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LANDMINE MONITOR FACT SHEET

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Landmines in Asia-Pacific

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Of the 40 countries in the region: 16 are States Parties, 5 signatories, and 19 non-signatories. Afghanistan is the most recent country from the region to join the treaty, acceding on 11 September 2002. Five countries have signed but not ratified the treaty: Brunei, Cook Islands, Indonesia, Marshall Islands, and Vanuatu. In January 2002, an official from the Cook Islands said that ratification legislation has been drafted. Indonesia has also made progress towards ratification.

In November 2002, 14 States Parties and Signatories from the region voted in favor of the **annual UN General Assembly resolution** (number 57/74) calling for the universalization and full implementation of the treaty. 7 of the non-signatories also voted in favor of the resolution: Bhutan, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, and Tonga. Burma/Myanmar, China, India, Micronesia, Pakistan, South Korea, and Vietnam abstained in voting on the resolution.

13 of the 16 States Parties from the region have submitted their Article 7 **transparency measures** reports. Nauru and Solomon Islands are late in submitting their initial reports. Afghanistan's report is due in August 2003.

Since entry into force of the treaty, States Parties in the region have destroyed nearly 1.2 million antipersonnel mines. 5 Countries have **completed destruction** of their stockpiles: Australia, Cambodia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and the Philippines. Japan is scheduled to complete its stockpile destruction program in February 2003. Thailand is also in the process of destroying its stockpile and is obligated to complete this by 1 May 2003. Bangladesh has not begun its program to destroy its stockpile of nearly 205,000 antipersonnel mines. Fiji, Kiribati, Maldives, Niue, and Samoa have officially declared not stockpiling mines.

3 of the 10 countries retaining more than 5,000 antipersonnel mines for training and development purposes under article 3 of the treaty are from the region: Bangladesh (15,000), Japan (11,223) and Australia (7,845).

Non-signatories in the region hold some of the **largest stockpiles** in the world: China (110 million), Pakistan (6 million), India (4-5 million) and

South Korea (2 million). Other non-signatories like Burma/Myanmar, North Korea, and Vietnam are believed to also possess large stockpiles of mines. Other countries holding stockpiles include Laos, Mongolia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, as well as signatories Indonesia and Brunei, and States Parties Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Japan, and Thailand. Additionally, the United States stockpiles over one million mines in Japan and South Korea. While Japan is party to the treaty, it maintains that the US mines are not under its jurisdiction or control, and thus not subject to treaty provisions.

Australia, Cambodia, Japan, Malaysia, and New Zealand have passed **domestic legislation** to implement the treaty, including criminal penalties for violations. Legislation is in process in the Philippines and Samoa. Thailand considers existing law adequate. Actions to pass legislation are necessary in Bangladesh, Fiji, Kiribati, Maldives, Nauru, Niue, and Solomon Islands.

Burma/Myanmar, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka **used antipersonnel mines** in 2001. Opposition groups are also reported to have used antipersonnel mines in Burma, India, India/Pakistan (in Kashmir), Nepal, Philippines, and Sri Lanka. There have been no allegations of use by Sri Lankan or LTTE forces since the December 2001 cease-fires. In Burma/Myanmar, three rebel groups, not previously identified as mine users, were discovered using landmines: Pao People's Liberation Front, All Burma Muslim Union, and Wa National Army. Thirteen rebel groups are now using mines in Burma.

Perhaps the most disturbing development was the **massive mine laying operations undertaken by India and Pakistan**. Since late December 2001, both India and Pakistan have emplaced large numbers of antipersonnel mines along their common border. This is one of the largest scale mine laying operations anywhere in the world since 1997, though details are scant due to military secrecy and lack of access to the areas. Numerous reports of civilian casualties on both sides of the border call into question the effectiveness of the measures taken to protect the civilians of India and Pakistan from the effects of mines.

8 of the 14 current **producers** of antipersonnel mines are located in the region: Burma/Myanmar, China, India, North Korea, South Korea, Pakistan, Singapore, and Vietnam. All of the producers in the region have a moratorium on export in place or have stated that they no longer export antipersonnel mines, except for Burma/Myanmar and North Korea. However, in April 2002, the state-owned Pakistan Ordnance Factories allegedly offered two types of antipersonnel mines for sale in the United Kingdom to a television journalist who posed as a representative of a private company seeking to purchase a variety of weapons. In Thailand, two army officers were arrested while allegedly trying to smuggle weapons including antipersonnel mines.

16 of the 40 countries in the region are **mine affected**: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma/Myanmar, Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Some highlights in **humanitarian mine action** include:

- The UN Mine Action Program in Afghanistan reports that its implementing partners cleared nearly 15.6 million square meters of mined area and 81.2 million square meters of former battlefields.

- A Landmine Impact Survey was completed in Cambodia in April 2002 and revealed that nearly half of all villages are either known or suspected contaminated by mines or UXO. In 2001, a total of 21.8 million square meters of land was cleared, including 29,358 antipersonnel mines.
- In 2001, the Republic of Korea cleared 840 mines and 850,000 square meters of land in the inter-Korean transportation routes south of the demilitarized zone.
- In Sri Lanka, a 23 February 2002 cease-fire may enable significant mine action activities to get underway.
- The Thailand Mine Action Center reported that 4.4 million square meters of land has been cleared as of June 2002.
- In Vietnam, mine action activities by NGOs continue to expand, including outside of Quang Tri province for the first time.

The **major mine action donors** from this region are Australia and Japan. Australia provided A\$12 million (US\$6.4 million) in mine action funding for its financial year 2001-2002, a similar level to last year. Japanese mine action funding fell about 40 percent in 2001, to 741 million Japanese Yen (US\$6.98 million). In 2001, New Zealand contributed NZ\$2.3 (US\$0.95 million) to mine action, up from NZ\$1.8 million in 2000. South Korea donated \$150,000 in 2001.

Urgent needs for more **mine risk education** (MRE) were reported in Burma/Myanmar, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. Significant MRE programs continued in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Laos, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, while smaller scale activities were conducted in Bangladesh, India, South Korea, and Nepal. Community leaders, local NGOs, or government agencies conducted MRE in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, South Korea, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

From January 2001 to the end of June 2002 **landmine/UXO casualties** were reported in 13 countries in the region: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, India, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. In 2001 and the first half of 2002, incidents during clearance operations or in training exercises caused **casualties among deminers** in: Afghanistan, Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. Some regional developments and key findings in the area of landmine **survivor assistance** include:

- In Afghanistan, according to the World Health Organization, 65 percent of Afghans do not have access to health facilities. Only 60 out of 330 districts have rehabilitation or socioeconomic reintegration facilities for persons with disabilities and even in those districts the needs are only partially met.
- In Burma, the ICRC reported that in 2001 the country ranked third out of their 14 prosthetic/orthotic programs worldwide for the highest number of mine survivors receiving prostheses, after Afghanistan and Angola.
- In India, in the mine-affected area of Jammu and Kashmir the State government has pledged to improve medical services in all health institutions in the State.
- In Laos, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare formally approved the constitution of the Lao Disabled People's Association, after five years.
- In Sri Lanka, the NGO Hope for Children introduced a mobile artificial limb manufacturing and fitting vehicle to provide assistance in remote areas.

- In Thailand, from 6-8 November 2001, representatives from Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam attended the South East Asia Regional Conference on Victim Assistance.
- In Vietnam, the Community-Based Rehabilitation program expanded from 40 to 45 provinces.

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