



AUSTRALIAN NETWORK TO BAN LANDMINES AND CLUSTER MUNITIONS INC

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Lend Your Leg 2012

As part of the global Lend Your Leg campaign to mark the International Day for Mine Awareness, ANBLC coordinated a number of events in Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney. Our aim was to raise public awareness of the ongoing need for mine action and the daily threat that landmines and cluster bombs still pose to millions of civilians around the world. Many Australians Lent their Legs and we were represented on two radio programs, one in Adelaide and one with Linda Mottram on the ABC.



ANBLC, Act for Peace and the Australian Red Cross join together at the Opera House in Sydney to lend their legs for mine victims.

More Australian Lend Your Leg photos can be seen at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/78686651@N05/>



Wheelchair basketball athletes in Melbourne support mine victims.

ANBLC Cambodia Project

During February and March, John Rodsted and Gemima Harvey from ANBLC covered thousands of kilometres in rural North Eastern Cambodia, researching the impact of cluster bombs and other unexploded ordnance in these provinces. Mette Eliseussen is now working on layout and design of the book and we will shortly finalise the choice of photos for the photographic exhibition.



A BLU-61 cluster bomb lies hidden behind the toilets at a primary school in NE Cambodia

As you might imagine, this is a huge undertaking for our small committee and we particularly thank Mette, John and Gemima for their enormous commitment to this project. We must also thank Rosemary SurrIDGE, Soroptimists International, Soroptimists International– Deakin Branch and Professor Jeffrey Rosenfeld for their willing and committed fundraising efforts for this Cambodian project.



John and Gemima in the field.

Treaty News.

The draft Australian legislation has still not been debated in the Senate, surprising us all. Despite assurances from the government that Australia will not authorise the stockpiling of foreign owned cluster bombs on our soil, that provision remains in the legislation so the possibility still exists. Letters to the Attorney General, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence asking for that commitment to be enshrined in legislation would still be extremely helpful.

Canada has now copied Australia's bad example and introduced weak cluster bomb legislation in their parliament. To sign an international petition to the Canadian government go to: <http://bit.ly/fixthebillca>

Good News from Jordan.

Jordan's announcement that all its known mined areas have now been cleared has been welcomed by the international community .

Jordan's National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR), under the leadership of its Director Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al-Hussein, declared on 21 March that all known minefields in the country are now safe after nearly 20 years of demining.

"We want to congratulate Jordan for this achievement, and especially Prince Mired for his remarkable leadership and tireless efforts over the years. Jordan has been a true champion of the Mine Ban Treaty and its national mine action programme is exemplary and one that many other countries – not least Jordan's neighbours in the region – should draw good practice from," said Kasia Derlicka, ICBL Director.

Many countries in the Middle East region are affected by mines, or cluster bombs, including: Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. However, only Jordan, Iraq, and Yemen have joined the Mine Ban Treaty and have been working to remove this threat from their land.

Danger in Chile

Hundreds of anti personnel and antivehicle mines have been moved by the "Altiplano Winter", a very strong climate phenomenon which has pushed hundreds of APs and AVs mines to the main border crossing with Peru. More than 60 thousand anti-personnel mines were laid between December 1973 and 1974, near Arica city. Arica is Chile's northernmost city, two thousand kilometres from Santiago and only 18 kilometres from the Peruvian border. The mines were pushed onto the road, the beach and into the sea. The road was closed for seven days and more than 50 thousand people were trapped on both sides of the border. It is the first mine problem on such a grand scale, where mines have affected thousands of people in such a short time in Chile. The Chilean Navy was also forced to create a navigation exclusion zone of three nautical miles and to close the "Las Machas" beach to all civilians.

The Chilean Army mounted an extensive search for mines in the area.

Sadness in Libya

A DanChurchAid (DCA) technical expert has been killed in an explosion in Libya, while clearing buildings of unexploded remains of recent fighting.

The explosion underlines the danger associated with unexploded weapons left over after fighting. For adults and children alike, explosive devices - in homes, schools, and in critical infrastructure like hospitals - pose a huge, lethal threat that simply has to be removed.

DCA has been engaged in emergency humanitarian mine action in Libya since April 2011. The main aim is to reduce the number of accidents involving landmines – old as well as newly-laid ones - and explosive remnants of war (ERW) scattered all over the country as a result of recent months of fighting.

In Misrata, DCA teams have helped clear the city centre, hospitals and schools. The main aim is to ensure that homes are secure for returning refugees now that the conflict is over. In Zlitan, which is a farming area, DCA is helping olive farmers return to their land to harvest and again cultivate their land. In general the clearance work also helps aid organisations carry out their much-needed humanitarian work.

For more about DanChurchAid and their work in Libya go to:
<http://www.danchurchaid.org/what-we-do/mine-action/libya>

LANDMINE LEGACY IN SRI LANKA

Excerpts From a Lateline Report by Richard Lindell.

The deadliest legacy of the civil war in Sri Lanka is the hundreds and thousands of unexploded landmines, laid by both sides in the conflict. ABC correspondent Richard Lindell reported on mine clearance from Kilinochchi: "This has the look and feel of a military operation, with discipline and focus to survive the day ahead. Almost a quarter of the workers here are women, taking on one of the most dangerous jobs in the world."

Therarasa Nithyananthi says: "I do have fears while doing this work. I try to do my work carefully and safely." She is one of the estimated 90,000 war widows in the north and east of the country. Work is scarce and manual labour doesn't provide the job security or the \$200-a-month salary she is paid to clear mines. She needs to work because she has four children and was struggling to make ends meet.

Her job is made more difficult by the nature of the conflict. Both sides laid mines during the almost three-decade-long civil war. While the Sri Lankan Army mapped their minefields, the Tamil Tigers did not. It means all uncleared areas pose a threat and the de-miners must map their progress as they work. At Kilinochchi, the scene of some of the fiercest battles of the war, minefields are still being discovered.

Barthy Digby, the local manager of HALO Trust says: "So as people are resettling, as people are pushing further back into the jungle, into their old land and into newly-reclaimed land from that jungle, new information is arriving. And we just have to react to that in terms of surveying, marking and then clearing when necessary."

Work at this site started three months ago and so far 200 mines have been removed. But a large swathe of this farmland is yet to be cleared. This is slow, painstaking work. Using basic tools, these women are reclaiming their land in 50 centimetre strips. There are no definitive figures as to the numbers of mines laid during the war, but it's estimated that there are over 100 square kilometres of minefields still to be cleared, with potentially hundreds of thousands of mines. Now 100,000 square kilometres may not sound a lot, but this de-miner will clear just 20 square metres a day.

Sri Lanka's north has one of the highest concentrations of landmines in the world. But clear marking by the military and aid groups has kept the casualty rate low compared to other conflict zones. Nine deaths and 38 injuries were reported in 2010, but there is also a social and economic cost. Minefields lay waste to valuable farmland and prevent thousands of displaced people from returning to their homes.

Kanesan Krishnaveny is the section commander of this team. She says: "I'm helping to make areas safe for people to live, do cultivation and for cattle to move around. I feel happy because people are benefitting." Her wage supports her four siblings and parents. While she's been promoted and had success here, it hasn't filled her with confidence about the future. She says: "I haven't thought about what I will do after I leave this work. It will be difficult to find a job once I leave here."

Richard Lindell sums up the situation: "In the meantime, aid groups say there's another decade's worth of work clearing the most dangerous legacy of Sri Lanka's civil war."

For full ABC Lateline transcript of report by Richard Lindell, go to:

<http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2012/s3474480.htm>

Report précised by Helen Stanger

Yoghurt Container Prostheses Offer Hope
From a report by the ABC's Correspondents Report, by Zoe Daniels.

Thailand's Prosthesis Foundation has just set a new record for the donation of artificial limbs.

To mark the King of Thailand's 84th birthday, the foundation donated 884 prosthetic legs, the largest single donation ever made.

The milestone has been confirmed in the Guinness Book of Records and welcomed by the recipients, many of them poor farmers in Thailand and neighbouring countries. The Prosthetics Foundation was set up to provide light, economical and locally made legs for people who need them.

An inventive Thai orthopaedic surgeon came up with the method: melting old yoghurt drink bottles and recycling them by moulding them around aluminium tubes into plastic legs; bringing the cost down from \$250 per patient to about \$25. Now specialist equipment and mobile teams allow them to be distributed all over Thailand and to neighbouring countries.

One design is water resistant and specially made for working in the field. Many of those who make the limbs in remote areas are recipients themselves, trained by the foundation in the art of making and fitting the limbs.

Those who use them vary in age, gender and lifestyle, which generates demand for creative designs to match the personality of the recipient.

To see the full report and Zoe Daniel's interview go to: <http://www.abc.net.au/correspondents/content/2012/s3455863.htm>

Mine Sweeper

Massoud Hassani, an Afghan immigrant living in the Netherlands, a graduate of the Design Academy Eindhoven, created the Mine Kafon (= Mine Sweeper). Resembling a giant dandelion clock weighing 80kg, the Mine Sweeper is a wind-blown, bamboo-spiked ball that is light enough to be blown by the wind, but heavy enough to trip mines, losing spikes with each landmine detonation. A GPS chip built into the centre of the Mine Sweeper tracks the device back to a website to chart a safe course. This was profiled at Cape Town's Design Indaba 2012 conference, where it generated dozens of stories and raised awareness about landmines in Afghanistan and Angola. The Mine Sweeper was also one of 88 designs shortlisted for Design of the Year 2012 by the Design Museum in London (which was won on 24 April by the UK's Olympic Torch).

The Mine Kafon has just been tested by the Dutch Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit, which has concluded that it is not suitable for mine clearance (which requires a more systematic approach), but at \$50 each could be used as a cheap and safe way to identify dangerous areas that need demining.

Massoud Hassani is now working to improve the design and hopes to conduct field tests on the new model soon.



Images: Massoud Hassani

To read more about the mine sweeper go to :
<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20120503-blowing-in-the-wind>

Syria: Army Planting Banned Landmines

A report from Human Rights Watch.

(New York, March 13, 2012) – Syrian forces have placed landmines near the borders with Lebanon and Turkey in recent weeks and months, Human Rights Watch said today, based on reports and confirmations from witnesses and Syrian deminers. Civilian casualties have already resulted, the witnesses said.

The Syrian army should cease its use of antipersonnel landmines and recognize that planting this internationally banned weapon will hurt Syrians for years to come, Human Rights Watch said. Both antipersonnel and antivehicle mines of Soviet/Russian origin have been cleared by deminers associated with the opposition.

“Any use of antipersonnel landmines is unconscionable,” said Steve Goose, Arms Division director at Human Rights Watch. “There is absolutely no justification for the use of these indiscriminate weapons by any country, anywhere, for any purpose.”

Antipersonnel mines are militarily ineffective weapons that mostly kill and injure civilians, Human Rights Watch said. A total of 159 countries have joined the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, which comprehensively prohibits the use, production, trade, and stockpiling of antipersonnel mines.

Syria has not joined the Mine Ban Treaty, though it is not thought to be a producer or exporter of antipersonnel mines. It is last believed to have used antipersonnel mines during the 1982 conflict with Israel in Lebanon. The size and origin of Syria’s landmine stockpile is not known, but it is believed to consist mainly of Soviet/Russian-manufactured mines, such as the PMN-2 antipersonnel mines and TMN-46 antivehicle mines.

To see the full report go to:

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/03/13/syria-army-planting-banned-landmines>

SAVE LIVES & LIMBS Poetry Competition

In conjunction with Friendly Street Poets, the Student Poetry Competition organised by the SA Group of ANBLC has introduced an ‘Open’ category. So in the third year since the introduction of this competition, adults now may also enter their poems on the subject of Landmines and Cluster Munitions and the effects on people who lose their lives or are injured by them. (Open only to SA residents; send enquiries to SA Coordinator). A further report will follow in our next edition, with prize-winning poems to be included in our August and November editions.

Membership of ANBLC

**Are you a member of ANBLC?
Can you afford \$10 or \$20 per year to help us in our work?**

**We deliberately keep our membership fees very low so that
membership is not out of reach of anyone.**

**The 2012-2013 Membership form can be found on page 7 of this edition of the
Memorandum. Please note: This year a receipt will only be issued if specifically
Requested.**

Please do consider joining us.

U.S. Weapon Manufacturers Feeling the Wrath of Arms-Control Activists

An extract from an article by Sandra Irwin in National Defense April 2012

U.S. production of air-launched weapons that are widely used by the Air Force and foreign allies might be in jeopardy as a result of a global advocacy campaign that targets manufacturers of military hardware.

As a result of steady efforts by antiwar groups, several munitions suppliers in the United States have seen their lines of credit and insurance coverage pulled back by major financial institutions. International banks that have terminated commercial relationships with cluster munitions and landmine manufacturers include Credit Suisse, BNP, HSBC, Societe Generale and UBS, among others, according to a report by the antiwar group IKV Pax Christi, titled, "Worldwide Investments in Cluster Munitions: a Shared Responsibility."

These banks' policies explicitly state that they will not invest in companies that are involved in the production of weapons banned under the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the U.N. Convention on Antipersonnel Mines.

One of the most forceful lobbying campaigns against banks that do business with weapon manufacturers has been by the Cluster Munition Coalition. On its website, stopexplosiveinvestments.org, the alliance praised the November 2010 announcement by Credit Suisse that it would end investments in producers of landmines and cluster munitions.

The Obama administration launched a review of landmine and cluster munitions treaties in 2009, but that process has been stalled and is unlikely to move forward during a presidential election year.

Variations of cluster munitions exist for use by every combat aircraft in the U.S. inventory, and in some cases constitute up to 50 percent of Army and Marine Corps artillery fire support, said a January 2011 Congressional Research Service report. "U.S. forces simply can not fight by design or by doctrine without holding out at least the possibility of using cluster munitions."

To see the full report go to:<http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/archive/2012/April/Pages/USWeaponManufacturersFeelingTheWrathofArms-ControlActivists.aspx#.T2IQYmiPWPM.twitter>

U.S. Bishops Join Call To President To Ban Landmines

WASHINGTON—Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, chairman of the Committee of International Justice and Peace of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), has joined a call from 76 nongovernmental organizations to President Obama, urging the United States to relinquish antipersonnel landmines and join the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty without further delay.

"This is a crucial humanitarian decision that should not be put off any longer, or postponed during a busy election year," the organizations' representatives said in an April 4 letter. "We urge you to submit the treaty to the Senate this year for its advice and consent next year."

Since starting the review, the letter notes, the administration has received letters of support for the Mine Ban Treaty from 68 Senators, 16 Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, key NATO allies, retired senior military personnel, dozens of NGO leaders, victims of U.S. landmines, and countless concerned Americans. For full report go to:<http://www.usccb.org/news/2012/12-066.cfm>



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Please complete the details below and post to:
PO Box 51, Kensington Park SA 5068

ANBLC Membership Pledge As a Member of ANBLC:

I believe strongly that anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions are indiscriminate and inhumane and therefore should be totally banned worldwide.

I believe that I have power to assist with the universalisation of treaties to ban anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions throughout the world.

As a Member of ANBLC I will (please tick those items below you wish to commit to):

talk to my friends and colleagues about this campaign and where possible spread the word more widely.

assist ANBLC where possible with advocacy, mailing campaigns and public communication.

ANBLC Annual Membership Fee : \$20 Individual/Organisation \$10 Student/Concession

Concession rate: If you feel that it applies to you, then that is sufficient.

Membership runs from 1st July to 30th June the following year.

New membership _____ or **Membership Renewal** _____ (please tick)

Nameor Organisation.....

Address.....

Contact Person

(Organ.).....Phone.....

Email address.....

(Please list email address if you have one; Memorandum will then be forwarded by email.)

Payment for: Membership : Individual/Concession/Organisation

\$.....

Donation:

\$.....

Payment: Total of

\$.....

If paying by **Cheque** (tick) and enclose form and cheque

If paying by **Direct Deposit** payment(tick) and provide date of transfer

Bank: Commonwealth Bank Account name: ANBLC

BSB: 065-005

Bank Account No.: 1026 3346

Please ensure that **your name or your Organisation's name** will appear on our bank statement and post this form to **ANBLC PO Box 51 Kensington Park SA 5068**

Signed.....

