



SAFE PASSAGE



A Newsletter for the Public-Private Partnership Community

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PARTNERS FORGING A SAFE PATH TO PEACE

By John Stevens

They gripped the red mesh of their utilitarian seats as the C-130 Hercules transport roared down the runway, its engines thundering in their ears. Clouds of steam filled the gloomy compartment as the plane's air conditioning met the humid air that clung to their skin. Paratroopers en route to a combat drop? No, just teams from the State Department's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA), U.S. Army's humanitarian demining research and development office, and private citizens led by the Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI), flying from Sri Lanka's capital to the former battlefields of the Jaffna Peninsula on a unique public-private partnership mission in June to provide mine detecting dogs for humanitarian mine action.

The story began in 2003. MLI, famed for providing mine detecting dogs (MDDs) worldwide, and PM/WRA agreed to MLI's provision of an MDD "six pack" to be integrated with the Department of State's mine action program in Sri Lanka. Perry Baltimore, MLI's Executive Director, quickly raised \$120,000 to fund the MDDs from various

concerned American citizens, corporations, the Sri Lanka Association of Washington, DC and the Sri Lanka-U.S. Business Forum. (See MLI's press release at <http://www.marshall-legacy.org/> that lists all of the contributors.) The initiative culminated in June when an MLI private delegation consisting of some of the contributors, Mr. Nathan Mick, policy advisor to Senator Chuck Hagel (R-Nebraska) and Brigadier Rohan Jayasinghe from the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington, DC joined with a State Department-Defense Department program assessment team to witness the graduation of the MDDs and their Sri Lankan Army dog handlers.

"Of all of the mine action programs that I've worked with around the world, Sri Lanka's is one of the best," remarked PM/WRA's Deborah Netland, who led the program assessment

visit. "The Sri Lankan Government not only welcomed our help, they're contributing their own resources to the program. As a result, their citizens are returning to their lands and peace is being strengthened. Add the Marshall Legacy Institute's generosity and Sri Lanka's openness to civil society participation in mine action and you've got a success story that's hard to top!"

Charlie Chichester and Greg Bullock from the U.S. Army office that conducts research and development for humanitarian demining technology were equally impressed by Sri Lanka's commitment to humanitarian mine action. Chichester remarked: "Terrain in the Jaffna Peninsula lends itself to mechanical clearance to reinforce manual demining. Getting U.S. equipment to Sri Lanka will be a challenge, but once it's shipped, our Sri Lankan hosts will facilitate its entry and fully support its maintenance."

What's next on the partnership front? The Sri Lankan Government, Marshall Legacy Institute, and Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement have agreed that Sri Lanka could use another MDD "six pack" to accelerate the demining process there. Perry Baltimore and MLI are now raising private support to do just that.



Nihal Goonewardene and Lasantha Dahanaike of the Sri Lanka Association of Washington, DC meet the mine detecting dog they sponsored and his Sri Lankan Army handler during the graduation ceremony. Photo: PM/WRA



Deborah Netland, PM/WRA's Program Manager for Sri Lanka, and a Sri Lankan Army Engineer general, formally open the PM/WRA-funded mine action office in Vavuniya. Photo: PM/WRA



Charlie Chichester of the U.S. Army's Humanitarian Demining Program exits a breaching lane in a Jaffna Peninsula minefield being cleared by the Sri Lankan Army. Those lanes represent many hours of hot, tedious, manual brush cutting, metal detecting, probing and delicate excavation. The stakes with yellow at the top indicate where mines were cleared. Photo: PM/WRA



The Honorable Anthony Lake, MLI Chairman of the Board, and MLI's Christina Greene try on personal protective equipment at the Sri Lankan Army Engineer School during the mine detection dog graduation there. MLI Executive Director Perry Baltimore and Don McCoy of the Sri Lanka-U.S. Business Forum are visible at the far right. Photo: PM/WRA



Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Jr.

Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State for Mine Action and Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs

MESSAGE FROM THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

State Department Partnership with Rotary International

With this issue, the Mine Action Messenger will be known by a new title—**Safe Passage**. When PM/WRA was formed in September, 2003, the office consolidated the public-private partnership program with the humanitarian mine action program and small arms and light weapons remediation/reduction program into one office. Although the focus of **Safe Passage** has been on the partnership program and engaging the private sector, this and subsequent issues will also highlight the activities and efforts of the entire PM/WRA office. This issue, for example, will introduce the officers in the Small Arms/Light Weapons area and their mission.

We will continue to focus on the partnership program, and in particular, I would like to highlight our partnership with Rotary International. Rotary has been a partner in mine action for several years, first through individual club involvement in 1999, and then, following a major landmine conference in Seattle, Washington (sponsored by Rotary District 5030 and Zones 23/24 and the State Department) in 2002. Most recently, I addressed the Rotary District 6960 (Southwest Florida) Conference in June.

Just this year, intrepid Rotarians officially formed a Fellowship of Rotarians for Mine Action (www.rotariansformineaction.org). Rotary is known for its can-do attitude in providing valuable humanitarian assistance throughout the world—and part of mine action is taking action. Many clubs already support demining projects and survivor assistance programs. The Rotarians who have joined the Fellowship of Rotarians for Mine Action have taken an excellent first step to show support and learn more about what clubs in this country and in mine-affected regions are doing. I was very pleased to see the excellent article on mine action in the June edition of *The Rotarian*. The word is getting out in a variety of ways, as the number of Rotarians joining the Fellowship continues to increase.

We are pleased that Rotary has successfully competed for a small grant to build momentum within the international organization for mine action efforts. Working toward the 100th Anniversary Conference of Rotary International in June, 2005, this Rotary group will enhance its website and develop a toolkit for Rotary Clubs around the world to use and arrange for special activities during the June Conference, working with partner NGOs and active Rotary Clubs to raise awareness among other Rotarians.

The Department of State stands ready to work with Rotary International, and indeed, all of our partners, to support mine action and help us clear a path to a safer and more secure world

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Lawrence Receives Secretary's Award

James F. Lawrence, Director of Partnership Programs, received the prestigious Secretary's Award for Public Outreach on June 24, 2004. This award, sponsored by the Una Chapman Cox foundation, was created to recognize State Department Officers who engage the American public on important foreign affairs issues. Mr. Lawrence was recognized for helping to create the public-private partnership program for mine action.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE MINE ACTION PARTNERS

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Profile: The Polus Center

The Polus Center for Social & Economic Development, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of community life around the world. The word “Polus” is of Latin origin and means “highest point or reaching for the heavens.” It suggests the notion of people trying to help each other and to welcome everyone into a rich and vibrant community.

In Nicaragua, Honduras, throughout Central America, and more recently, in Ethiopia, the Polus Center has formed partnerships with individuals with disabilities, grassroots organizations, and community leaders to plan and design community-based projects ranging from prosthetic outreach to small business development to reducing barriers to public spaces and promoting awareness. Projects include prosthetic outreach clinics, accessibility, organizational capacity building, and small business development, such as the Walking Unidos Clinic and the Disabilities Leadership Center and the Ben Linder Internet Café in Leon, Nicaragua.

In addition to vital support from USAID’s Leahy War Victims Fund, PM/WRA’s public-private partnership program has helped link the Polus Center to the Grapes for Humanity and Julia Burke Foundations. These foundations have funded the Walking Unidos Clinic in Nicaragua and helped establish Vida Nueva, a prosthetic outreach project that opened in 2003 benefiting landmine survivors and others in Choluteca, Honduras.

Other partners include the International Committee of the Red Cross Special Fund for the Disabled, the University of Ottawa, the University of Massachusetts Medical School, private foundations, businesses such as Dean’s Beans fair-trade coffee, and NGOs such as Motivation in the UK and WiRED International. For more information about the Polus Center, please visit their website at www.poluscenter.org.



The Polus Center begins every project by bringing together the community to discuss the needs of persons with disabilities, as in this planning process in Managua.

Our Other Half: Small Arms, Light Weapons, and MANPADS

The illicit global trade in small arms and light weapons (SA/LW) contributes to regional instability, arms terrorists, fuels crime, exacerbates conflict, and threatens U.S. interests and forces deployed overseas. Most of these weapons are not new but surplus military weapons that are stolen and/or illegally transferred, often into conflict zones. In Fiscal Year 2001, the United States adopted a policy to combat the threat of the global illicit trade in SA/LW through programs of surplus arms destruction and improved stockpile security. Our first program successfully destroyed 100,000 weapons in Albania. Since then, small arms programs have received \$3 million annually, expanding to over 18 countries worldwide, and destroying over 840,000 weapons and over 75 million rounds of ammunition. Since the November 2002 al Qaida attack on a commercial jet in Kenya, preventing terrorist acquisition of man-portable

air defense systems (MANPADS) has become a high priority for the United States and our SA/LW policy. Thus far we have assisted in the destruction of over 8,400 MANPADS and are continuing a global effort in this area. Here are three examples of SA/LW programs:

Liberia: Since November 2003, the United States has cooperated with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to destroy over 9,200 SA/LW and ancillary amounts of heavy weapons. The program, which is scheduled to continue through November 1, 2004, supports the peace process in Liberia and promotes stability in the region by removing weapons from circulation and destroying thousands of additional weapons.

Serbia & Montenegro: For several years, the Government of Serbia & Montenegro (GOSAM) has been plagued by organized criminals and gray market arms brokers who

Spotlight on our SA/LW Team

Steve Costner, Deputy Director (PM/WRA), oversees our small arms and light weapons (SA/LW) and man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS) policy and destruction efforts. He recently led a U.S. delegation to the United Nations’ first negotiating session on an international agreement on tracing illicit SA/LW as part of a larger international effort to address the problems caused by the illicit trade of SA/LW.

Jill Shaunfield, a Foreign Affairs Officer, runs SA/LW and MANPADS destruction programs in the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

Stephanie Pico, a Foreign Affairs Officer, joined WRA in March of 2004 after serving as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Baghdad, Iraq, for five months. Stephanie recently represented the United States at the opening session of the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Tracing Illicit SA/LW and at informal UN consultations on brokering of SA/LW.

Mark Adams, a Program Manager, works on both Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) and SA/LW programs. He currently manages the Slovenian International Trust Fund and all the office’s humanitarian demining and SA/LW destruction programs.

Katherine Baker completed her two-year Presidential Management Fellowship in September, shortly after returning from a three-month assignment with the U.S. HMA program in Iraq. While her primary focus is landmine policy, Katherine also provides support on SA/LW and MANPADS policy issues as required.

sought to acquire the tremendous amount of excess stocks of SA/LW and sell them on the illicit arms market. Since 2001, the United States has assisted the GOSAM with several destruction programs, together destroying over 51,000 SA/LW and 1,200 MANPADS.

Cambodia: Earlier this year, Cambodia set a precedent for Southeast Asia by recognizing the liability of their militarily obsolete, but highly sought-after by terrorists, MANPADS stockpiles, and seeking U.S. assistance to destroy their entire supply. With funding from PM/WRA, Cambodia destroyed its entire known stockpile of 233 MANPADS and improved its security of the remainder of its SA/LW arsenal.

Thanks, USTA

A year ago, PM/WRA launched an effort to partner with the United States Tennis Association (USTA). We successfully engaged with the U.S. Davis Cup team to raise a total of \$50,000 for mine action in Croatia, including USG matching funds from the Slovenian International Trust Fund (ITF). Building on this effort, the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Slovenia was able to organize a similar activity around the 2004 Federation Cup Matches.



On September 4, Special Representative Bloomfield, with a video address from Secretary Powell, made a presentation at the U.S. Open.

Following these matches between Slovenia and the U.S., the U.S. women tennis players (including Venus Williams and Martina Navratilova) donated their autographed racquets and warm-up suits to be auctioned in Slovenia on May 14. The Slovenian Tennis Association and *Finance*, a prominent business daily, organized the auction, and raised \$8,500, a significant amount by Slovenian standards, plus an additional \$4,000 donated by the USTA. The combined amount of \$12,500 was donated to the ITF and matched by the U.S. for a total of \$25,000.

We thank Ambassador to Slovenia, Johnny Young, and our embassy colleagues for their dedication to mine action outreach and congratulate them on their successful partnership efforts. They have done an outstanding job promoting mine action awareness and public-private partnerships. We also thank the USTA for its contributions and commitment to mine action.

Prosthetics Outreach Foundation Featured on CNN



Recently, Seattle-based Prosthetics Outreach Foundation's (POF) work in Vietnam was featured on CNN. POF has operated a prosthetics clinic in Hanoi since 1990 that uses automated manufacturing technology to fabricate artificial limbs for landmine survivors and other amputees. The technology allows POF to quickly and economically fabricate comfortable, custom-fit prostheses. "More than 11,000 children and amputees are walking again and able to rebuild their lives thanks to this technology," says POF Executive Director Winfried Danke.

The clinic is operated entirely by a local Vietnamese staff. POF's three Vietnamese prosthetists regularly visit rural areas to bring prosthetic care to amputees living in remote, mountainous communities. Without this mobile outreach, widespread poverty and lack of transportation prevent many rural amputees from receiving basic prosthetic services.

To develop a local supply of affordable, functional prosthetic components, such as feet, knee joints, pylons, etc., POF started a component manufacturing program in Vietnam in 1994. Today, a full line of locally made prosthetic components is available. "Local component manufacturing," Danke says, "has reduced the cost of a prosthesis by 90% compared with imports. It has also taught the Vietnamese important skills so they can care for their people without our help." POF is now replicating its success with local prosthetic component manufacturing by making orthotic

parts in Vietnam with support from the US Agency for International Development.

Over the last two years, POF has expanded its Vietnam programs to include orthopedic surgical care for landmine survivors and disabled children and adults in conjunction with the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society. POF also has opened an orthopedic workshop in rural southwestern Bangladesh, and is launching a new prosthetics initiative in Africa. For more information visit www.pofsea.org or call (206) 726-1636.

People to People Support for Demining in Sri Lanka

People to People International (PTPI), an organization founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower 47 years ago in an effort to create world peace at the grassroots level, is making a major push to help the country of Sri Lanka become mine-safe. President Eisenhower's granddaughter, Mary Eisenhower, President and CEO of PTPI, championed mine action over a year ago and brought PTPI into public-private partnership with PM/WRA. Through the partnership program, PTPI has connected with The HALO Trust, One Sri Lanka Foundation, and other partner organizations. PTPI is pleased to announce that it has raised enough funds to sponsor a demining team in Sri Lanka for one year.

Through educating PTPI's worldwide chapter network about landmines and raising funds

through dinners, Mary and her team decided to focus on Sri Lanka after networking with HALO Trust and One Sri Lanka Foundation. Mary and Marc Bright, PTPI's Executive Vice President, traveled there in September 2003 for a site inspection as part of a group of NGOs hosted by HALO, including the Julia Burke Foundation, Humpty Dumpty Institute, Land O'Lakes Foundation, and One Sri Lanka.

In addition to visiting mine-infested areas and learning the basics of how a deminer works, Mary and Marc distributed some basic necessities for Sri Lankan students thanks to the efforts of PTPI's Global Youth Forum.

People to People International is committed to all aspects of mine issues: education, removal and aftercare. For more information on PTPI, please visit their website at www.PTPI.org.



Global Care Unlimited to Focus on Cambodia

As a follow-up to its successful "Spring Symposium on Cambodia and Landmines," Global Care Unlimited and the Tenafly Middle School Landmine Awareness Club inaugurated a year-long focus on Cambodia by organizing a youth leadership conference in October 2004. Students representing schools throughout northern New Jersey were invited to join Global Care's Youth Coalition for Mine Action.

Earlier this year, Global Care Unlimited and the Tenafly Middle School Landmine Awareness Club ran a three-month educational and fundraising campaign to educate New Jersey youth about the global landmine problem, with a special emphasis on the problem in Cambodia. The sixth graders raised \$11,000 to assist Cambodian landmine survivors.

Global Care's partner in Cambodia, Clear Path International, will provide hands-on vocational skills training to 105 Cambodian landmine survivors aimed at empowering them to begin their own businesses and reengage in their communities. For more information on Global Care Unlimited and its work in Cambodia, please visit www.globalcareunlimited.org.