

THE UNITED STATES' LEADERSHIP IN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS DESTRUCTION



The United States is a world leader in the destruction of conventional weapons. Since 1993, the United States has invested more than \$1.9 billion to save lives and promote post-conflict recovery in 81 countries by clearing landmines and unexploded ordnance; helping countries safely dispose of deteriorating and excess small arms, light weapons, and munitions, including man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS); and helping countries properly secure and manage their military stockpiles.

U.S. Support for Mine Action

- Clearing landmines and unexploded ordnance
- Mine risk education
- Landmine Impact studies
- Survivors' assistance
- Technology research and development
- Training

Dramatic Reduction in Casualties

One measure of the success of this program is its contribution to the dramatic reduction in the annual number of civilian casualties from landmines. According to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines' annual *Landmine Monitor* report for 2010, in the past decade that figure dropped from an estimated 15,000-20,000 to 3,956 reported casualties from mines and other explosive devices.

History of U.S. Program

U.S. humanitarian demining efforts began in 1988 in Afghanistan, and expanded with the establishment of the U.S. Humanitarian Mine Action Program in 1993. In 2001, the U.S. program was expanded to include the destruction and improved security of conventional weapons and munitions.

U.S. Interagency Support for Global Action

This interagency effort by the U.S. Departments of State, Defense, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has provided as much as one-quarter of annual global aid for humanitarian mine action. This includes clearing mines and unexploded ordnance—the vast majority of which were generated and abandoned by parties other than the United States; mine risk education; national landmine impact surveys; survivors' assistance; research and development of new technologies for use in humanitarian demining; and training. The Department of State works with some 60 non-governmental partner organizations to carry out these efforts, as detailed in our annual report, *To Walk the Earth in Safety*.

Current Activities

In Fiscal Year 2010, the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) in the Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs contributed \$161.5 million to conventional weapons destruction programs in 43 countries. This included support for the third Workshop on a Regional Approach to Stockpile Reduction in South East Europe and the deployment of PM/WRA's Quick Reaction Force, which destroyed WW-II era ordnance in Papua New Guinea. In all, more than 1.5 million weapons and 90,000 tons of ammunition have been destroyed since 2001 through U.S. programs.

In addition, PM/WRA coordination with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency has enhanced physical security and stockpile management of remaining small arms and light weapons, most recently in Croatia, Ecuador, and Romania. The United States also has been active in countering the illicit proliferation of MANPADS—serious potential threat to global civilian aviation—destroying more than 32,000 excess MANPADS in 30 countries since 2003. This also prevented them from being obtained by criminals and terrorists.

Learn more about United States conventional weapons destruction efforts at www.state.gov/t/pm/wra.