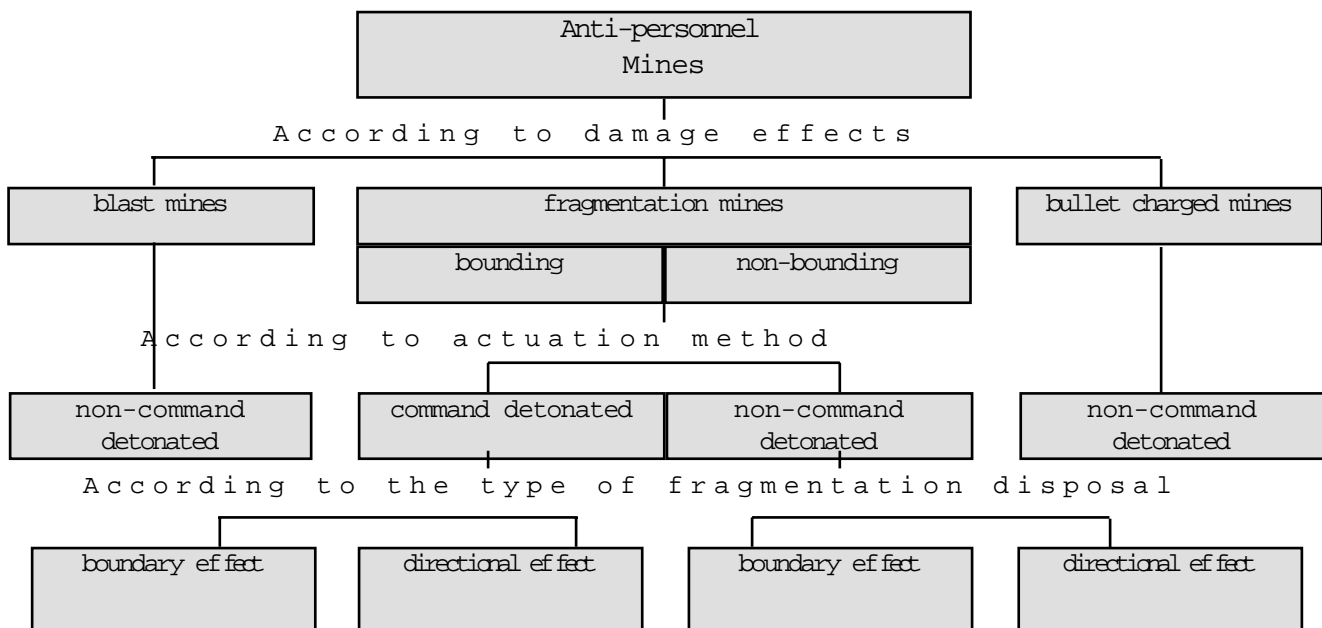
Anti-tank barriers include minefields, mine-sets, solitary mines, anti-tank mines and blast mines, mined slashing, destroyed roads, bridges, and overpasses that are prepared for destruction.

Anti-personnel barriers include anti-personnel minefields, mine-sets and solitary anti-personnel landmines, and mined slashing.

Anti-vehicle barriers include solitary anti-vehicle mines and sets of mines, mined roads, bridges, overpasses, tunnels, and other artificial constructions placed on auto roads and railways.

Anti-landing barriers include anti-landing, anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, minefields, sets of mines that are placed in all likely locations of airborne landing, i.e., in coastal land of the sea and in coastal water in the depth up to 5 meters. Sea mines are deployed deeper than 5 meters.

Water barriers include river and anti-landing mines, anti-tank and anti-personnel minefields and mines sets, deployed in water or on coast in places of likely crossings over the river by an enemy, etc.



SECOND PLenary

Elgudza Butzhrikidze

Lieutenant-General, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Georgia

Today, when everything is provided in our country to preserve stability, the peace issue in the Caucasus is of outmost importance. Peace is a vital basis for a normal life and the stable development of future generations.

Following the law of history, our generation is responsible for the future where there will be no place for violent death, bloodshed, and destroyed lives.

My generation has experienced war and has learned "the price" of life and health. Any war is a great tragedy, but any war must abide by laws. One of these is the requirement to reduce to a minimum the threat to civilians during military operations. Alas, this law is rarely observed, and civilians become victims to explosives left over after the war is over.

The exact number of landmines in Abkhazia and Samatchablo is unknown. Under existing by-articles, the engineer service of Georgian Internal forces is obliged to clear mines from inhabited areas and highways. Starting from 1991, the engineer service has demined more than 100 unexploded ordnances (UXOs), while during the last two years it had to operate in various regions of Georgia, including the Red Bridge and the Zugdidi area. The mine problem in Georgia needs more attention in order to be resolved. Our meeting is of great importance because the more people are involved in the mine ban movement, the less is the likelihood of mine use.

The idea to get rid of all types of weapons is unreal in today's world. Hopefully the day will come when weapons would not serve any longer as problem-solving means, and our grandchildren will know nothing about mines and weapons.

Marina Sallier

Chair, Women for Life Without War and Violence, Russia

I welcome the Second Conference to Ban Landmines in the CIS countries and thank the organizers for giving me the opportunity to speak.

There are two controversial trends in the development of the modern world, both related to the issue discussed here today. On the one hand, we have terminated the world wars and considerably reduced the number of local

conflicts. But at the same time we witness an overwhelming growth and expansion of terrorism. Mines are one of the basic weapons of terrorists. Thus, another trend emerges: mankind switches from demanding the prohibition of nuclear weapons to banning ordinary weapons, primarily landmines. How do these two trends interact? And is it possible at all to press governments to stop using mines, knowing that mines are the main weapon of terrorism? I do not mean that governments should not ban mines, the question is how to do it.

At the Moscow Conference, the ongoing international conference Women for Life Without Wars and Violence addressed all participants and asked them to support its appeal for the alarming situation in Dagestan, calling for safeguarding peace in Dagestan. This appeal was published in the Moscow Conference Report, page 16.

I worked a lot before this Conference to bring a statement of the initiative group Common Action, uniting widely known Russian dissidents. This statement addresses the accidental and erroneous aircraft mining of Georgian Onalo and the artillery bombardment of the Sateli settlement on 17 January 1999, as well as the problem of Chechen refugees in Georgia.

Common Action calls on the Russian government to stop immediately the war in Chechnya. The International Conference in Georgia, "Peaceful Caucasus: Future without Mines," expresses its gratitude to the Georgian organizations for rendering help to the refugees. From my point of view, the movement to ban landmines can go separately from the struggle for peace in general. We discuss here the issue of mine victim rehabilitation, while our organization's



position is that all people who had witnessed military conflicts need rehabilitation. If rehabilitation is not provided, there is a great risk of the "conflict transfer" to future generations. Do you recall the video-clips you have just seen at this Conference? The child tearing off the doll's legs and arms? This child is a future terrorist.

The year 2000 was announced by the UN as a year of the "Culture of Peace." Our organization is preparing a big action in the Caucasus. I call on all participants to the Conference to help us with this action. Our organization is represented in every republic, territory, and region of the Russian Federation, as well as in the Caucasus. We plan to perform the same action in all border regions of Russia and capitals and principal cities of the Transcaucasus. The action is called "Peace to Caucasus." We can combine this action with a ban mines action. I cannot divide these two issues. The problem of terrorism could be resolved only through resolving the general problem of peace. Why do we confront and fight? Because we want to share something. We share wealth, lands, money, etc. What do we pay for it? We pay with human lives, but each of us has the only thing that cannot be divided. How simple and difficult it is to understand it. But once understood we'll see no more wars on this earth.

Irina Yanovskaya

Chair, Journalists for Human Rights,
Southern Osetia

In November 1999, 10 years had already passed since sad 1989, when the Georgia-Osetia conflict began. Tens of thousands of refugees and destroyed human lives, hundreds of youngsters killed and wretched civilians these are only some features of the tragedy. The open confrontation has resulted in bloodshed and uncontrollable consequences.

Within the territories of the Georgia-Osetia conflict, mines still wait for their victims although now they are more rare than before. Landmines are a blind weapon, injuring mostly innocent civilians. Blast injuries leave dirt and fragments deep in wounded tissues, thus, amputation is required in most cases. Mines are especially cruel to children, who suffer from the cruelest wounds.

Since 1992, 30 children injured by mines, aged 3-12 years, have been operated on in the pediatric surgical department of the Tshinvali Central Regional Clinic. One nine-year-old girl died, and one boy underwent leg amputation, while other children suffered amputations of fingers, eye operations, etc. Some of these kids happened to pick up explosive devices that looked like toys. One of them was wounded after setting garbage on fire, having overlooked a hand-made explosive in a pile. Luckily this child was saved.

These children wounded physically and psychologically will need long-term care and assistance, which is expensive, while most of them come from poor families.

The trauma department of the Central Regional Clinic has reported 38 cases of injuries caused by mines and other explosives since 1992; among them, three have resulted in amputations. Of the 38 injured, 17 were young people aged 14-30 years, and the remaining 21 were aged 30-70.

All of us remember the terrorist acts at the Druzhba market and the Business Court in Vladikavkaz, Northern Osetia-Alanya. A similar tragedy could have happened a while ago in Tshinvali, where a self-made explosive device with a clock mechanism containing one kilogram of explosive matter was detected on 10 November 1999 at the Falloy market. The device was safely removed and destroyed by deminers of the 1st battalion RSO-Alanya outside the city.

On 1 December 1999, a schedule was authorized for the leaders of the parties in conflict to organize a campaign for the voluntary return of illegal weapons and ammunition by the population in the zone of the Georgia-Osetia conflict.

Quite recently the commander of the peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone General-Mayor Tchurayev, reported that 27 landmines were returned by citizens of the Dzhevaysky region.

Currently the European Union (EU) plan of social reimbursement, i.e., building medical aid stations and emergency stations, or providing rewards of pedigree cattle in exchange for returned weapons, is being discussed.

Hopefully, these intentions will become a reality.

Ashot Adamyan

Orthopedic Surgeon, Pediatric Hospital of
Nagorny Karabakh

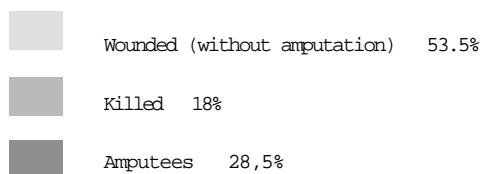
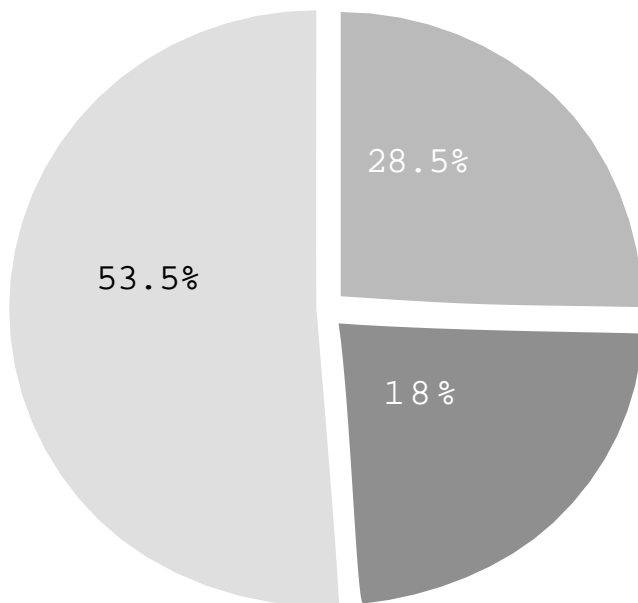
Unfortunately, military solutions to political problems are still practiced worldwide. We have witnessed numerous emerging local military conflicts in the Caucasus in the last decade of the 20th century. Nagorny Karabakh happened to be the first involved in such a conflict at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Former battlefields were left imprinted with hundreds of thousands of mines, most of them AP mines. Many more mines were left in the so-called buffer zone. Mines still threaten human lives throughout Nagorny Karabakh and will continue to threaten for years to come, even though the cease-fire agreement was signed in 1994.

Demining is being carried out and will continue, but the process is very complicated because most territories were mined a few times as control shifted between confronting forces. No minefield maps were offered by the Azerbaijani party.

Early mine accidents have been reported from the agricultural areas. For example, during the period of 1993-1998, 645 mine incidents were reported in Nagorny Karabakh, including 83 children.

However, I want to point out that mine awareness programs in problem areas, and the partial clearing of mines from the territories, have changed the mine incidence statistics for the better. During 10 months in 1999, only 31 mine incidents were reported; 10 of them were children.

Mine-blast trauma in most cases results in amputation. But this outcome is not the only one requiring long-term medical and social rehabilitation. Mine-associated spinal trauma is much more difficult to handle. Children usually get injured while playing; thus very often they have severe facial wounds, eye trauma, and maimed upper limbs. The mortality rate is much higher among injured children.



Nagorny Karabakh has accumulated sufficient experience in dealing with military trauma, and organizing primary medical assistance for mine victims is already a resolved issue. Nonetheless, there were mistakes at the very beginning, and surgeons had to learn a lot with the transition from peacetime medicine to field-surgery. Surgeons and traumatologists had to adjust from practically zero to 10,000 cases during the military conflict; thus specialized medical assistance can be provided now in the Central Hospital of the republic, as well as in numerous regional hospitals. These special departments, though, could be equipped better technically.

Similarly difficult is the task of post-operation rehabilitation of mine victims. Luckily, international humanitarian organizations were very helpful in this issue. They rendered aid in training specialists and financing to start the Pediatric Center of Psychological Rehabilitation, which already functions in Nagorny Karabakh, as well as a prosthetics center, and a new medical rehabilitation center, which is currently under construction. All humanitarian programs are widely supported by related ministries. But to meet all existing needs we still have to provide similar facilities in other regions of the republic. Thus, the Ministry of Public Health plans to set up rehabilitation services in all the regional centers and big settlements. Rehabilitation specialists are being widely trained to cover the needs of all regions. However, these tasks are not so easy from the financial point of view for the republic inheriting a post-war economy. Socially important is the provision of working

Mine-Awareness Puppet Show



Conference participants were shown a mine-awareness puppet show.

places for the disabled. An NGO of disabled mine victims, registered in 1994, is dealing with this issue.

To summarize, Nagorny Karabakh has a necessary basis for developing a network of rehabilitation institutions for mine victims in all the regions of the republic, but has to rely on intervention and assistance of international humanitarian organizations in order to speed up the process.

Taking into consideration all that has been mentioned above, and adherence to humanitarian principles, representatives of the medical profession of Nagorny Karabakh are willing to join the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Introduced many years ago to protect humans from their enemies, landmines have become a weapon of mass destruction (mainly of civilian populations) in all regions where wars or military conflicts have taken place.

Hidden explosive devices, left on purpose or accidentally somewhere in the ground, kill 25-30 people and maim more than 40 daily.

According to statistical data, mines cause more deaths and injuries after a conflict is over than during the conflict, which means that this relatively cheap and widely used type of weapon has really emerged from being a weapon of self-defense to becoming a weapon for the mass destruction of civilian populations, mainly women, children, and the elderly.

Landmines have caused nationwide disasters in Angola (15 million non-deactivated mines), Cambodia (10 million), Afghanistan (10 million), the Kurdish region of Iran (10 million), Bosnia (6 million), Croatia (6 million), Vietnam (3.5 million), and Mozambique (3 million.). Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan have each "inherited" 1 million landmines. The economic situation in these countries does not allow them to support mine victims' families or to clear the infested territories of mines.

To date, the rate of mining is much greater than that of mine clearance and demining operations. According to UN data, 2 million mines were laid in 1993 alone, while only 100,000 were deactivated. At this rate, the number of laid mines has grown beyond any reasonable control, with the result that there is now 1 mine for every 48 people on Earth. In countries like Angola or Cambodia, the number of laid mines exceeds the entire population of the country. Every 20 minutes 1 person in the world is killed or maimed by a mine, not only on the battlefield, but in "peaceful" environments as well.

Public awareness of the mine problem arrived with the emergence of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) in 1991. Veterans of the Vietnam war, ICRC representatives, medical workers, and ICBL activists in Canada, Norway, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Kenya, Southern Africa, and elsewhere have joined the campaign.

One of the first significant results brought about by the efforts of the international campaign was a UN resolution calling for an immediate negotiation process regarding the landmine issue. This resolution was supported by 157 nations in December 1996, and a year later, in December 1997, the Ottawa Convention banning the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of landmines was opened for signature, and the ICBL, along with its Coordinator, Jody Williams, was awarded the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

Third Plenary

Jody Williams

ICBL International Ambassador,
1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Apart from the chilly air, I want to congratulate the organizers of this conference. Many of you know we consider this to be a follow-up conference to the one held last year in Moscow. And it is critically important as we move forward to try to universalize the Treaty to ban AP mines. I will take just a few minutes to talk about the challenges facing us now—two years after the Treaty. Mr. Goose will talk about universalization and implementation; General Ray will talk about the weapon itself.

I am recognizing that it has been two years since the Mine Ban Treaty was signed on the 3rd of December 1997 in Ottawa, Canada. I think that we are all aware of the very positive part of the ban movement, that 136 nations have already signed the Treaty and 89 have ratified. The number of countries that were producers has dropped dramatically, and exports have dropped dramatically. None of this would have happened without the campaign. None of this would have happened had civil society, non-governmental

organizations, not brought these critical issues to the attention of governments and militaries around the world. And we are pleased with our success. We never dreamed when we launched the campaign in 1992, that we would be where we are today.

But we are also facing extremely critical challenges to the Mine Ban Treaty, to the total elimination of anti-personnel landmines. Even though 136 nations have signed, critical areas of the world are not part of this Treaty. When the campaign met earlier this year to rededicate itself to the global elimination of the weapon, we focused on several areas of the world for continued work and pressure to try to change the thinking on the weapon. One area is my own country, the US, which has not signed the Treaty and which still reserves the right to use landmines. And out there, of course is Russia and the CIS states, and, finally, nations of the Middle East. It is a huge challenge to us in the campaign to bring these regions onboard. When any country—big or small—reserves the right to continue to use AP mines, it undercuts the establishment of this new international law to eliminate the weapon, to outlaw the weapon. We are

certainly pleased that some language we hear in this region is positive, recognizing the need to eliminate the weapon someday. But from our point of view someday is not soon enough.

This is my second trip to Georgia. I was here earlier this year in March, I met with the committees of our campaign in the region. I also met with the President, and the Minister of Defense and the Foreign Minister, and heard nice words about the ban. Unfortunately, the nice words have not yet turned into a signature of the Mine Ban Treaty by the Government of Georgia. There are statements saying that there is too much unrest in the region, that the overall situation inside Georgia makes it impossible at this

Helsinki Citizen's Assembly Chairman Aleksander Rusetsky (center) discusses the details of the upcoming press conference with (left to right) Human Rights Watch's Stephen Goose, Advisor to Canadian Ambassador for Mine Action (Rt.) Lieutenant-General Gordon M. Reay, and Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams.



time to sign the Treaty. The point of view of the campaign is that this weapon should be eliminated in any circumstances not only when it is comfortable to do so. Many other nations who feel they are in similar circumstances of uncertainty have signed this Treaty. I hope as we continue to raise awareness in this region we will bring more countries onboard here. So that ultimately every country is part of the ban movement.

General Ray will be talking of the utility of the weapon, so I will not take time to talk about that aspect. My concern is the political aspect of the ban movement and having the civilian side of the government recognize that this weapon should be given up. And that the civilian sides of governments order their professional military to stop using the weapons. The professional military in any country of the world will obey the Commander-in-Chief. And it is understandable that an institution like the military does not want to voluntarily give up weapons that it has at its disposal. But the issue before us is that the overwhelming majority of governments and militaries of the world have decided that this is an illegal weapon. And they are giving it up. And we hope that soon Georgia will do the same.

So, these are the challenges that I believe are facing us, among many others, but the most important right now is putting pressure on the regions of the world that are outside the Treaty, bringing to them the same message that we have brought to every country big and small since we started this Campaign. The message is that though anti-personnel landmines have a certain utility, this utility is outweighed by the impact they have on society. And because of this disproportion in the impact and the indiscriminate nature of the weapon, it must be eliminated. I think I speak for all of the campaigners in the room, when I say that we will continue our efforts until that happens.

Stephen Goose

Arms Division, Human Rights Watch, USA

The Arms Division of Human Rights Watch looks at weapons that we consider to be incompatible with International Humanitarian Law. Such a weapon is the anti-personnel (AP) landmine. I am also going to talk about the universalization of the MBT and the implementation of the Treaty.

We are witnessing the emergence of a strong international norm, a strong standard of behavior in which any use of an AP mine is unacceptable to the world community at large. There are probably some lawyers who will argue whether we are already at the stage that this is considered an international norm. But clearly we are moving rapidly in that direction. The landmine treaty, as Jody mentioned, has now been signed or acceded to by 136 nations; that is more than 2/3 of the world's nations. This total includes a majority of some of the biggest producers and exporters of AP mines and it includes, most importantly, the great majority of the major users of AP mines in recent decades. These are the most important countries to have joined any regime trying to outlaw the weapon. We see that all of the nations in the Western Hemisphere, for example, have signed the Treaty, except for the US and Cuba, who offer somewhat different reasons for why they have not

signed. But it is strange to see them on the same side of this issue. It includes every member of the European Union except for Finland. It includes all of NATO, except for the US and Turkey. Very important, it includes 40 of the 48 nations of sub-Saharan Africa, the most mined region of the world, as well as many Asian nations, including key powers such as Japan, Thailand, and Indonesia.

But, as Jody had indicated, there are areas that have been resistant to this emerging international norm: the Middle East is one, and the region that we are in now is the other. Turkmenistan was one of the first nations to sign and to ratify the Treaty. Since then we have also seen Moldova and Ukraine, and most recently Tajikistan, join the Treaty. So we see movement here also. Ukraine was vital because it has the world's fifth largest stockpile of AP mines ten million. So we see a great deal of success in terms of the universalization of this Treaty. It entered into force and became binding international law more quickly than any major treaty in history. This shows great commitment on the part of most nations of the world.

We have also seen an encouraging degree of compliance with the Treaty since it has entered into force, and indeed throughout the process that led up to the Treaty. Global production of AP mines has dropped dramatically: there used to be some 54 producers, today there are only some 16. Export of AP mines has almost stopped altogether. More than 12 million mines from the stockpiles of some 45 nations have been destroyed. Destruction is under way in about 30 other nations. And we have significant evidence that the use of AP mines has also fallen significantly in recent years. It appears that for most armies AP mines are no longer considered an ordinary weapon of war, one that you would use without a second thought.

That is the encouraging side of things, but of course many armies do continue to cling to this weapon, including of course many in this region. That is why conferences such as this are so important, both so that NGOs can come together to make their voices heard, but also to have the opportunity to engage in discussions with political and military officials. It is incumbent, we think, that it is up to political leaders to insist that their military offer a convincing rationale for retaining AP mines. What we have seen in country after country around the world is that when the political leaders do that, the military leaders have a difficult time making the case that the weapon is essential. There is no question in anybody's mind that the AP mine is useful, that it has some utility, but it has such horrendous humanitarian consequences, that the military must make the case that it is essential to the successful conduct of war, and we believe that it is a very difficult case to make.

Many countries like to argue that their situation is unique because of their borders, or because of their neighbors, or for other reasons. I think that we have yet to see a country that appears to be truly unique when it comes to AP mines, and why various governments and military try to rationalize their use. It is quite clear that there are a number of governments in this region that are not prepared to join this Convention any time soon. Most all of them have indicated they are willing to join at some point of time in the future. In the interim, consideration should be given to the kinds of steps that will lead a nation closer and closer to this

emerging international norm against the weapon, move them closer and closer to being able to join the treaty. These partial steps will vary, of course, from country to country, but some of them are relatively obvious: the moratorium on production, a permanent ban on export, destruction of excess stocks of the AP mines, the creation of a time-table for destruction of stockpiles. And, perhaps, most important, the institution of a policy that the weapon should only be used under extraordinary circumstances.

Of course, as a ban campaign we think that there are no circumstances under which this weapon should be used. But for those who are staying outside of this Treaty there should at least be a recognition that it should be resorted to only under the most extraordinary circumstances. We have not seen that in much of the recent conflicts in this region.

I will close by just mentioning that part of the universalization and implementation of the Treaty requires active monitoring of how governments are behaving. The ICBL has established something called the Landmine Monitor System, which consists of a global reporting network. Many people in this room participate in that global research network. And a mine database in fact just went public three days ago and is now available. It involves the production of annual reports. This is the first one that was released at the First Meeting of the States Parties to the MBT in Maputo in May of this year. It has 1,100 pages covering every country of the world: their mine ban policy, production, stockpiling, trade, use, mine action programs, mine awareness, mine clearance, victim assistance programs; and it assesses the progress in the problems in all these areas. This is our way to hold governments accountable on this issue. It is the first time that elements of civil society have come together in a systematic and coordinated way to try to monitor a humanitarian law treaty or a disarmament treaty. The Monitor also provides us with the means to continue to try and convince the non-party governments that they need to be part of the new standard of behavior rejecting this weapon. Through this and every other means at our disposal, pressure will continue to come from this campaign.

Vladimir Podolin

Chair, Department of Emergency Situations and Post-Conflict Reconstruction, Ministry of Nationalities, Russia

I positively agree with the decision of the Conference organizers to invite representatives of state structures. This will enable me and other official representatives to deliver the concern of non-governmental and public organizations struggling for peace over the use of a terrible weapon at the end of the 20th century to the government.

The mine problem is a worrisome issue. For more than 10 years, I was involved in conflict resolution activities, including two years in Afghanistan. I know a lot about the consequences of mine use. I met a lot of people maimed by mines, and see such people here as well. Unfortunately, Russia does not always take care of those who were maimed in military conflicts. The main task of the subdivision of the Federal Humanitarian Department, and my personal task as well, is to render practical assistance in

conflict resolution. Nowadays experts from my Department work in the Chechen republic, Northern Osetia, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, and the republic of Ingushetia. They pursue the state national policy concept, interacting with both state bodies and non-governmental organizations. This strategy allows us to acquire more reliable information, analyze it and offer proposals to develop corresponding governmental decisions.

I believe that all participants of these conferences must cooperate with governmental organizations. Our department, for example, works closely with socio-political movements, various parties, and international organizations carrying out activities within conflict zones. Before coming to this conference, I participated in a seminar called "International Alert" that was devoted to peace-building measures in conflict zones, including the northern Caucasus. The Declaration they adopted is aimed at conflict prevention.

As a delegate to this Conference, I am going to pursue further the ideas of peace and civil concord, and appeal to my superiors to get involved in the activities aimed at adherence to the Ottawa Convention because mines bring pain and suffering into human lives. I wish a fruitful effort to all participants of this Conference and success in their further activities.

Archil Burdzhanadze

Colonel, Chief Physician of Central Military Hospital, Georgia

I am going to share the experience of being chief of a field hospital, which I was during the military operations in Abkhazia.

In the 1970s, my colleagues were optimistic about organ-saving operations after blast trauma, but I cannot share this optimism even theoretically, because blast trauma includes: 1) detonation; 2) tearing off of limbs; and 3) development of traumatic shock. The main destructive factors are: percussion action, flame and gas, and mine fragments. The pathogenesis of blast trauma includes: contusion and commotion (due to percussion action), and severe deep destruction of soft tissues. Contusion and commotion results in the disturbance of external and tissue-breathing functions, of microcirculation, the depression of immunity, the disturbance of blood coagulative function and the rheology, and of vital organs' and systems' function. Damaged organs and tissues produce pathologic afferent (pain) impulses, while the course of blast trauma is defined by such factors as blood loss and post-hemorrhagic anemia, shock, distant organ damage (in 3-4 days if a person survived), intoxication, and thrombotic events. Thus, organ-saving tactics are under question, while the main purpose is to save the victim's life. We categorize blast trauma as: tearing off of limbs and segmentation; multiple fragmentation injuries with multiple bone fractures, with and without injuries of principal nerves and blood vessels; multiple and solitary fragmentation injuries with solitary bone fracture; multiple fragmentation soft tissue injuries, with or without penetrating injuries of vital organs; solitary soft tissue injuries combined with cranial and cerebral injuries; closed injuries of chest organs with or without

pneumothorax; closed injuries of abdominal organs; severe multiple trauma of limbs; cerebral and spinal trauma; thoracic and abdominal trauma, which usually occur when anti-tank mines are detonated.

Based on the Georgian Army organizational structure, the following two types of field hospitals were forwarded: battalion aid posts and brigade hospitals. The aid post provides medical assistance with the effort of 16 people, including 3 physicians in the following subdivisions: sorting block, surgical block, reanimation block, and operation hall. Eighty people, including 18 physicians, provide for the operation of a brigade mini-hospital with two operation halls, a reanimation and intensive care block, and two blocks for wound dressing.

At the beginning of the Abkhazian war, bullet wounds were predominant, accounting for 76 percent of all wounds; another 8 percent were burns, and 9 percent multiple trauma and blast injuries (due to anti-tank mines).

Starting from October 1992, battles became more severe and in 1993 blast injuries accounted for 62 percent of all injuries.

The reorganization of field medicine was imposed by the severity of injuries our soldiers were suffering. Thanks to the invention of a new approach, sanitary losses did not exceed 2 percent. The proximity of medical aid posts to the battlefield allowed the first aid to victims to begin within 30 minutes after the accident.

Louis Maresca

Legal Division, ICRC, Switzerland

I will follow up, to some extent, to the comments you have heard this morning from Jody Williams and Stephen Goose who have both made references to anti-personnel (AP) mines and their utility, or perhaps, their non-utility, and specifically to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) work in this field.

There are as you know a number of states that, citing their specific circumstances, continue to believe that AP mines are an indispensable weapon of war and cite their utility. It was one of the big obstacles or issues that was present during the international negotiations first in 1995-96 to amend the International Treaty of 1980, the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). And it has also been present throughout the Ottawa process and the development of the Mine Ban Treaty. The militaries have often cited that AP mines, if properly used and used in accordance with the military doctrine, would have limited effects on civilian populations. And they have often cited the irregular use, or the use by irregular forces, as the leading cause of the mine problem. But as many of us know, the reality on the ground has been much different, in that irrespective of the type of conflict or the forces involved, there have been high levels of civilian casualties and untold amounts of suffering and long-lasting socio-economic effects. In conjunction with the continued references by many militaries to the utility of AP mines, there was an acute absence of any studies that should have been conducted supporting what appeared to be based on an assumption. And when states were asked "what kind of studies have been conducted; what kind of analysis exists," none was ever found.

Based on this, the ICRC decided to commission a study on the military use and effectiveness of AP mines. The study was authored by Brigadier Patrick Blagden who had a career in combat engineer in the British armed Forces and who also served as a Senior Demining Advisor to the UN peace-keeping operations and as Technical Director for the Geneva Center for Humanitarian Demining. The study examines the military use of AP mines in 26 conflicts from 1940 to 1995. It includes a variety of armed conflicts, both international and internal, with professional as well as regular forces. Actually examined was the effectiveness of AP mines when they were used, as well as some indications of their tragic effects long after the conflict. And General Reay will speak more and provide a little bit more hard data.

But just in summary, the study was then presented to the Committee of Military Experts, who have careers in combat engineering, who were involved in the laying of mines and in demining, and who had also been involved in many of the conflicts cited in the report. Following are the highlights of some of the conclusions that were adopted unanimously by this Committee of Military Experts. The first conclusion was that there has thus far been no extensive evaluation of the historical effectiveness of AP mines. As I said before, this was true during the negotiations, and even though many militaries cited readily the utility of AP mines, there was very little documentation supporting that. The second conclusion by the military experts was that maintaining an extensive border minefield is expensive, time-consuming and dangerous, and it is useless without constant observation and direct fire. The fundamental part of mine warfare is that for a minefield to be effective as a barrier it had to be kept in a good form and it had to be covered by fire, otherwise to bridge it was relatively easy. Mining alone does not prevent infiltration. Without surveillance, regular forces could pass very quickly. The third conclusion: in the conflicts that had been examined, and in general practice, it is extremely difficult to use mines in accordance with traditional military doctrine. To some extent, this was supporting the effects that have been seen underground by many of the humanitarian organizations. And difficulty in practice, of course, may not always result from intention. The fourth conclusion is that the cost to forces of using AP mines in terms of one's own casualties and loss of technical flexibility is significant. The cited fact is that maintaining a minefield is dangerous and, of course, once a minefield is laid it becomes an auto-depositing force: it limits the technical flexibility of the force that laid it. The minefield is just as lethal to the opposition as it is to the mine-linked army.

The experts concluded that the military value of AP mines is questionable, and that in light of the obvious humanitarian consequences that have been seen, the utility is far outweighed by the humanitarian impact. These are the highlights of the ICRC study.

One of the key elements in the development of the Mine Ban Treaty and the Ottawa process has been the fact that military have come to recognize the limited military value of AP mines and have been willing to re-examine the utility in light of the developments that are occurring around the world. We would ask the military representatives that are here, and other participants, to read the study and feel free

to comment or engage the ICRC and any other military who belongs to a state party to this treaty, and to reconsider the utility of AP mines.

Gordon M. Reay

(Rt.) Lieutenant-General, Advisor to
Canadian Ambassador for Mine Action,
Canada

It is a great pleasure for me to join with so many like-minded people to see how we can progress even further in ridding the planet of anti-personnel (AP) mines. Your agenda is a very complete one, covering almost every aspect of the problem from humanitarian demining to victim assistance, to military utility. In my brief presentation, I would like to tell you about the Canadian efforts in finding alternatives to AP mines and perhaps, to pose some challenges to some people in the audience at the same time.

The Canadian objectives in alternate technologies are twofold: first, to determine if and what types of alternatives to landmines might be required by the Canadian Army, and second to offer ideas and information to other countries, particularly those thinking of signing or ratifying the treaty. The work is being done in two separate institutions but on roughly the same lines. One institution is relatively new the Canadian Center for Mine Action Technology, where the focus is on pure research and development. The second is led by the doctrine writers in Army headquarters, and is supported by the Army Staff College and the First Canadian Division Headquarters. Their focus is more on applied research, with an emphasis on doctrine, force structure, and equipment.

The parallel studies are roughly in two phases, with the first phase ending this calendar year and the second phase scheduled to commence in January, which will also take about one year. Phase one can best be described as setting the scene. It involves a full literature search of the practical and real effects of AP mines on the battlefield. There is a series of scenarios we have developed that will allow computer models to examine the effects of landmines and of possible alternatives. The main or baseline scenario is that of mid-intensity conflict, the one deemed most likely to involve the Canadian forces. However, scenarios will also be developed for operations other than war and for border operations. Finally, the computer models will be used to evaluate alternatives.

The preliminary results of the first phase are causing gray-haired generals like me to wonder why our absolute faith in the overriding benefits of landmines seem to have been so badly misplaced. It would be safe to say that no military, anywhere in the world, will willingly forfeit a useful weapon system that has been part of the doctrine and equipment for decades. But it has been done before, with dum dum bullets and chemical weapons being but two examples. And certainly once political decisions have been taken, the job then requires militaries to identify replacement technologies, to determine if other systems already in place can be sufficient to close the capability gap, or some combination of the two. Our research in the computer modeling has determined quite empirically what that gap can be and what alternatives should be considered.

The analysis of over a dozen conflicts from the American Civil War to the Gulf War, shows that the overall effect of landmines on the battlefield amount to something between two and six percent. That is to say that of all the casualties on the battlefield, no more than two to six percent of them were caused by AP mines. And when one considers the time and effort required to place and maintain the mines on a minefield, when one considers the labor involved for the benefit achieved, the AP mines seems to have been a very poor weapon system.

It is also interesting to note that in terms of the development of the mine over time, unlike almost every other weapon, the impetus did not come from the operational requirements staff of the armies, but rather from industry. It is important to note as well that the type of mine that seems to have had the most effect is the area mine, not the blast or fragmentation mine. There have been virtually no incidents where mines and minefields had a decisive effect against a determined enemy. And again when you measure the expenses time, labor, and logistics for such a small increase in combat power, is it worth that effort? Nevertheless, two to six percent does suggest that alternatives should be examined, though those alternatives do not necessarily mean the invention of new requirements.

As the army now turns to alternatives, it has to be conscious of a number of factors. The first, of course, is the characteristic of the landmine, the fact that it is reliable, the fact that it is cheap, etc. You must consider the morale effect on your own soldiers soldiers feel safer, the theory that it economizes its force, and so on. And, of course, the impact on enemy forces, the fact that it does inflict casualties, that it does freeze forces in place, that it does affect soldiers and commanders, and, of course, it affects their morale.

And you must consider the tradeoffs and the balancing acts that are always involved in military decisions. On the one hand, the use of mines does require a high labor effort for a low operational impact, and it requires a great deal of logistics; but on the other hand, any alternative technology cannot be any more expensive than the AP mine. And what is this optimum balance between surveillance, obstacles, and other weapon systems? What are some of these alternatives? Some are lethal, some are not. Some can compensate for the lack of mines without necessarily adding any costs at all, simply by increasing direct fire weapons at the platoon and squad level, or increasing indirect fire at company and battalion level. Better and more use of barbed wire, plastic mesh and trip flares provides early warning and separates the infantry from the armor on the battlefield. As every day goes by, shelf radars and acoustic sensors are also becoming much more affordable for all armies. Other alternatives include more sophisticated man in the loop sensor systems, combined with human-controlled Claymore varieties of mines. Combining sensor packages, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and remote cameras to remotely controlled mortars and artillery weapon systems, as well as machine guns, is yet another variant. Adding fairings or fins to rifles extends their ranges and lethality and helps to provide that integrated close in defense that may determine the outcome of a battle.

And there are also non-lethal alternatives. Some of them might strike you as science fiction, but they are being

developed and studied as I speak. And some will be quite effective: for example, noisemakers, sirens, strobe lights, and even odors. Cheap stun weapons, dazzle lasers and optical flashes, high power microwaves, new types of entangling devices to immobilize infantry and stop wheeled vehicles, even super-adhesives, anti-traction agents, and fast-hardening foams, which can be delivered either by troops on the ground or by artillery – these are all being examined in laboratories around the world.

I have met with many senior officers, staff, college students and instructors, and others; those from the countries that have signed the convention and those that have not. Too many of them try to draw a direct link between the highest imperatives of national security, on the one hand, and the central place of this tiny little AP mine in the defense planning of the nation. It is almost a psychological issue. Almost as if the country cannot be defended unless it retains this tiny little AP mine. Somehow this weapon that you can hold in your hand or place on the ground in front of you carries more weight in people's minds than the most modern main battle tank, aircraft, or warship. Our studies (pure laboratory research) show that AP mines have a very low effect on the success in battle, and are often counter-productive, particularly in today's strategies of maneuver and of getting inside the decision-cycle of your opponent. And even in the one area of battle where you would think they might make a decisive difference – the last 100 meters of an assault onto a prepared position, the effect even there is five percent or less.

The audience is well aware of the psychological effect on the soldier of suddenly finding himself in the middle of a minefield, afraid to move forward, or sideways or even backwards for fear of stepping on a mine. It is my personal opinion that that fear that arises is not one of dying, but of one being maimed, of losing a leg, or worse, one's masculinity. Groups of soldiers caught in a minefield, frozen in fear, cause the whole advance to stop and provide a resolute defender with the opportunity to bring effective fire to bear and defeat an attack. But this analogy holds true for any attacker facing a determined foe. A motor strike, an artillery bombardment, an anti-tank or attack helicopter assault, all have the same effect. In all these cases, the initial reaction of a soldier is either to fall to the ground and seek cover or to rush the defender. What separates the AP mine from all other weapon systems that have the same effect? And why are these mines banned and others are not?

The main reason is their pernicious nature, their longevity, their effect on the civilian population, their lack of discrimination and the fact that they are the only weapons on the battlefield that are victim-activated. The injuries they cause are out of proportion to their purpose, much the same way dum dum bullets were before they were banned. They stay in the ground for years, long after the military purposes have been achieved. And despite pleas from armies that they always use mines responsibly, mark them properly, and keep meticulous records, the fact is often they do not. They forget, they cut corners, the enemy disrupts their planning and execution, records are lost or they no longer occupy the terrain in question, even though their civilian populations may still live there.

Yes, on the one hand we expect armies to use all

available weapons in their arsenal to accomplish their strategic and tactical objectives. But on the other hand, there have always been restrictions placed on armies, from the time of the Code of Chivalry through to the Geneva Convention. In other words, civilized nations have always agreed to abide by international humanitarian law, to accept the doctrine of proportionality, and therefore to place restrictions on how their troops are employed and equipped.

So what could a battlefield look like in the future with no landmines in the arsenal? I will talk of the technical aspects. An attacker will maneuver forward and come under intense surveillance from a variety of sensor and radar packages, on the ground and in the air, many of them linked to remotely controlled weapons, both direct and indirect. He will have no idea from where the surveillance is emanating. Because he is under fire, he will know, of course, that he is being observed and taking accurate fire. As he tries to maneuver closer, he will run into sirens and noisemakers, a whole variety of lights and dazzlers that will disorient his drivers and crew commanders. He will encounter barbed wire and plastic entanglers that will stop his infantry and chew up the wheels and transmissions of his vehicles. He will encounter well-hidden anti-tank trenches and other obstacles. Indirect weapons will fire foams and other agents that will cause his vehicles to spin in their tracks, crash into other vehicles and generally disrupt his movement. Other agents will act as a kind of super glue, pinning vehicles to roads and track surfaces. Microwave emissions will further confuse him. And, of course, he will continue to encounter anti-tank mines, all of them protected by anti-handling devices, and man in the loop AP mines, such as the Claymore. All of this is going on at the same time as he is being pounded by all the lethal weapons the defender can bring to bear in the form of artillery, air strikes, anti-tank and vehicle missiles and so on. The attack fails, the enemy withdraws, the friendly forces make counter attack, pursue, maneuver for another strategic advantage, or commence a strategic advance, abandoning the ground they had just so tenaciously fought for 20 minutes ago. But in this case the ground left behind has not been littered with a single AP mine, and yet the effects of the mine have been achieved just as well, if not better and more economically.

I hope I have given you a good idea of what my country is doing and of some of the alternatives to landmines that already exist or will exist in the nearest future. There is no single solution to the problem of alternatives. Countries will adopt solutions that best fit their circumstances, but all will use some combinations of what I was talking about. And I urge those countries that have not yet signed, particularly the Defense Departments, to take off the blinders and examine the utility of a landmine with a cold heart of facts and figures, not emotion. And you can only come to the conclusion that these things have got to disappear.

Aslambek Aslakhonov

Academician, Chair, Union of Chechen
People Living Outside the Historic
Motherland, Russia

At present, the Chechen people are being "mined" by the mass media. Chechen refugees are dying of famine,

cold, and diseases; we are witnessing an on-going humanitarian disaster in the region, while Russia insists that there is no disaster! We have been "mined" so drastically that not one country outside of the CIS has ever tried to offer shelter to a single Chechen refugee, not even until summer, not even to women or children. After the humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo, even the remote Colombia sheltered 20,000 refugees, Germany more than 20,000, Italy and Spain 19,000 each. The Chechen people get refusals instead of visas. The Russian border security services retained me in the Moscow airport, even though my Chechen nationality is not indicated on my passport, and even though I have done more for the USSR and Russia than most of the acting governmental officials. But I have a Chechen name! My friend was kept for 40 minutes, and on arrival in Tbilisi we learned that the border security was intending to deport us back to Moscow.

I want to address all participants. The situation in Chechnya is catastrophic, especially for mine victims. Hospitals in Ingushetia have overflowed with victims; our neighbors cannot afford such inflows of refugees, for they have 30,000 of their own refugees from the Prigorodny region. Currently they have 230,000 more refugees than are officially registered – the real figure of refugees exceeds 300,000. These poor people stand in queues for days for a loaf of bread. A very small part of humanitarian aid reaches the real "consignees," people who are suffering from a severe lack of first aid, primarily pharmaceutical products. We are trying our best to provide almost personal humanitarian aid. Vitally important is the provision of prosthetic aid to mine victims – these prosthetic shops should be opened in Georgia, Armenia, and Russia, for Chechnya cannot afford to do this at this point. Chechen people living outside of Chechnya do not have money, because they are not allowed to earn money. Their businesses are prosecuted; their companies are being closed down under any artificial pretext. However, it is a duty for a Chechen person to take care of his/her grandparents and relatives who are in trouble.

Consequently, if surgical and rehabilitation services are not provided, we are going to lose many more human lives, for we cannot provide for them ourselves.

I feel ill at ease to ask for any assistance, because Georgia shelters more than 200,000 Chechen refugees, and recently was hit by a natural disaster resulting in thousands of homeless Georgians. Armenia and Azerbaijan are in a very similar situation, so we are not asking them to shelter our refugees, but maybe to render assistance in prosthetic services or other vital needs.

I am addressing friends from different countries participating in this Conference! It is not the military that is to blame for the mined lands. The military took an oath and it is fulfilling the will of the ruling politicians. So, we are to address the politicians to stop manufacturing and using mines and other weapons of mass destruction.

I also hope to witness the "moral demining" of the Chechen people. We are ordinary people, and Chechnya used to have the best criminal record within the former USSR. Now we are being called bandits and terrorists. The outrage against criminals all over the world who are taking hostages is something we share. We ask you to explain to your countries that the Chechen people are trapped. We also ask you to deliver any humanitarian aid on the ground, not through governmental structures, if you want those in need to get it. I am speaking now on behalf of the Union of Chechen People Living Outside the Historic Motherland. We are more than one million Chechens, Russians, Ingush, Armenians, and other people inhabiting Chechnya. We will adhere to your activities to promote all ideas and tasks that will be formulated here.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Russia has accumulated significant experience in mine clearance and has developed reliable and sophisticated mine clearance technologies that are being constantly modernized.

Mine clearance includes 3 principal stages:

- Surveillance of an area and detection of explosive devices;
- Clearing an area of unexploded ordnances UXOs;
- Control procedure to assess the quality of performed mine clearance.

Inductive mine detectors, such as IMP-2, or MIV-2 for in-water works, are used to detect landmines, or anti-tank mines or other UXOs with a metallic shell. For the detection of other types of mines, i.e., shelled with other than metal materials, multi-channel MMP detectors or others are used.

The complex use of modern detectors provides the reliable and effective detection of all modern explosive devices, as well as of WWII devices that have been idle in the soil for more than 50 years.

A few words about the staffing of mine detection services: In modern practice, dogs are one of the best means of UXO detection. The best trained for Russia's specific environment are the German hounds. The training of dogs consumed time and effort: the complete course lasts from 10 months to one year. Dog trainers are also trained for five months in the same center.

The medium service life of a mine-detecting dog is 6-8 years. During this period, the dogs have daily general training and special mine search training 2-3 times a week. If a dog fails to detect at least one of five hidden mines, it will be either rejected or re-trained.

Modern mine clearance technologies are based on the so-called cell-system, i.e., the target area is divided into cells by major and perpendicular, or additional, paths, that are marked by clearly visible signs. Each member of the team gets either part of a cell or a whole cell for clearance operation. The clearance procedure is performed twice, i.e., repeated on the way "back."

Modern technology includes the obligatory control of the quality of clearance. Control groups are assigned by coordinating bodies. Control groups revise the cleared area randomly, making control paths 50 to 100 meters one from another. Areas where a single UXO was detected are to be re-cleared completely.

An analysis proves that Russian technologies, involving double or triple clearance and quality control operations, guarantee the international standards of mine clearance and comply with UN standards of humanitarian demining.

The following methods are used in the process of mine clearance:

- manual demining
- mechanical search
- blast techniques
- complex clearance.

Manual demining is the basis of all existing technologies, for there is still no equivalent mechanical substitute for a deminer's live hands. Mechanical slacking and blast techniques are basic for clearing mine barriers during the battle, but they are auxiliary to humanitarian demining.

Demining teams are usually equipped with special KR-E kits for manual demining. Newly developed devices serve to modernize and improve the quality of traditional kits. Examples are devices for the non-detonating destruction of UXOs, new types of manual slacking or means for the delivery of devices to a mined area, non-magnetic probes, personal mine protection devices, and blast-localizing devices.

Mechanical slacking involves the use of the following devices:

- mechanical mine trawls for contact slacking (i.e., mechanical detonation, surfacing, displacing, or destruction);
- special equipment for non-contact slacking (i.e., through various physical phenomena);
- complex equipment for simultaneous use of both slacking modes.

The blast demining technique is based on the use of known blast parameters of various explosives, which, when applied on a minefield, provide either detonation or mechanical damage to laid mines.

The complex use of modern detection and demining techniques provide effective humanitarian demining.

Regional security: Landmines on borders (Krasnyi Most) and humanitarian demining

Anzor Maglakelidze

Colonel, Counselor to Commander-in-Chief of United Forces, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Georgia

The Red Bridge (Krasnyi Most) is located on the junction of three borders: Armenia-Georgia, Azerbaijan-Georgia, and Azerbaijan-Armenia. Azerbaijani settlements neighbor the Red Bridge area in Georgia.

Gas conduits and a strategically significant field road pass through this region. During the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, all neighboring territories near the border were mined, including Georgian territories. Numerous mine accidents were reported in the area, sometimes entire families were killed by mines. Incidents of Azerbaijani citizens' intruding onto Georgian territory with the aim of mining the paths of fuel tanks delivering fuel to Armenia were also reported. As a rule, demining teams detected new mines next to exploded mines, thus mine clearance operations resulted in the spill-over of the effects of military conflict between other republics onto Georgian territory. Numerous episodes of gas conduit damage done by Azerbaijani citizens have also been reported. I want to point out that all these events were related to the military conflict.

Mine clearance is always a risky venture, whatever safety measures are undertaken. If only anti-personnel (AP) landmines were involved, mine clearance could be done by plowing through the soil with tractors. But

unfortunately, in real life the soil is usually mined with a variety of mines. Humanitarian demining is out of the question when anti-tank mines are laid. Although anti-mine slacking provides for the safe demining of geographically peculiar areas, narrow tracks, marshy places, mountain areas, etc., could pose obstacles to tanks bearing slacks; thus manual demining becomes the only solution.

Arif Yunusov

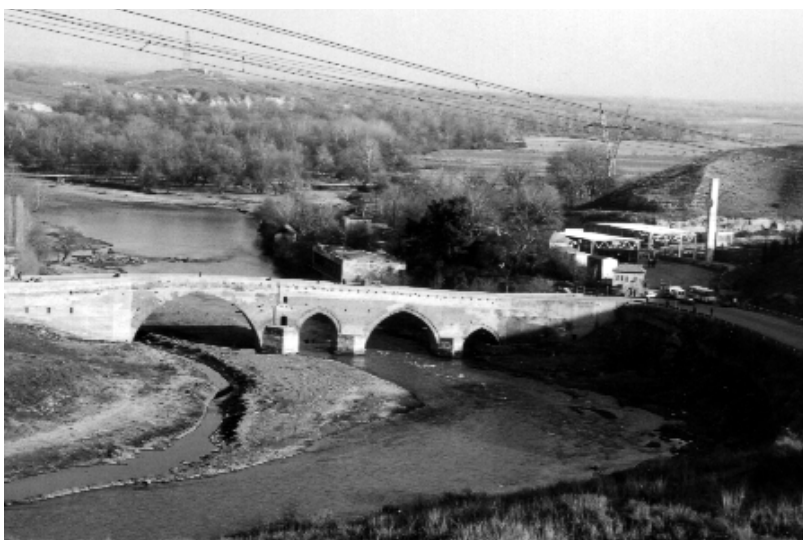
Chair, Azerbaijani Campaign to Ban Landmines, Azerbaijan

The problems of the Red Bridge area were already discussed during the April meeting in Tsinandali, Georgia. It is necessary to define the zone of confrontation in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, as well as the zone of the state border (about 7 kilometers) between the three states: Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The issue is that there was no demarcation of the borders (a common problem for the former USSR republics, as all borders were conventional, i.e., marked only on maps) on the one side, and the indefinite responsibility for clearing the planted mines was left for the other side. Recognizing that, it is clear that mine clearance should be provided by the joint efforts of all three states, possibly with the participation of international organizations, once the demarcation has been conducted. The joint efforts should be viewed as confidence-building measures.

The Azerbaijani and Georgian sides have already resolved the problem at the level of their foreign ministers (except for minor details). Some complications coming from the Armenian side should be settled at the governmental level. Public organizations could facilitate the process. Governmental officials, to be more exact, representatives of frontier services and Foreign Ministries, did not participate in the Tsinandali meeting.

The most urgent problems regarding the mine issue are as follows:

- how to render assistance, for example, to Azerbaijani citizens living in the Georgian frontier territories when border demarcation has not yet been conducted;
- how to make progress on the cease-fire agreement, i.e., bring about the signing of a Peace Treaty in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, and in Georgia-Abkhazia conflict.



I sincerely hope I have outlined the most alarming issues and that this discussion will help improve the situation. Let the Red Bridge area become a start.

Albert Kaltakhtchyan

Vice-Governor, Tavush-Marza Province,
Armenia

Our province has 400 km of borders, including 350 km shared with Azerbaijan and 50 km shared with Georgia. During the conflict, mines were laid by both parties, but minefield maps are missing. We have demarcation lines instead of borders, thus areas deep into the province territory were mined, and 9,500 hectares of agricultural lands have been abandoned due to the mine danger. Our neighbors are in the same situation. The problem has two aspects: humanitarian and economic. Farmers are deprived of the harvest from more than 9,000 hectares of mined lands. Mine clearance issues will be resolved by our governments. We have recently witnessed regular meetings among the three Presidents. We are obliged to support the populations of the problem frontier areas, i.e., inform them about adhering minefields. I appeal to international organizations to participate in our mine awareness efforts. It is reasonable, from my point of view, to educate the local population first, and then to provide mine clearance when minefield maps are available with the efforts of local experts.

We are trying to build a "bridge" with our neighbors, while before we could do it only through Georgian intermediaries. For example, a while ago I had a 5-hour meeting with the governor of Kazah (situated next to Ijivan). A number of mutually important issues were agreed upon and arranged, such as the construction of water channels, which would be a joint effort, or inviting international organizations working in the area for discussion on the finances. The project needs about \$15,000 to \$20,000 of investments, but this would guarantee the restored economic and trade links, and consequently, the restored peace in the area. This would also help resolve mine clearance problems, border problems, and other issues of concern.

Alexander Kobelashvili

Department of State Borders, Georgia

Mines are a painful problem for the entire Caucasus. Georgia has 7 km of minefields from the Red Bridge to the cross-border of the three states. As a former chief of the Red Bridge frontier post, I know the issue. Georgia started to guard this border when the Abkhazian War began. Military operations in the Nagorny Karabakh war started in 1991 and lasted until 1998. Obviously, Georgia had no reason to mine the discussed territories because of its neighbor relationship with Armenia and Azerbaijan, so I take all responsibility in insisting that Georgia has never laid mines in the Red Bridge area. The Armenian and Azerbaijani parties could have mined the area for control purposes. Although when you are in the Red Bridge area you never know exactly on which territory you are, Armenian, Georgian, or Azerbaijani. Thus, all three states should define the course of mine clearance. I regret the fact that the Foreign Ministries of Armenia and Azerbaijan are still not ready to negotiate, and that Georgia performs mine clearance on both neighboring territories, while the efforts of the Georgian-Azerbaijani commission were fruitless. It is necessary to provide the joint efforts of all three states, while international organizations could render financial assistance, although I feel ill at ease saying this. Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan can provide experts. Six experts two from each side would define the costs of the whole venture. All specialists were trained in the same Russian school.

Money could be entrusted to a neutral party. This way, we can report at the Third Conference, that the Red Bridge zone is free of mines. This is my proposal.

There are still problems with Nagorny Karabakh and Abkhazia, but while Karabakh personifies the conflict between the two states, Georgians have no conflict with the Abkhazians. The territory is occupied by Russian troops and so-called Northern Caucasus combatants. There is the risk of a new, uncontrollable war breaking out in the Caucasus if international organizations do not intervene.

QUESTION ANSWER

Bagir Godjayev, Lieutenant-General, Department of State Border, Azerbaijan:

Who is responsible for mining the Georgian Red Bridge territory? How big is the mined area? Are there any mine clearance activities?

Badri Natchkebia, Centre for Research on Terrorism and Political Violence, Georgia:

The discussed area is adjacent to the Georgia-Azerbaijan border and is inhabited by ethnic Azerbaijani people. For the last four years, 44 mine victims and killed cattle were reported. The last mine incident was reported in November 1998. The estimated mined area accounts for 15 square km. Deminers have detected Russian, Italian, and Israeli mines. Set up in 1998, the Georgian Committee of the ICBL carried out a series of activities and organized a few meetings in Azerbaijan and Armenia. NGOs from Armenia and Azerbaijan joined the last meeting held in Tsinandali. Before conducting a demarcation of the borders, international organizations might share the mine clearance efforts with the involved states. I have a proposal: to replace the Ministry of Defense forces by the border troops of Armenia and Azerbaijan, for they are likely to reach a faster and mutual understanding. There would be no problems with demarcation, though mines are still a big problem, even if no registered mine accidents have taken place in the Red Bridge area since 1998 (data from Azerbaijan and Armenia included).

Arthur Sakunts

Chair, Vanadzor Office, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Armenia

I want to touch upon the regional safety issues. Without democracy and civil society, we cannot provide real safety. Military means can never guarantee it. I would like it so much, of course, if the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan ordered their armies to clean the Red Bridge area of mines. But we have to work a lot to make it happen. The necessary political and social environment in the countries should be created by non-governmental organizations: "We do not want people to die anymore in our countries, whoever they are by nationality; we do not want the money of our tax-payers to be used for the purchase of mines."

So, we have to adhere to an active civil position, declaring that mines are the most inhumane weapon. People should be aware and demand that their politicians spend money for peaceful purposes, rather than for the purchase of weapons that kill civilians.

I do agree that the Red Bridge zone is a symbolic territory that should be cleared of mines by a joint effort. In our case, the problem with Azerbaijan is a problem between politicians, not between non-governmental organizations. Consequently, it is non-governmental organizations that should raise the discussed issue up to the governmental level. It is not the time yet, from my point of view, to discuss purely technical or financial issues. International organizations come and help those who are trying to help themselves.



Azerbaijan Army servicemen confirm that they still find mines in the Krasny Most border area.

QUESTION-ANSWER

Alexander Kobelashvili, Department of State Borders, Georgia:

We keep discussing the involvement of international organizations in clearing the Red Bridge area of mines, but still we cannot define their exact input. Shouldn't we hold a referendum?

Arthur Sakunts, Chair, Vanadzor Office, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Armenia:

For me, the most important issues are human life and human rights. I am Armenian and I think that if my country spends money for the purchase of weapons, only public opinion could interfere. So, I think a referendum is necessary either Armenia, or Nagorny Karabakh, or Abkhazia are involved when vitally important issues are discussed. Let us avoid any actions escalating the conflict; let us destroy weapons that kill civilians. Our movement should enroll all non-governmental organizations of the southern Caucasus. Marina Sallier proposed to organize an all-Caucasus peace action movement, and this is one of the possible ways to express the will of civil society when politicians fail to resolve existing problems. I am going to promote this action, and I am not going to sit and wait for the ministers and frontier officials of Georgia and Azerbaijan to settle the problem.

Mine awareness programs

Geir Bjoersvik

Technical Advisor, Norwegian Peoples' Aid,
Norway

Our organization has accumulated a certain experience in delivering mine awareness programs to civilian populations.

To start and to make your effort effective, you should estimate the general situation in the region and the means at your disposal. In Mozambique, for example, there are no TV broadcasts, so, we had to use other mass media tools.

It is reasonable to use simultaneously more than one route for spreading information. Obviously, TV and radio are very effective, but programs in high schools and secondary schools are effective as well. The inclusion of mine awareness programs in school curricula requires close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the provision of training for instructors.

Another original approach is the enrollment of local celebrities and well-known people, such as rock-stars, actors, religious leaders, into mine awareness activities. There is an arsenal of methods that could be used simultaneously. For example, the demonstration of a landmine "potential," the wounds and suffering it causes, are at once very impressive and unforgettable.

The coordination center is very important for the proper organization and performance of mine awareness programs. Such a center, for example, operates effectively in Azerbaijan.

Nelli Alilova

Armenian Committee, Helsinki Citizens'
Assembly, Armenia

I will not talk about the methods of propaganda that are widely used in any propaganda campaign, although they are at our disposal. Certain investments are necessary to provide mine awareness programs in an environment of economic crisis. Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia can rely on the assistance of international organizations acting in their territories, while small republics such as Chechnya, Ingushetia, and Ossetia are in a more difficult situation, especially when the armed conflicts in these republics are not over yet. I think it is wise to join our efforts. A creative team of experts from the involved republics develops and creates posters, video clips, and manuals, and works out mine awareness programs within half a year, which will then be translated into the languages of the region and disseminated among the population. Special school mine awareness programs will be developed by the joint efforts of the military experts and school teachers, and then instructors from all republics will be trained. Former Soviet-era military school classes were proven to be ineffective and non-compliant with current tasks and challenges.

Martin Van Harten

International Officer, Helsinki
Citizens' Assembly, The
Netherlands

I am positive about the idea of a transnational Information Center in the Caucasus. Cooperation of activities on this issue can be problematic, thus the role of international organizations is crucial in establishing and developing links. Our organization, the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, has accumulated research experience not only in the southern Caucasus, but also in the Balkans. We support all kinds of cooperation and interaction, especially in conflict frontier regions.

Since 1992, our organization has addressed a lot of efforts to develop cooperation between Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, including the Armenian and Azerbaijani people of Nagorny Karabakh. These contacts were built on a mutual confidence basis. We have every reason to believe that these contacts in the frontier regions

A mine-awareness lesson for children of the Caucasus.



will develop even further. When a military conflict breaks out as happened in 1991-92 the civilian population of both conflicting parties is deprived of the normal practice of communication. In Kazah and Itchivan, we participated in rescuing hostages and searching for those missing, and we worked on both edges of the minefields. However, the replacement of the military subdivision in the area has interfered with our effort. Our mission was to provide direct contacts between the confronting parties in the conflict zone. This involves mine clearance operations as well. Particularly important are the roads. They are heavily mine-infested; and to provide our peaceful initiative, we have to make these roads at least walkable. This refers to the Maniul region in Georgia. We have to take care of mine awareness programs in affected areas.

The Helsinki Citizens' Assembly would support all initiatives aimed at organizing joint projects and expert groups dealing with mine awareness issues, as well as mine evaluation and mine clearance issues. We would also strive to make governments aware that such contacts and cooperation are of vital importance for the population of mine-affected territories.

Temur Sakhokia

Mine Victim, Georgian Campaign to Ban Landmines, Georgia

I would suggest that the Ministry of Education start mine awareness programs within the 10-kilometer security zone where the military conflicts took place. Mine awareness among the local population is of crucial importance; the people will be grateful for the initiative. The simultaneous training of instructors can be organized by the Engineer Forces of the Defense Ministry. I would also suggest marking dangerous areas with special signs; for example, placing light reflecting mine-danger signs next to road signs. All types of mines can be displayed on these signs, for this kind of information is no longer classified (except for technical details). My third proposal is to organize training seminars on mine awareness for school teachers, especially within the primary school system. For the teacher has the strongest influence and can persuade school children to believe that mines are dangerous. All schools in mine-endangered areas should be involved. The tragedy of Chechnya has just started; a lot of trouble is awaiting the refugees when they start returning to their homes. I address the Azerbaijani ICRC representatives to share their experience and disseminate whatever knowledge they can among refugees in Ingushetia refugee camps. The optimal way is to make maximum copies of what is available at the moment and have a target group of activists distribute the materials in mine-endangered areas.

Musa Jalalov

Program Coordinator, Azerbaijan Committee of the Red Cross, Azerbaijan

I want to share our experience within the frames of the mine awareness program that has been carried out in Azerbaijan by the ICRC since 1996. Our program has covered the frontier areas of Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh, i.e., about 20 mine-endangered regions. You have seen already our video and posters. The information you want to deliver should be clear and eye-catching. We started with the brochure describing the types of Soviet mines, types of minefields, and their location. Furthermore, we designed a few posters and distributed them in populated areas, primarily in kindergartens, schools, and institutions, as well as other crowded areas.

Then we prepared special programs for schools, for we had to take care of 500 schools in former battle areas and another 500 schools in occupied territories. The school initiative was a joint effort; we worked together with our Swiss colleagues. We prepared seminars for school teachers that were accompanied by a demonstration of posters and models of mines and ordnance (one- and two-hour seminars). All school teachers got special 3-4 page leaflets with basic information on the issue. Later on, we made a video and distributed it among schools through educational committees.

There is no doubt that the Ministries of Education and Defense should cooperate to provide adequate security for civil populations, to clear infested territories from mines, and to deliver sufficient mine awareness programs to endangered areas. The ICRC has prepared a special booklet on mines for schools that will be presented soon to the Ministry of Education for distribution.

Karl-Heinz Stirli

Counselor, National Committee on Demining, Azerbaijan

Our Committee, supported by the UN and the government of Azerbaijan, is engaged in mine clearance and mine control operations, in providing mine awareness programs and mine victim rehabilitation, as well as in creating a complete information database on the mine problem. Financial support for all these activities comes from UNDP, the government of Azerbaijan, the World Bank, and the governments of Canada, Norway, Japan, and Switzerland.

In order to get financial support from international sources, you should develop a sophisticated project with all financial details. Our Committee has already got all necessary documents and is authorized to start demining training programs and mine awareness programs in January 2000.

These facts allow me to propose that the Azerbaijan National Committee become engaged in mine control and mine clearance operations in the Red Bridge zone, as well as in rendering assistance to mine victims. International financial organizations will not support military structures, but they would support humanitarian demining programs. This is the alternative chosen by our Committee.

The government of Switzerland plans to render financial

support to mine clearance operations in the Caucasus. In order to address our government, you should prepare specific detailed projects with clear budgets. For my part, I am ready to help in developing such projects and forwarding them further for the consideration of the government of Switzerland.

Aleksander Russetsky

Coordinator, Georgian Committee of
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Georgia

The Georgian committee of the HCA has its own understanding of mine awareness issues, and our action programs require investments. We understand that we should present live projects with a financial assessment of the problem targeted. For example, currently we are negotiating with the Ministry of Education for the possible support of our mine awareness program. I think similar projects can be developed in Armenia, Ingushetia, Dagestan, everywhere. It is NGOs that must develop such projects and introduce them at the governmental level.

We face multiple problems, including protectionism and corruption, in providing adequate prosthetic aids to mine victims. I think it is our task to cooperate with official state structures and the Ministries of Public Health, Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Engineer Forces to provide intermediate prosthetic aid to those in need. In order to effectively resolve the multiple problems of mine victims, we should start with organizing adequately equipped information centers in the entire Caucasus region. A network will allow for a timely and effective informational exchange, bringing up the level of our mutual informational policy and effectiveness.

We have delegates from the newly born movement "Refugees Against Mines." From my point of view, we should widen this movement to include a network of local organizations; but in the very beginning, the nuclei of any network are the informational and organizational centers. I think my approach should be shared by representatives from Ingushetia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, as these republics are acquainted with an influx of hundred of thousands of refugees. Nobody else knows better the problems of refugees than the refugees themselves.

Tamara Osmanova

Director, Derbent Center for Socio-
Psychological Rehabilitation and
Culture of Peace, Dagestan

Our Center was born under the auspice of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (UNESCO) on the southern borders of the Russian Federation. We provide rehabilitation for immigrants and displaced people, those who are afflicted by the numerous psychological traumas that usually characterize people in conflict zones aggravated by homelessness.

The majority of this group consists of women and children. We have started with a primary medical aid program, and we plan to involve our students in it as well, since Derbent has a lot of them. We do not have reliable

data on mine victims, but according to the sources of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the number of recent conflict victims reaches 710 civilians, among them 540 injured and 170 killed. About 110 of them are thought to be the mine victims. Since we have just started our activities, we are here in Tbilisi to absorb the useful experiences of other organizations that we will get to know.

Joining the Ottawa Process: Obstacles and opportunities

Mikhail Nagorny

Lieutenant-Colonel, Department of Engineer Forces, Ministry of Defense, Russia

I represent a structure that is characterized here as a fiend, sowing death and injury. We know the danger of mines better than anyone else does, we face it daily. Our officers risk their lives daily to save the lives of civilians.

The Chief of the Engineer Forces is deeply concerned with the mine problem.

Many speeches emphasize the ineffectiveness of mines, while mines caused 57 percent of all losses in Afghanistan, 30 to 50 percent in Vietnam and Korea. Although only 2 to 6 percent of battle effectiveness is attributed to mines in "modern" assessments, statistics say it is 50 percent.

Mines, hiding in the ground for years waiting for their victims, are not only a community concern, but ours as well. Russia has adhered to Protocol II of the Geneva Convention. Although it has not yet been ratified, the Engineer Department of the Ministry of Defense has already been fulfilling the articles of the Convention for a few years. Russia has stopped the use of blast mines; it stopped their production in 1991. Blast mines are used only in limited perimeters to protect the Russian troops and are under constant surveillance, as in the case of Russia's anti-terrorist operation in Chechnya. Thus, mines are used under full control with the purpose to protect troops, and aircraft mining with self-destruct mines (destruction within 40 hours) is used to block mountain routes from Chechnya to Georgia. Specialized subdivisions started mine clearance operations in Dagestan and Chechnya, for example. In the Novolack region of Dagestan, deminers have already been working for 1.5 months and more than 100 hectares of land have been cleared of mines and other UXOs. Our deminers work in Kosovo, Bosnia, and Abkhazia. But a complete and full-scale demining is beyond our possibilities, for we have limited manpower. Generally, we can provide only our vital needs, but deminers, nevertheless, are always within reach if a shell or mine is reported somewhere by civilians.

President Yeltsin declared Russia's intention to ban mines in Strasbourg, thus the moratorium on mines not complying with the requirements of the Geneva Convention (i.e., non-detectable and non-self-destruct mines) was extended. Production of blast mines, including cassette mines, has ended. Stockpiles of the most dangerous types of landmines PMN and PMN2 are being destroyed (about 800,000 have already been destroyed to date). Mine arsenals are being destroyed as well at Georgian

military bases following the agreement with the President of Georgia.

We stopped the export of landmines in 1991 with the exception of Russian arsenals in the former USSR republics under governmental agreement. Russia also stopped the transfer and trade of mines in 1991. All Russian armies received recommendations on the use of mines based on the Geneva Convention requirements. Military training is also organized in compliance with these requirements.

Russia is ready to adhere to the Ottawa Convention, but has to first replace landmines by alternative weapons, and is not ready to do so now. It usually takes about 10 years to develop a new type of weapon. Some of the alternatives to mines are successfully screened: for example, blinding devices by glasses; noise generators by ear protective devices. Thus, these alternatives significantly lose their effectiveness. Fences and other mechanical barriers do not really fit into modern battle, for they lack mobility and their installation is time and labor consuming. Although it is not easy to find an alternative to landmines, the problem, nevertheless, will be solved, and Russia will join the Ottawa Convention within 10-12 years, while in the meantime fulfilling the Geneva Convention. Blast mine stockpiles will be completely destroyed by 2010-2012. We cannot manage this earlier, taking into consideration Russia's huge territory and, for example, considerable transportation expenses. Utilization itself needs finances that we are looking for now.

A few words about cooperation with Georgia. Currently we have Georgian students in Russian military schools, and we will provide military and technical personnel to organize training and humanitarian demining on the territory of Georgia. However, in order to comply with the Russian Federation's Constitution, all these undertakings should be first agreed to at a governmental level. We are ready to meet any requirement if there is an official address from the Georgian government.

I want to stress that all minefields installed by Russia in Abkhazia are under control. We do not take responsibility for minefields installed by other parties, although we actively participate in their clearance, leaving only one to two percent of the initially installed landmines and other UXOs behind. Yesterday I learned that my university classmate died while demining an aviation bomb.

As to the mining of Oralo, Russia has acknowledged the error, made apologies, and assured Georgia that it will clear the infested territories.

Presently, Russia is preparing maps of thousands of minefields in Afghanistan, to pass them over through Pakistan or Switzerland intermediaries.

Yuri Donskoy

Chair, Ukrainian Campaign to Ban
Landmines, Ukraine

I think that there are no contradictions between the Geneva and Ottawa Conventions. The Ottawa Convention offers a complex approach and solution to the problem of landmines and UXOs. Our trouble is that all these efforts are limited to military issues.

This refers to Ukraine as well. The cost of Ukraine's mine stockpiles amounts to \$242 million. True, it is hard to lose invested money. Moreover, the destruction of these stockpiles will require \$10 million on average. But the resolution of all mine-related problems will cost about \$1 billion. Thus, the cost for mine destruction and neutralization of the effects caused by mines outweigh the Ukrainian military budget by three times. This means that Ukraine will not be able to resolve the problem itself. The same goes for all republics of the former USSR, including Georgia and Russia.

The current standards in the former USSR republics differ and do not comply with the UN standards, hence the landmine issue should be discussed at an intergovernmental level by an ad hoc intergovernmental commission on the Ottawa Convention, comprised of representatives of all states. The Geneva intersessional committees and working groups are not effective from my point of view. Ukraine is represented in Geneva by an official from the Foreign Ministry. Besides, Ukraine has limited its activity on the issue to only one expert group on stockpile destruction, while other features are simply ignored.

I think that an International Council of CIS Engineer Forces' commanders (as well as other military divisions) would be useful. Ukraine's Engineer Forces do not participate in international military cooperation programs. There is no coordinating center that would accumulate relative information from foreign sources, process, and deliver or disseminate it to related services. Russia and Georgia are in the same situation. There is only an expert group consisting of governmental officials and representatives of NGOs, but unless there is a legal basis regulating the relationship with governmental structures, the latter would rarely hear the opinion or recommendation of the experts.

One of the important tasks of the movement to ban landmines is to create a reliable organizational and informational supporting network that would make all efforts much more effective.

A month ago, a meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee — a structure of the Council of Heads of CIS States — of soldiers and international affairs took place in Kiev. The Committee, headed by the president of Ingushetia, Ruslan Aushev, develops the legal basis for all military veterans' and military victims' issues for all CIS states. Thus, we are trying here to address the needs of mine victims within the framework of the Ottawa process, while in parallel an intergovernmental structure is engaged in the same issues. There is an ad hoc department on social and medical issues in the CIS and a special institute in St. Petersburg, i.e., the establishments that are supposed to promote the Ottawa process. It is logical to formulate the Conference's proposals and address them to the CIS governors.

Ukraine is preoccupied with the stockpile destruction process, showing zero results in other aspects of the Ottawa process. Traditionally, it is the Ministry of Defense that takes the decision to join the Ottawa process, and the President cannot submit a document for ratification to Parliament if his opinion is not shared by the Engineer Forces. Thus, the military department acts like an obstacle to improving the mine situation in general, or in addressing the needs of mine victims and veterans, which inevitably results in new victims and financial losses.

Louis Mareska

Legal Division, International Committee of
the Red Cross (ICRC), Switzerland

A few words about technical support to mine clearance and disarmament efforts.

Any government in need can apply for technical and financial support to be able to fulfill the provisions of the Treaty. Donor states can unite their potential to render technical, financial, and other kinds of assistance. Following the agreements, the recipient state reports on the projects that have been supported. An example of such cooperation is the Canadian support to the Ukrainian government in view to provide the fulfillment of the Ottawa Treaty provisions. Support and assistance is very important in providing other states chances to join the Ottawa process.

The other important issue I will touch on briefly is the states' responsibility for non-compliance or violation of the Treaty provisions. Primarily this refers to illegal activities within non-controlled territories. Following the Treaty provisions, a responsible party should provide mine clearance and placement of mines under strict control within a guarded territory. Violations are disputable when a particular state cannot provide control over the limited territory, does not use AP mines, and is not a party to Ottawa Convention. Although any state should undertake measures to prevent the use of AP mines and the violation of norms postulated in the Treaty. This refers, certainly, to territories under state control. Legal provisions should prevent any violations of these norms.

Timely and adequate steps to guarantee compliance with the Treaty provisions would be viewed as the best understanding of the idea of the Treaty.

The number of landmines disseminated during the armed conflicts in Nagorny Karabakh, Tajikistan, Transnistria, Abkhazia, and Chechnya pose a great threat to the populations in the involved areas. In Abkhazia only, 150,000 mines were deployed along the Inguri river in the so-called buffer zone (UN data, Humanitarian Department). In Nagorny Karabakh, according to ICRC data, at least 50,000 different types of mines were deployed from both sides.

Detection and destruction of one mine costs from \$300 to \$1,000. The same money allows the purchase of 100 to 330 new landmines. Modern remote deployment techniques with the use of aircraft, artillery, and missiles allow for the dissemination of up to 2,000 mines within minutes over the targeted area. With this in mind, a deminer's effort might seem like Sisyphus' burden. There is one more detail: the average human cost of every 1,000 destroyed mines amounts to two deaths and four injuries for deminers.

PANEL 4

Landmines on the territory of the former Soviet military bases.
Cooperation on the landmine problem between military bodies
and civil society institutions.

Abstract from Roundtable Discussion

Djgeneraya Vahtang

Commander of Engineer Demining Unit,
Ministry of Defense, Georgia

I would like to comment on the period when Russia started the transfer of former USSR military bases to Georgia. There were violations on both sides, but I will speak only of those which I witnessed myself.

The first object is the stockpile of artillery ammunition in Oseauri. The final transfer dates to the years 1992-1993. The entire perimeter and part of the territory of the military base was mined, basically by PMN2. There were mine accidents even among the Russian military (a case with the officer reported), so mine clearance executed by officers-deminers lasted for almost three years, interrupted by fire in 1996 and renewed in 1997. In 1997, one soldier lost his eyes due to a mine accident, and only afterwards did mine maps appear. There are still infested territories on this base.

The second object is a pontoon battalion in Mzheta. PMN-2, PFS and PFS-1 mines were laid along the perimeter, fragmentation mines on the Kura-river banks and near the lake. About 700 mines were cleared, and further control revealed no mines. We experienced a severe deficit of technical devices for mine clearance; in particular, there is no a single professional mine slack in the Georgian army.

At the end of the 1980s, the airport in Kutaisi-Kopetnari was mined, mostly by PMN and PMN-2. We plan to extend mine clearance operation in the spring of 2000.

Aleksander Russetsky

Coordinator, Georgian Committee of
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Georgia

These areas are mined with what? According to my data, the areas discussed are known as anti-tank fields.

Djgeneraya Vahtang

These territories are mined by landmines. All mentioned areas were mined by Russian units. There are 7-8 such areas in Georgia. Near Vaziani, on the territory of a former air defense unit, a few blast mines were cleared. In the Lonovo settlement, 3,600 mines have been cleared altogether to date, excluding self-destruct mines. There are still more mines in neighboring Shenako, but we stop mine clearance during wintertime. We have to work with "naked

hands"; there is no aid from the Russian part, but we cooperate with frontier units.

Aleksander Russetsky

What do you know about Shevardnadze's attitude toward the use of landmines?

Djgeneraya Vahtang

I do not know, but probably the head of the Engineer Department of the Ministry of Defense has some information.

I want to address the delegates with the request either to render aid in technical equipment or to participate in joint mine clearance programs, for my deminers work with naked hands or use outdated equipment, and they are never rewarded for their extremely dangerous work.

Aleksander Russetsky

Do you know about the Presidential Decree stating a 20-fold month salary reward for each cleared mine?

Djgeneraya Vahtang

This is not the Presidential Decree, but the regulation of the Minister of Defense, authorized by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Georgian Army, E. Shevardnadze. The provisions of this regulation envisage an award in the amount of 5 to 20 minimal salaries, depending on the degree of complexity (3 degrees). According to the regulation, the degree of complexity is defined by a commission, then the commander applies for a reward.

Aleksander Russetsky

Do you think the danger of your work is not compensated for?

Djgeneraya Vahtang

Our Ministry of Defense does not have finances for it.

Aleksander Russetsky

For example, if you had cleared 100 mines but were not compensated for it, what would you do?

Djgeneraya Vahtang

We are soldiers and we just continue to perform our duty. One day people will say "thank you" for what we have done.

Aleksander Russetsky

I address my question to the Ministries of Defense of Georgia and Russia: which mechanisms regulate the transfer of military objects and how do they really work?

Mikhail Nagorny

Lieutenant-Colonel, Department of Engineer Forces, Ministry of Defense, Russia

There is a schedule for the transfer of military bases; it has been executed since the first day of the independence of Georgia. The imposed mining or fencing in of bases in order to prevent the leakage of armaments came out of the numerous incidents of attacks on military settlements. Moreover, the transfer procedure could not be observed everywhere because the Russian military were pushed out of some areas, never having an opportunity to pass over military documentation, including mine maps, as it happened in Mzheta. Most bases were transferred according to the protocol, and we would not listen to the "voices" saying that the bases went to the wrong people, because all transfer acts were authorized by the state stamps. As for missing mine maps, each particular case should be examined to find the reason and answer.

Aleksander Russetsky

Who should deal with the issue of the non-transfer of minefield maps? The procurator's office?

Mikhail Nagorny

I suppose we should ask those Georgian military who happened to acquire mine maps recently. Where did they get them, and where were these maps before?

Aleksander Russetsky

I want to discuss the legal aspects of this issue. Criminal liability is quite clear in the case where somebody burned a house causing the death of its inhabitants. In the case of

Numerous mine incidents have occurred in this area within the former Soviet military base at the junction of the Kura and Inguri rivers.



military bases, mines are the issue! Who is to provide expertise on the violations of the procedure by both involved parties?

Mikhail Nagorny

An official trial could be initiated only following an application to the procurator's office.

Comment from the Ministry of Defense of Georgia

According to acting regulations, the party that deploys mines should provide the accompanying documentation and transfer it to another party along with the minefield.

Aleksander Russetsky

I understand, but reported violations mean that control mechanisms are not always effective. I do not understand why the Russian and Georgian Ministries of Defense do not initiate criminal proceedings over neglected minefields. Why do the control mechanisms of the two Ministries fail? Should I think that not a single trial was ever conducted following all these violations, including the incident in Oseuri?

Alexander Kobelashvili

Department of State Borders, Georgia

I want to comment on the attacks on FSU military bases discussed earlier, including the intrusion of military groups, the arrests of Russian commanders, etc. The context for these comments is missing, namely, that during the transit period from the USSR to Russia, the Russian military were plundering and taking military ammunition out of Georgia. We had to stop this leakage, intercept blocks, and arrest the ammunition traffic. There is an episode when indignant civilians from neighboring villages spontaneously blocked the traffic; although, I would not say it was correct.

Question

Can you give an example of an incident when ammunition was plundered by representatives of enforcement structures?

Alexander Kobelashvili

Well, I can, but consider both parties responsible for that. A month after the transfer of the military base in Vaziani it turned empty, because the Georgian military had plundered and sold all ammunition. In such a case, it is difficult to blame any party, it was simply chaos.

Aleksander Russetsky

Does this chaos continue today, on December 6th 1999?

Alexander Kobelashvili

The current border transfer procedure offers an example of a civilized and high-level approach: all border posts, equipment, armament, and military objects are accurately transferred on schedule. All border posts were transferred by schedule.

Aleksander Russetsky

My next question is about those terrorist groups whose mining activities caused losses among peacekeepers.

Comment from the Ministry
of Defense of Georgia

Do you mean an Inguri River area in Abkhazia? Our military have never been over there; it is Russian and Georgian troops that operate in the area.

Mikhail Nagorny

I do not blame either the Russian or the Georgian side, and I generally try to avoid political issues. I only stated 20 accidents in 1998 and 31 in 1997. There were also accidents in 1999. People keep dying.

Alexander Kobelashvili

The Abkhazian side blames the Georgian side. We can reformulate the question: Peacekeepers are the Russian military that changed their national helmets for blue berets. Why do they stay and die in Abkhazia?

Mikhail Nagorny

Peacekeepers have cleared 23,000 of UXOs and mines. If it were not for them, 23,000 accidents could have happened.

Aleksander Russetsky

This question should be addressed to political decision-makers.

Alexander Kobelashvili

You could also mention 123,000 of UXOs as well. But the issue is that we have our own professionals, let them also participate.

Aleksander Russetsky

This question should be addressed to politicians.

Alexander Kobelashvili

For years, Russians have been blaming Georgia for the fact that Russian military keep dying in Abkhazia while Georgia does not appreciate it. For God's sake, leave Abkhazia and do not blame us any more.

Aleksander Russetsky

I ask speakers to show mutual respect for each other. The issues discussed are painful for all parties involved. We should not engage in political debates. Our task here is to

clarify which ways of cooperation might be the most effective.

Comment from the Ministry of Defense of
Georgia

There is an impression that NGOs should necessarily participate in the process, although "should better" would be more correct. Respected NGOs from the Russian and Georgian sides will undoubtedly improve the atmosphere.

Mikhail Nagorny

We will not object to any Georgian public organization's initiative to participate in the activities of operating commissions initiative (the Russian side showed no initiative so far) and get acquainted with their activities.

Aleksander Russetsky

But we were not even allowed onto the military base in Akhaltseh, although accompanied by a representative of a Russian organization.

Mikhail Nagorny

While the Russian unit is responsible for the military base, all procedures are regulated in the Russian headquarters. You should address a corresponding office for permission. I doubt their negative response.

Aleksander Russetsky

Looks like it is really an issue of the culture of behavior and public organizations do not always look for information in the proper places.

Mikhail Nagorny

There are special bodies, for example, the press office of the Ministry of Defense, whose task is to involve public organizations.

Alexander Yemelyanenko

Program Director, Russian Committee of
IPPNW, Russia

I share the position of my colleague A. Russetsky. We are not here to cure our past, a past stigmatized by an atmosphere of proximity, mutual mistrust, and chaos. Now we should ensure that the process of transferring a military base is witnessed by a Georgian public organization and a journalist, that they are invited directly by military officials and not only through the press services. So that the military are not blamed for secrecy. It affects our relationship and policy. And misunderstandings at the presidential level are not the reason: presidents are informed by their press secretaries, assistants, and consultants, and presidents' decisions come based on this information. That is why I insist that the transfer procedure should be treated with adequate responsibility. I know that problems with already transferred areas exist; I know mine danger exists. A. Russetsky raised the issue of cooperation on numerous occasions. The Georgian military assure they will cope themselves. There is a contradiction. In a few days, I will meet with a representative from the Ministry of Defense in

Moscow. Should I mention the problems in Mzheta and ask for assistance? Are there mines left over there?

Answer from the conference hall

There are none.

Alexander Yemelyanenko

We do not know, for example, the procedure of transfer and details. Are there minefield maps? Is there any information, at least oral, from people who used to serve there? They are probably in Moscow, quite within reach; they can come and tell the truth. And it is only one base that's being discussed.

Aleksander Russetsky

The information for the same area from the Russian and Georgian sides differs. Corrections are necessary, the difference comes out in a number of mine victims.

Mikhail Nagorny

I have a proposal:

- 1) To train military and technical engineer-demining personnel in Russian military schools. If you currently have officers studying at the Academy the problem can be resolved;
- 2) To provide military consultants; you have your own experts, but some extra would do even better;
- 3) To carry out military training on the ground in order to teach demining practices with the use of available equipment, to demonstrate new devices and technologies right here in Georgia. The current military cooperation law should be observed, i.e., all agreements should be first reached at the governmental level. The Commander-in-Chief of the Engineer Forces cannot transfer even a single mine detector without the underlying governmental decision. My commanders assured me that there would be cooperation meeting the corresponding request.

Aleksander Russetsky

Who should request this, Russetsky and Yemelyanenko?

Mikhail Nagorny

It is only a request from a state structure that would be answered, I'm afraid, and not an NGO's.

Aleksander Russetsky

If we assist our governments to get prepared, forward all our initiatives in beforehand for their consideration does it contradict the existing rules?

Mikhail Nagorny

The Russian Military Department will be informed about the issues discussed at this Conference, for military statute obliges me to report. But my presentation at this Conference does not suffice to start the implementation of all proposals made here; official governmental request is required. The Chief of Engineer Forces or the Commander-in-Chief of the Minister of Defense are not authorized to take state-level decision themselves. Our initiatives can

influence their attitude and opinion, but they cannot guide their action. Neither our military leaders nor yours will break the state law.

Aleksander Russetsky

If we need, for example, information on Mzheta, which level of government should we address?

Mikhail Nagorny

This request will be considered by the General Headquarters' Commander-in-Chief. A recent official request from Afghanistan's Minister of Defense and the ICRC to transfer the minefield maps was resolved at this level, so that now our Department is preparing 300 maps for Afghanistan. These maps have already been transferred twice: the first time was right after the war was over, and the second time was in 1996 after the new government came. Chechnya has never applied.

Aleksander Russetsky

In order to finalize our work, let us place our attention on the following:

- 1) the issue of military equipment and possibilities for cooperation in this field;
- 2) the legal vulnerability of the military of the Engineer Forces;
- 3) the ignorance around the violations of the transfer procedures in the military bases, and the absence of adequate control mechanisms;
- 4) the proposals of M. Nagorny: training Georgian military personnel in Russian schools, military field training in mine clearance.

I think that the representatives of the Georgian Enforcement structures should discuss and report on all these issues and initiatives to their chiefs so that we hear their opinion later on.

Silence would be assessed as avoiding the issue; it is better to speak out on why a particular initiative does not seem satisfactory.

Comment of Mikhail Nagorny

There are commercial enterprises that produce sometimes better engineer equipment than that of the regular army. You may buy these products without losing time and waiting for official permission from the governmental and military structures. Buy samples, test them, and take decisions. This tactic is practiced all over the world.

PANEL 5

Landmines in conflict zones and special military/peacekeeping operations in the Caucasus

Chris Hunter

Center for Peacemaking
and Community Development, Russia

Our organization works in the conflict zones of Abkhazia, Nagorny Karabakh, and Chechnya. We have some experience in working in conflict zones in the Caucasus. From all perspectives, there is one fundamental requirement to clearing minefields in conflict zones, and that is the attainment of absolute and transparent neutrality. It is often very difficult to get people to understand why you want to clear mines. When we first went to Abkhazia, we spoke about clearing the mines in Sukhumi, on the Humista. Mines had absolutely no military significance whatsoever. We spoke with the authorities in Georgia and asked about the possibility of clearing mines. We were told to clear

The protective demining gear seen here is designed and produced in Russia to enable demining in the most difficult conditions.

(Photo: V. Velengurin)



mines in the Gali region. We said that we risk being killed by Abkhazians for clearing mines on the Inguri River, and the response we got was, "Well, if you clear mines in Sukhumi, we will kill you." And that is the story of clearing mines in any zone in this part of the world. Of great importance is simply to gain the confidence of people. And we have achieved that, and now we have cleared several thousand mines and several thousand items of ordnance. In Chechnya, we have not yet managed to find cooperation with the Russians, but we are trying there to gain the confidence of the people to allow us to work in the area.

In Nagorny Karabakh, likewise, we cleared several thousand mines and 80 tons of ordnance, but with the very tacit approval of the authorities in this area. Nevertheless, they allowed us to work because we could convince them that all we wanted to do was to clear mines, that we did not have any political objectives. And that we would not clear any mines of military significance. It is also of absolute and fundamental importance, when we talk about clearing mines in conflict zones, that there is no point in trying to clear mines that soldiers want in the ground. Because as fast as you clear the mines, soldiers will lay them again in the ground. But if you stop with the mines that no one objects to, and you gain their confidence, then it subsequently becomes possible to clear all mines. As an example of this, I would cite our work in Inguri, where we are now clearing mines around the refugee crossing points. And there is no objection to our work. So, the establishment of confidence and the demonstration of neutrality is critical for mine clearance in conflict zones.

Gordon M. Reay

(Rt.) Lieutenant-General, Advisor
to Canadian Ambassador for
Mine Action, Canada

I will try to tell you briefly about peacekeeping operations, not so much in the Caucasus, but the Canadian experience in the Balkans, in Rwanda, in Somalia, now in East Timor, and to try to speak in very general terms about the role of the military engineers in these operations. The basis for beginning a peacekeeping operation is quite simply that there is a peace to keep. And that implies cooperation on the part of the belligerent with the peacekeeping forces. That is not always the case on the ground, but certainly something that has to be established in the beginning. The purpose of peacekeeping is to restore normalcy, to encourage people to return to their homes and to use their land, and to open the roads, so they can do

so. In the beginning, particularly if you are an engineer and have no great experience in peacekeeping operations, you have to do quite a bit of retraining of those engineers before they start work. For a military engineer, all his training has taught him to do is to clear mines in a particular way. In military operations, the objective is to get across the minefield as quickly as possible. But in peacekeeping operations, the mission is quite different. It is not to get across the field and keep going; the objective now is to clear the whole field. Peacekeeping soldiers, most of the time, are the first people to get into these affected areas after peace has been established. It is very dangerous work, it takes a great deal of time, and, most importantly, it takes a lot of patience. It cannot hurry and go too fast. When a peacekeeper is clearing a road, a field, or a house, clearing it 75 or 80 percent is not good enough. The UN standard is 99.6 percent, and it has to be that. When people come back to their homes and their farms, they have to have absolute trust in your words "the field is clear."

Two or three other points. One major difficulty of the job, in addition to detecting and removing the mines, is acquiring information. As an example, soldiers may come across mines that they have not seen before. They have to acquire data about that mine—how does the detonator work, how is it fused, what is the explosive. We have come across some countries where even though we are there to keep the peace they have agreed to, they will not hand over that data because they regard it as classified information. Similarly, it is difficult sometimes to acquire minefield records. Generally speaking, when you are dealing with former armies, it is easier to acquire minefield records because armies do things in a particular way. But if it is a civil conflict, there are very few records; often mines have not been used for military purposes, but to terrify the local population. And there are no records. The debate that goes on is the debate about technology and old traditional methods of finding mines. Companies will always tend to inflate the performance of their equipment. As an example, is it better to spend tens of thousands of dollars on a very fancy metal detector, or is it better to hire 100 local people, give them some basic training, pay them a salary and clear the field that way? The last point also has to do with the local population: it is our experience to try to use the local population as much as possible. They have the local knowledge; if they are actively involved in clearing their land, they will want to ensure that it is cleared properly. It helps to build up trust between the local population and the peacekeepers, and it also provides work for the local population. One final point as to companies and technologies: When a company insists it has a very magic solution for clearing the field, I used to say: "You go and clear the field. When you say it is cleared, then you bring the board of directors of your company to this field, have them play a game of football, and then I will trust your technology."

Yuri Donskoy

Chair, Ukrainian Campaign
to Ban Landmines, Ukraine

I think General Reay touched on a very important issue, namely, the training of peacekeepers for operations and the training of local engineer personnel. All of us have been in the situations when a new type of mine or, on the contrary, a very old but, nevertheless, unfamiliar one, is used. All countries of the FSU face similar problems, and we can facilitate their resolution through cooperation on both governmental and NGO levels. So my proposal is to set up coordination centers involving NGOs in each country.

Also very important is the exchange of information on new mine types that are being used. In my own experience, there was a situation when a mine accident was prevented thanks to a very experienced soldier who suspected the object was a mine. Even the mine service of the Ministry of Interior could not identify the type of that mine. The progress of a few days' effort was to identify the mine manufacturer—it was Yugoslavia. The other example refers to Bosnia, where Muslims in the Garazhdy enclave were producing a new type of home-made mines. Quite often new mines do not have metal parts, so, they are practically unidentifiable. Thus, coordination centers would be very helpful in monitoring the new types of mines.

Our Campaign is looking for cooperation on these issues. In my opinion, Russian and Ukrainian specialists and enterprises engaged in demining are as good as their western counterparts. The only fault is the backwardness in our policy on standards.

Medical assistance and social rehabilitation of mine victims

James Cobey

Orthopedic Surgeon,
Physicians for Human Rights, USA

I want to applaud all the efforts of the Georgians to hold a landmine conference here and to spearhead the landmine campaign in a region which has been so polluted with mines. I want to thank you for inviting Physicians for Human Rights to this conference to share ideas with you.

Physicians for Human Rights was started just a little over ten years ago as an organization to use medical and scientific skills to document human rights violations. Our goal has been to assemble and disseminate that objective data.

I want to emphasize that there are two parts to a human rights campaign: (1) to collect accurate data, and (2) to disseminate that data to effect political change. It is not enough to say that things are bad if one wants to cause change in policy. One has to say how bad with believable figures. Then with that data you have to broadcast that information to the public and to decision-makers.

Given that philosophy, PHR helped initiate the landmine campaign by collecting hospital data in the spring of 1991 in Cambodia. In that study, I and two others visited many governmental, non-governmental, and Red Cross hospitals going through all the data we could find. The estimate was that 1 out of 236 Cambodians had been injured by a mine, which has since been verified to be amazingly accurate and has stunned the world.

Since that time PHR and many others have been working to develop standardized systems for data collection and recording. Standardized simple data collection tools aid in comparing the problem between different countries, as well as measuring change over time.

Gathering accurate data is essential if you want to make a case for change. There are a number of systems being developed to gather data. A number of organizations are busy performing something called "Level One" surveys. These are important surveys that take about a year to complete to guide demining priorities. To determine the extent of the landmine epidemic, much simpler quicker systems are needed.

PHR has been working with the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the United Nations Mines Action Service (UNMAS) to develop a set of standardized tools that any one can use to quickly assess the size of the problem in any region. Some of the details of these tools are still being redesigned. We have developed a manual on the use of these tools. Our goal is that any organization or government can use these tools simply.

There are five basic tools. First, a medical facility survey or surveillance tool. For simple definition of terms, a survey is a one-time study, that may be repeated, while a surveillance system is an ongoing system to collect data. The tools that we have developed can be used in either way. A survey will give you quick data and can be repeated to look for change. The World Health Organization prefers, however, that permanent surveillance systems are set up in hospitals to report data to the ministries of health. We applaud efforts to set up permanent data collecting systems, but they take more time and may lack reliability over time.

In any case, the hospital data tool is the fastest way to gather the size and location of a problem in a country. It is relatively easy to count surgical procedures done at any hospital in any area, if you have access to the hospitals. This tool actually allows one to collect much more data than the number of cases if desired. If done completely, it allows for collection of outcome data of the injured victims as well as demographic data on the location and circumstances of the actual injury. We recommend that if hospital records are not easily accessible that the researcher goes to the actual operating theater logbook. I have never been to a surgical facility, no matter how small, where there was not at least a list of the surgical procedures performed.

The second tool is equally important: measuring the incidence of injuries using community surveys. PHR found in Mozambique in 1994 that 47 percent of the injured never reached a hospital for medical care. Use of this second tool takes a little more time and organization but it tells you what ratio to multiply the hospital data by to get an accurate assessment of the entire problem. Using all or part of these two tools, you have objective evidence of the size of the problem and the general location of mines. Repeated use of the same instrument can show change and the effectiveness of the landmine campaign.

To use the above two tools, remember you must have population data so you can compare injury rates. Getting population data may be politically difficult in some situations, but it is essential that you give the source of the data to have any reliability or respect. Remember, it is not enough to say your data and conclusions are accurate; they must be perceived as accurate by documentation of sources.

PHR developed three other tools to assess the capability of a country or region in victim assistance. The landmine treaty is the first arms control treaty to specify assistance to victims. Again before treating a problem which may mean asking for monetary aid for a country, make a diagnosis of the need. These tools are helpful in guiding donors.

First, there is a tool measuring the rough capability of hospitals to handle wounds, then a tool to measure the capability of the prosthetic rehabilitation centers, and finally, but most important, a tool to measure the effectiveness of rehabilitation by measuring social reintegration.

The first victim assistance tool just measures the basic minimum facilities that are available for appropriate medical and surgical care. We found, as ICRC has found by working on this problem for years, that it is hard to measure quality, but at least one can grasp if the physical plant of the facility can reasonably expect to handle people with serious wounds. I know of no simple reliable way to assess quality and motivation of the staff except by close observation over a period of time. If a donor really wants to help build the medical infrastructure, that intensive observation is obviously essential.

The second of these victim assistance tools measures the capability of the rehabilitation facilities to fabricate different types of prostheses. By comparing different facilities within one country, donors can then assist in funding.

The third tool measures victim social reintegration. This is functionally the most important of these last three tools. If victims are not getting back into society or at least using their prostheses, the rehabilitation efforts are failing. We have found individuals with as many as five prostheses from different shops who do not use any of them for various reasons. This tool, if used, forces the hospitals and rehabilitation facility to keep records of their patients. Lists of the number of prostheses made is not a meaningful measure of success, one must be sure that the prostheses are being used.

We have field-tested these tools in Azerbaijan with the help of the Azerbaijan Campaign, UNDP, and Relief International. Azerbaijan with a population of 7.8 million, has an estimated 100,000 active mines planted in the Nagorny-Karabakh region alone.

The first hospital tool questionnaire worked well, but it is being reworked again to fit into the UNMAS database. The team had difficulty getting data, however, from military hospitals. The second tool, which is similar to the hospital tool, but designed for field use, was easy to translate into local languages and teach field staff to use. The hospital capability tool showed us clearly that many district hospitals are not able to handle trauma due to many reasons, one being nonavailability of blood on a twenty-four hour basis, as well as lack of anesthesia at all times. The rehabilitation tool showed us that many facilities make no effort to track their patients at all. It was able to determine that 11 to 25 percent of patients need surgical stump revision. This latter fact should not be blamed on poor surgery, by the way, since some of these wounds are hard to close. The initial goal is a clean, healed wound. Often individuals need stump revision even in perfectly healed wounds, since residual limbs change shape over time.

There is one more measurement you can make even if the number of injuries is not a large problem. That measurement is the fear of mines. Vast areas of land cannot be developed due to perceived presence of mines. If you can measure that fear with objective questionnaires, you also have data substantiating the need for the treaty and its enforcement.

Again I want to thank you for inviting PHR to come to Georgia to participate and share ideas with you.

From a public health point of view, we say that the Landmine Treaty is the vaccine to prevent injuries. All public health efforts start with simple data collection.

PHR and I plead for you to work at simple data collection. That data will become the foundation for your actions. Accurate data collection and dissemination can change the world.

Ildar Minnullin and Nikolai Fomin
Military Medical Academy,
St. Petersburg, Russia

The war in Afghanistan started an era of wars, which have enriched military medicine with the concept of multiple blast trauma, caused by the heat associated with all explosions. This type of trauma is most often referred to as mine blast injury, and in medical literature is associated with the so-called mine factor. It is a combined multi-trauma caused by known blast factors that interact and yet aggravate tissue destruction and produce contusion and commotion. An analysis of task trials enabled the production of a comprehensive and scientifically based pathogenetic pattern of mine blast trauma. The main factors affecting the injury are air, fragments of detonating devices, and secondary shells.

All blast injuries are characterized by profuse bleeding, shock, embolization, contusion, and commotion syndrome with varying degrees of cranial, chest, abdomen, and pelvic organ involvement.

In order to choose the correct surgical tactics, a physician should have a perfect knowledge of the patterns of development of the local, segmental, and general morphological lesions, beside the surgical anatomy of blast injury.

Initial and secondary structural and functional disorders are revealed through a complex effort, including anatomical, histological, and morphological studies of injured limbs, as well as studies of healing stump tissue biopsies, angiographic and manometric control of arterial circulation and perfusion, and microcirculation.

Although there are common morphological features in the evolution of an injury, differences are produced by the different mechanisms of trauma, and should be considered in surgical management. Autopsies of those who died from mine trauma on the spot or within the first few days have revealed heart and lung contusions, ruptures of parenchymatose and hollow organs, mediastinal, peritoneal, and pelvic hemorrhages, and hemorrhage and thrombosis of cerebral and spinal vessels. The most severe cases are accompanied by multiple organ failure leading to death.

To summarize, mine blast trauma is a special type of multiple trauma, requiring a sophisticated and pathogenetically motivated clinical management. The magnitude of the real structural and functional damage often does not allow a surgeon to operate on a case radically. Limb saving operations propagated by N.I. Pirogov in the 19th century were fraught with local and general complications due to deep morphological and functional disturbances, often involving the vital organs.

Abstracts from round-table discussion

Liana Asatiani,
The Mothers of Georgia, Georgia

I am a physician working in a public organization, and this work has given me a chance to witness all of the realities of the post-socialist era. During the Soviet times, no one could ever imagine that our industry would become engaged in the manufacture of weapons that kill, and that physicians would be developing organ-saving operations for mine blast injuries.

The responsibility of the state is a very important issue. Somehow, it is foundations and different organizations that take care of mine victims, but not the state. Most of the conflicts could be prevented by political means, but still, our children are being killed on battlefields, and civilians are being killed by mines. The state should take responsibility. Why should people look for support in foundations and organizations when they are in so much need of relying on state assistance?

I call on all delegates to appeal to their related Ministries and ask them to address the problem with state programs, so that the state pays for what it's guilty of.

Ruben Nikogosyan
Professor, MD, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Special Programs
and Disaster Situations,
Ministry of Public Health, Armenia

Emotions are very powerful sometimes. Today I promise to personally finance the prosthetic aid for two kids: one from Chechnya and one from Dagestan.

Levozha Magrtyan
Traumatologist, Military Medical Hospital,
Armenia

The last few decades of our history have been stigmatized by local wars and the extensive use of landmines. The incidence of mine blast trauma is almost an epidemic. Both the military and civilians are dying. Adequate surgical assistance is not always available. Landmines are the most inhuman weapon. The psychological rehabilitation of mine victims is very expensive, both for the state and the community. Many countries in the world suffer from a similar mine problem: Iraq, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Laos, Yugoslavia, and numerous African states. In local wars, both sides the attackers and the attacked have chaotically disseminated mines, never taking care of keeping records. The absence of records became one of the most painful problems in Armenia during the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. It has already been four years since the cease-fire was signed, but civilians are still dying of mines. In our study, we tried to estimate the consequences of the mine war in Karabakh. An analysis of mine blast injuries revealed that mines could hit all parts of the body: upper and lower limbs, the abdomen, the head. Prevailing were the injuries of limbs, and multiple traumas was the third by rate of incidence. The

effectiveness of medical assistance depended on the circumstances before reaching a medical center: there was a sharp increase of mortality when the time of transportation exceeded 12 hours. An analysis of primary care mistakes done during the 1995-96 period revealed a high prevalence of suppurative and necrotic complications due to the inadequate transportation conditions. The highest prevalence of complications was among the cases of pelvic and abdominal injuries and multiple trauma. The shortcomings in specialized centers were of an organizational character due to the massive influx of injured and because of inadequate equipment. One hundred and twelve cases were subject to an additional bacteriological study (850 studies of wound microflora). This study revealed that the high degree bacterial infections were associated with highly resistant microbes. Following these results, we proposed the reorganization of medical assistance, with the hope that accumulated experience and modified surgical tactics will decrease the rate of disability and mortality among mine victims.

Yuri Donskoy
Chair, Ukrainian Campaign
to Ban Landmines, Ukraine

I want to comment on the issue of data collection on mine victims. Currently, Ukraine collects data on WWII cases, post-war cases, cases of veterans of the Afghan war and other wars and conflicts, as well as on civilians, including those who were injured outside of Ukraine. A country should estimate the number of mine victims according to the provisions of the Convention and pass this data over to the UN to assess the necessary support. According to our data, there are about 80,000 mine victims in Ukraine, but our state is not engaged in mine victim data collection. Some activity is pursued in the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Defense, but they do not possess complete data because they do not cooperate or coordinate their activities. The ICRC was ready to donate DM 300,000 and was interested in finding out the number of mine victims in Ukraine. Veterans' organizations and victims of recent conflicts reacted immediately, while civilian victims remained outsiders, for there is no data on this category of mine victims (or it is purposely hidden). We have 200 deaths caused by mines, among them 70 children, during the last 3 years, while our officials state they have never heard about it. Since no reliable data collection is conducted on the state level, we are ready to benefit from other countries' experience.

Another shortcoming is the absence of a unified electronic system for the registration of victims, i.e., military registration offices register veterans and military handicapped persons, the social insurance fund has its own independent registration system, while other categories are not encountered. A registration campaign may be very expensive for the state. The meeting of the Committees on Veterans' Affairs in Kiev earlier in November this year revealed similar problems in all countries. A united program for all FSU countries is the best solution for the development of data collection standards. A coordination center that would engage both NGO and state structures should be set up.

CLOSING PLENARY

Jody Williams, International Ambassador, International Campaign to Ban Landmines, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

In her final presentation, Jody Williams commented on the proposals of some of the delegates with regards to modifications of the Ottawa Convention and the involvement of professional diplomats in the further development of the Ottawa process:

The Treaty should not be understood as a flexible document, for giving "space" for maneuvers has never been its task. The purpose of the Treaty is not to grant flexibility. The purpose of the Treaty is to establish a clear international norm of behavior, and that norm of behavior is to prohibit the use, production, trade, and stockpiling of anti-personnel landmines. The campaign that we began in 1992 had no desire or intention to create a flexible regime. The flexible regime already existed under the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons, Protocol II. It proved itself to be a horrendous failure. It was a more flexible document that tried to limit use without taking use away from soldiers. That did not solve the humanitarian crisis in the world. Therefore, a movement was created to press the world to eliminate this weapon. And if you are eliminating the weapon, you cannot

be flexible in the elimination. This movement has not flexibility about weakening the MBT. We did not succeed in getting 136 nations to be part of this Treaty because we were flexible. We have succeeded so far because our message is the same whether it is Russia, or Chechnya, or the US, or Angola it does not matter. The message is: "the international community has already decided this is an illegal weapon and sooner or later you will give it up."

I was here earlier this year in March, I met with the President, the Minister of Defense, and the Foreign Minister. The civil part of the government demonstrated a deep interest in the Treaty and a readiness to sign it. I was pleased by the enthusiasm of the President and the Foreign Minister, while the Minister of Defense, on the contrary, was protecting all kinds of weapons that he has at his disposal, which is logical, because he should keep the interests of his Department. That is why we should not count on the initiatives from the military. The decision should be taken by the President and the Security Council, who would weigh all aspects and tell the Military Department which position they should take. Obviously, at the meeting of the Security Council in April of this year, under current circumstances the military took over and the civilian part had to accept their will: that the mines are necessary because of the situation within the country and because of the instability in the region. The Georgian government is trying to explain its position by the fact that Georgia cannot provide control over the entire territory, provide mine clearance, and meet the provisions of the Treaty. But it is only a pretext, from my point of view. Georgia does not have any obstacles interfering with the signing of the Convention. If your government were really willing to sign the Treaty, it would have already done it. Nowadays many governments, including my own, the Egyptian, and others, are looking for justifications for not signing the Treaty. If the leaders are not positive about adhering to the Ottawa Treaty, they will be looking for new pretexts and obstacles not to do so.



Final Statement of the Second International Conference on Landmines in Russia and the FSU "Peaceful Caucasus: A Future Without Mines" organized by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and the Georgian Committee of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA)

From 5-7 December 1999, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), the Georgian Committee of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA), and the Georgian Committee of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) hosted the 2nd International Conference on Landmines in the former Soviet Union (FSU), "Peaceful Caucasus: Toward a Future without Mines," in Tbilisi, Georgia. The aim of the conference was to follow up on the accomplishments of the First International Landmines Conference in Russia/CIS/FSU, held in May 1998 in Moscow, Russia, and to end further death and disability caused by anti-personnel (AP) mines in the former Soviet Union.

The conference was attended by more than 170 participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Canada, Georgia, Germany, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the US, as well as the territories of Abkhazia, Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Nagorny Karabakh, and South Osetia. Participants included government officials, military generals, parliamentarians, experts in demining, surgical traumatology, orthopedics and prosthetics, activists, ban campaigners, landmine survivors, and representatives of regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Numerous diplomatic representatives of Mine Ban Treaty signatory governments, such as Canada, France, Moldova, Poland, Ukraine, and the Vatican also attended. Non-signatory governments such as Russia, Turkey, and the US were represented by diplomatic representatives posted to Georgia. Of the fifteen FSU nations, only five have signed the Mine Ban Treaty: Lithuania, Moldova, Ukraine, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan and only the latter two have ratified it. The list of non-signatories includes Russia, the only AP mine producer in the region, as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, which are all mine-affected countries.

The opening plenary featured remarks from Archbishop Abraham of the Georgian Patriarchy, who spoke of the illegality of using weapons that violate a person's most basic human rights. Georgia's Deputy Minister of Defense and Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council reaffirmed Georgia's declared support of international efforts to prohibit the use of landmines, and the government's desire to participate in discussions on the global humanitarian crisis caused by landmines. In 1996, Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze had announced Georgia's intention to join the treaty at some unspecified time in the future. Georgia continues to present the continuing conflict in Abkhazia and the lack of necessary funds as the two main obstacles to joining the family of nations that have banned this indiscriminate weapon.

Representatives of the Georgian Ministries of Ecology, Social Protection, Labor and Employment, Internal Forces, and the Safeguarding of State Borders, a Georgian parliamentarian and leader of a women's association, as well as representatives from Chechnya, Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan also made remarks during the plenary sessions on the opening day. Moreover, Lieutenant-General (Rt.) Gordon Reay, Advisor to Canada's Ambassador for Mine Action, addressed the audience during the opening plenary, bringing greetings and words of support from the Government of Canada, which has played a pivotal role in the landmine movement.

The following two days of the conference included sessions on a wide range of mine-related issues reflecting the landmine situation in the Caucasus region. The topics discussed included regional security, landmines on borders and humanitarian demining, landmines in former Soviet military bases, cooperation between civil society and governments, mine awareness programs for populations living in mine-affected areas, medical assistance and rehabilitation of mine victims, and obstacles and opportunities for joining the Ottawa process. Jody Williams, ICBL Campaign Ambassador and 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, addressed participants on the second day of the conference and spoke about the accomplishments of the international movement, but also about the challenges that still lie ahead. Stephen Goose from Human Rights Watch gave an overview of the status of universalization and ratification of the Mine Ban Treaty and the progress of the Landmine Monitor initiative.

Throughout the conference, exhibitions on prosthetic devices, children's drawings on war and landmines, and a model minefield were put on display, and participants had the opportunity to evaluate these efforts by voting on their favorite exhibits. During the opening plenary of the conference, six anti-landmine video clips, produced by Pelikan TV studio (Russia), were screened for the first time, and organizers conducted a poll to identify the most effective ones. These video clips will be broadcast by major TV stations throughout the FSU region.

At the conclusion of the conference, participants called on:

- FSU non-signatory governments to sign the Mine Ban Treaty, and signatories to ratify the treaty as soon as possible;
- FSU states, if they refuse to sign the treaty now, to take interim steps such as permanent ban on production, export, and transfer of all anti-personnel mines, and the establishment of a timetable for the destruction of stockpiles of all anti-personnel mines;

- FSU states to make public detailed information on production, stockpiles, and transfer of anti-personnel mines, as well as mine incidents, mine clearance, and mine victim assistance initiatives throughout the region;
- Parties to conflicts in the region, such as Abkhazia, Chechnya, Nagorny Karabakh, and Tajikistan, as well

as any possible conflicts in the FSU, refrain from using anti-personnel landmines.

As a result of the conference, the organizers are hopeful that the campaigns that started in the region following the Moscow conference will be continued, that new initiatives will begin, and that more coordinated NGO action against landmines will take place in the FSU region.

Working Group Action Plans and Recommendations

Panel on Joining the Ottawa Process: Obstacles and Opportunities

- Participants will introduce the issue of banning AP mines to the CIS governing/working bodies (mailing informational materials, initiating discussions, advocacy work) in an effort to press for the inclusion of the landmines issue in their agendas;
- Participants will seek to engage the governing structures of the CIS and GUAM countries (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova) in the development of joint programs based on the Mine Ban Treaty;
- Participants will support the joint appeal of the chairs of the Commission of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia (in exile), the Women's Council of Abkhazia, the Women's Council of Georgia, and the Georgian Committee of Dialogue of the Women of Transcaucasia, urging the Georgian leadership to sign the Mine Ban Treaty;
- Participants will recommend to all NGOs working under the umbrella of the ICBL to develop and publicize small-scale actions to promote the Ottawa process. The first step will be to arrange a mass mailing of postcards in support of the Ottawa process to national parliaments and individual parliamentarians;
- Participants will aim to utilize more efficiently the potential of electronic and press mass media to promote a comprehensive ban on AP mines;
- Participants will seek to secure from the ICBL practical assistance in arranging national groups of experts on the Mine Ban Treaty in the FSU;
- Participants called on the governments of states that produce AP mines to declare, extend, and make permanent existing moratoria on the export and transfer of landmines to conflict territories, and on the governments of non-producing states to declare, extend, and make permanent moratoria on the import of landmines and their transit through their territories.
- Participants called on all parties to armed conflicts to halt immediately the use of non self-destruct and non-detectable AP mines, as well as AP mines without anti-handling devices, as an interim step toward the complete ban on the use of all AP mines;
- Participants condemned the Russian Federation for the incidents in Onalo, Shatili (Georgia), and Zakatala (Azerbaijan), where mines were accidentally planted. Participants also made note of a statement prepared by the initiative group Common Action regarding these incidents.

Panels on Mine Awareness and Humanitarian Demining

(Including Landmines on Borders Krasnyi Most, Former Soviet Military Bases, and Conflict Zones)

- Participants will encourage national NGOs to work out concrete plans of action (including detailed budgets) on mine awareness and mine victim assistance programs;
- Participants will seek to engage popular public figures from the North and South Caucasus in a mass media campaign which will aim to inform the public about the effects of AP mines on the life and health of people living in the region;
- Participants will support the development of an international initiative for the humanitarian demining of the Chechen territory, which will include training national staff and providing them with the appropriate demining gear and equipment, as well as financial support;
- Participants from Dagestan appealed for international financial support to help clear the territory of Dagestan of AP mines and UXOs, planted during recent combat operations;
- Participants called on the governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to increase efforts to demine the mine-affected area of Krasnyi Most (border between the three states). Participants also recommended that national NGOs initiate and develop a comprehensive plan of action to address the mine problem in Krasnyi Most;
- Participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia will hold joint landmine seminars in areas close to the borders between the three states;
- The Georgian Committee of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA), in cooperation with governmental bodies and international organizations, will assess the economic effects and the scale of the danger posed by AP mines and UXOs left behind by the Russian troops in the former Russian military bases in Georgia;
- Military representatives from Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Russia will initiate the founding of: (i) an international council of Commanders of Engineer Forces; (ii) joint groups of experts within the framework of the CIS; (iii) a joint commission on UN demining standards and technologies; and (iv) a joint commission on mine victim assistance and mine awareness, in order to foster the process for building trust;
- Participants appealed to the ICBL and the governments of Canada, Norway, and other pro-ban

countries to promote the discussion of issues such as stockpile destruction, demining, standardization, the training of deminers, etc., within the framework of NATO and with countries party to the program "Partnership for Peace";

- Participants called on national campaigns to form teams to assess the scope of the landmine crisis and gain as much comprehensive and verified information on landmine issues in the region and territories in question as possible. This assessment should be done in coordination among the countries of the region, and it should include visits and discussions with civil and military agencies, international NGOs experienced in mine action, and contacts with already established Mine Action Centers. The assessment should result in a plan of action along with a related detailed budget.

Panel on Medical Assistance and Social Rehabilitation of Mine Victims

- Participants will create national databases on mine victims in mine-affected countries of the FSU in order to facilitate increased and more effective aid to mine victims;
- Participants called for the inclusion of the social and medical rehabilitation of mine victims in the action plans of the Committee on Soldiers Internationalists under the Council of the Heads of Governments of the CIS states;
- Participants encouraged national campaigns to take the following steps:
 1. Promote improved medical assistance by: (i) obtaining accurate data on the number of people in need of care; (ii) obtaining information on the capacity of hospitals to provide trauma care; (iii) determining the capacity of rehabilitative facilities to provide appropriate treatment, and (iv) addressing both physical and psychological needs;
 2. Educate the public on the needs and capabilities of disabled people;
 3. Encourage national laws for physically disabled people's access to facilities.

Throughout the Conference, participants broke into informal small groups and developed sets of recommendations/action plans on specific topics. Following are these action plans, as well as a list of general recommendations put forth by individuals.

Building Effective National Campaigns

- Participants will seek to establish a joint information and coordination center on mine issues in the FSU in order to foster the cooperation between the governmental and non-governmental levels and to facilitate the information support of national campaigns. This center will be developed by the regional coalition with the help of international organizations and the ICBL;

- Participants will establish national information centers on landmine issues within their countries;
- Participants from the Caucasus will seek to coordinate the activities of Caucasian NGOs, within the framework of the Caucasus Campaign to Ban Landmines;
- Participants will appeal to all political parties and parliamentarians in the Caucasus to unite their efforts in promoting the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region, the ban on the use of AP mines, and an increased support of humanitarian demining and mine victim assistance;
- Participants will hold regular conferences and seminars on landmine-related issues;
- Participants will encourage the cooperation between national state organizations and NGOs and the regional offices of the UN, EU, OSCE, and other organizations and agencies involved in the Inter-agency Coordination Group on Mine Action in the development of joint programs;
- Participants will promote the further involvement of additional NGOs in the region, such as Women for Life without War and Violence and its project "Links of Peace in the Caucasus," in the international campaign;
- Participants will promote and publicize the appeal of the movement "Refugees Against Landmines" to international human rights organizations, the UN, the European parliament, peace and ecological organizations, and the governments of the Caucasus.

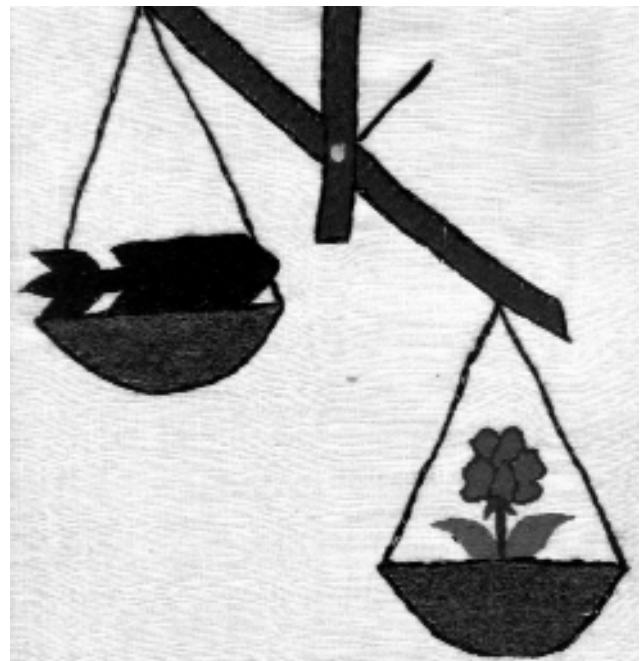
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- All mine-related efforts in a country (mine awareness, survey, demining, and political advocacy) should be coordinated. National campaigns should consider establishing a national Mine Action Center (MAC) to coordinate all mine-related efforts. The lack of coordination has been the key error in most countries in the world;
- The coordination of what campaigns do should be based on a realistic basis. An assessment team may be a good start to avoid suspicion and lack of confidence;
- Campaigns should avoid duplication of efforts there may be actors already working with mine awareness, information gathering (survey), demining, and political advocacy (national CBL).





During the conference, the results of a children s art competition entitled Peaceful Caucasus: To a Mine-Free Future held by the Georgian Committee of the Helsinki Civil Assembly were exhibited. More than 100 paintings dedicated to both general disarmament and mine ban issues were submitted. The winning works are show here.



APPEAL

from the INITIATIVE GROUP "REFUGEES
AGAINST MINES"

We call on the international community, governments, the European Union, the United Nations, the European Parliament, international human rights organizations, parties, ecological and peacemaking organizations all over the world!

To date, the danger of mines has reached a universally threatening degree. We are obliged, in front of God and humanity, to recognize our responsibility and to address this problem adequately and properly.

We are to do everything in our power to outlaw this weapon and prevent new victims, and thus, stop the aggravation of the mine tragedy, which is already beyond any level of tolerance. In order to reach this point, we should strive to declare anti-personnel mines ineffective, from a military point of view, and barbaric, from a humanitarian perspective.

Mines, which are now viewed as weapons for the mass annihilation of civilians, continue to pose a great danger even after the battle is over, when refugees and displaced people find death or injury on their way back home.

The prohibition of the use of landmines alone would not solve the "mine problem;" other broader aspects should also be addressed, such as the clearance of all unexploded ordnance after the conflict is over, for example.

States in trouble usually cannot address all issues on their own and need help from international organizations in order to be able to carry basic programs against mines.

We want to emphasize the need for providing adequate financing for humanitarian mine clearance programs, humanitarian mine victim assistance and rehabilitation programs, and mine awareness programs for the civilian populations. The resources required could be enormous, but this fact should not interfere with our activities aimed at the prevention of new victims.

Everything in our power should be done to provide the safe return of refugees to their homes.

Coordinators of the Initiative Group of the
International Humanitarian Movement
"Refugees Against Mines"

Temur Sakhokia
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APPEAL

from the INITIATIVE GROUP
"COMMON ACTION"

The continuation of the new war in Chechnya, launched by Russia as an anti-terrorist and anti-bandit operation, has caused the escalation of tension in the entire Caucasus and especially in Georgia.

The incident involving the remote aircraft deployment of AP mines over the Georgian village Onalo on 9 August 1999, during the course of anti-bandit operations in Dagestan, was officially recognized by the Russian Federation's Ministry of Defense in an information note for the mass media released on 18 August 1999. The Russian side characterized this deployment as erroneous, apologized, and assured the Georgian side that it would undertake all measures to compensate for the damage caused and to prevent such incidents in the future.

A new military operation on the territory of Georgia took place on 17 November 1999. The chief of the border post Captain I. Chincharauli testified that 3 Russian military helicopters were shooting for 20 minutes at the mountains around the Shatili village and the border post next to Georgy-tsminda. Russian Federation representatives, including Lieutenant-General E. Koshitsin and military experts participating within the Georgian Ministry of Defense Commission of Experts in the investigation of this incident, refused to comment on the numerous fragments of reactive/artillery shells that were discovered.

Under regular fire, this area is the only border corridor for refugees passing via the Shatili village. About 4,000 Chechen refugees are hiding in the Pankiss gorge of the Georgian Akhmet region from the Russian federal troops' irregular bombardments and artillery shooting. Russia is taking no care of these refugees under the current situation. Assistance from Georgia and international organizations is inadequate.

The "Common Action" initiative group considers unacceptable:

- the Russian Federation's violation of international norms (remote aircraft deployment of AP mines over the territory of Georgia) and ignoring its obligations to clear the deployed mines and render assistance to victims;
- the refusal by the representatives of the Russian Federation to make a joint statement with the Georgian side over the incident in the Shatili village and the Georgy-tsminda border post, which does not contribute to the improvement of the current situation in their bilateral relationship;

- the regular artillery bombardment of the refugee corridor on the Russian-Georgian border and ignoring issues of humanitarian aid to Chechen refugees in Georgia;

All these violations contribute to the further escalation of the military conflict in the Caucasus and diminishes the chances for a peaceful resolution of the existing problems, thus aggravating the Russian-Georgian relationship.

The "Common Action" initiative group condemns the Russian government's chosen methods of controlling terrorism, which have led to a full-scale war against the Chechen people, the murder of hundreds of civilians, and a humanitarian catastrophe that has displaced more than 200,000 Chechen citizens, and calls on the Russian government to stop this war that is endangering all the peoples of the Caucasus and Russians immediately.

On the eve of the opening of the international conference in Georgia "Peaceful Caucasus: A Future Without Mines," we express our gratitude to human rights organizations in Georgia for their efforts in rendering humanitarian aid to Chechen refugees, searching for a peaceful resolution of the Russian-Georgian conflict, and welcome their steadfast position on banning the use of anti-personnel landmines in order to prevent countless accidents among civilians.

We express our gratitude to the Georgian Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Committee for their initiative to cooperate, and we are ready to cooperate on all human rights issues, primarily in international humanitarian issues following the current situation in the Caucasus.

29 November 1999, Moscow.

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Appendix II

CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)

IPPNW, a global federation of national medical associations in 65 countries, was founded in 1980 by US and Soviet physicians who shared a deep concern over the threat of humanity by nuclear weapons. Through research, education, and advocacy, IPPNW physicians demonstrated that there could be no winner in a nuclear war, and that the only solution to the threat posed by nuclear weapons was their abolition. For their efforts, IPPNW received the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize. Today, the abolition of nuclear weapons remains paramount to IPPNW's work. IPPNW's broader mission now encompasses not only the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, but an end to the prevailing culture of war and militarism. IPPNW began work to ban landmines in the early 1990s through projects in a number of its affiliates. IPPNW's Landmines Project is based on its experience in using research on health effects to educate policy-makers, the medical profession, the media, and the public, and to advocate the elimination of landmines as the only solution to the crisis.

Helsinki Citizens Assembly (HCA) Committee of Georgia

Helsinki Citizen's Assembly (HCA) is an all-European peace-building movement supporting the process of European integration on the level of civil society. In order to promote the harmonious co-existence and development of the European community citizens of the New Europe HCA

has developed a variety of projects. HCA aims to promote conflict de-escalation and resolution, preventive measures against violence, human rights, the harmonious and equal development of civil society, and the development of political culture and self-administration. HCA is an open, pluralistic, and independent network of civic initiatives, movements, social and political groups, as well as individuals in the Helsinki region, who identify with the Prague Appeal 1990.

Georgian Campaign to Ban Landmines (GCBL)

The Georgian Committee of the ICBL, founded in 1998, has the following main goals:

- (i) to support and promote Georgia's adoption of the Mine Ban Treaty;
- (ii) to define ways for the practical management of resources needed for mine clearance and to set up a strict control of these resources;
- (iii) to increase mine victim assistance, including medical and social rehabilitation and reintegration; and
- (iv) to ban non-conventional weapons on the territory of Georgia.

In working toward these goals, the GCBL engages in the following activities: monitoring the mine situation in Georgia; collecting information and setting up an information database; organizing seminars and workshops; producing materials; holding mine awareness programs; promoting cooperation between governmental structures and NGOs; and working with like-minded organizations in the Caucasus region and internationally.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Second International Conference
on Landmines in Russia and FSU,
5-7 December 1999

Financial support for the Second International Conference on Landmines in Russia and the FSU was generously provided by the following governments and foundations:

Government of Canada
Government of Norway
Open Society Institute
Ploughshares Fund

This generous financial support was accompanied by in-kind support in the form of office space and administrative support from the Russian branch of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and the Georgian Committee of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA).

In lieu of a direct donation to conference organizers, several NGOs and international organizations have contributed to this conference by sending participants and resource materials.

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