

# Landmine Monitor Report 2001

Toward a Mine-Free World

BELGIUM REPORT



**M** LANDMINE  
MONITOR

**HANDICAP**  
INTERNATIONAL



# Landmine Monitor Report 2001

Toward a Mine-Free World

Belgium Report

## Table of Contents

Mine Ban Policy	p.3
Production, Transfer and Stockpiling	p.4
Landmine/UXO Problem, Casualties, Survivor Assistance	p.7
Mine Action Funding	p.8
Research and Development	p.12
NGO Activity	p.14
Notes	p.16

# Mine Ban Policy

## The Mine Ban Treaty

Belgium signed the Mine Ban Treaty on 3 December 1997, ratified it on 4 September 1998, and became a State Party on 1 March 1999. Belgium had already adopted domestic legislation banning the production, procurement, sale, export, use and stockpiling of antipersonnel mines.<sup>1</sup>

## The Second Meeting of States Parties

In September 2000, at the Second Meeting of States Parties in Geneva, Belgium's delegation was headed by Ambassador Marc Baptist, Deputy Director-General of Political Multilateral Relations and Thematic Questions, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador Jean Lint, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Advisers from the nongovernmental organization Handicap International (HI) Belgium were also members of the Belgian delegation. In a speech at the opening ceremony, Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium,

reiterated the need for universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty, and pleaded for greater solidarity with landmine victims.<sup>2</sup>

## Implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty

Belgium continues to play a significant role in promoting adherence to, and implementation of, the Mine Ban Treaty. For example, on 15-16 February 2001, Belgium participated actively in a seminar in Bamako, Mali, on the implementation and universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty in Africa. Belgium promotes universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty via bilateral contacts. Louis Michel, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, has sent letters to a number of States not party to the Mine Ban Treaty, encouraging them to join the treaty. Efforts to promote universalization are also made in multilateral or international fora, such as the UN, NATO, and the CD. The interdepartmental working group established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has continued to work

Belgium continued to play a leadership role in promoting universalization and effective implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty

Belgium has served as co-chair of the intersessional Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention since September 2000

on promoting the Mine Ban Treaty, and regularly invites HI Belgium to attend its meetings.

## The Second Meeting of States Parties

At the Second Meeting of States Parties, Belgium became co-chair with Zimbabwe of the Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention. This Standing Committee has stressed the importance of continuing efforts to universalize the Mine Ban Treaty. Belgium, together with a number of other States Parties, has taken the initiative to form the Universalization Contact Group, which coordinates activities encouraging non-States Parties to accede to, or ratify, the Mine Ban Treaty without delay. The group was formally recognized at the Second Meeting of States Parties.

Belgium was a very active participant in the December 2000 and May 2001 intersessional Standing Committee meetings. Belgium has given financial support to the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining to create a sponsorship fund, which will allow wider participation in the intersessional work and annual meetings of States Parties.<sup>3</sup>

## Implementation measures

In addition, Belgium is coordinating efforts to encourage full and prompt

reporting by States Parties of implementation measures under Article 7 of the Mine Ban Treaty. Together with the NGO VERTIC, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, and UN Department for Disarmament Affairs, Belgium undertook to develop a guide for Article 7 transparency reports. During the Bamako seminar, Burkina Faso and Belgium co-chaired a workshop on how to construct national Article 7 reports. Belgium and Burkina Faso agreed to make a contact list of the African representatives responsible for Article 7 reports.<sup>4</sup> Belgium has also undertaken démarches in respect of a number of countries that have not submitted Article 7 reports to the UN.

Belgium submitted its transparency reports under Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 in May 1999, 15 August 1999, 27 April 2000, and 30 April 2001.<sup>5</sup> The most recent Article 7 report includes the new Form J, in which Belgium provides information on mine action funding and victim assistance measures.

## UN General Assembly

In November 2000 Belgium voted in favor of UN General Assembly Resolution 55/33v on the universalisation and implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty. In 2001, Belgium will lead the drafting of the UN resolution on the Mine Ban Treaty.

## Amended Protocol II of the CCW

Belgium is a party to Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). At the Second Annual Conference of States Parties to the Protocol in December 2000, Ambassador Lint headed a small Belgian delegation, and Belgium was the only State Party to include an NGO member in its delegation. The Belgian position is to continue encouraging States Parties to implement the Amended Protocol II and also to encourage States to join the Mine Ban Treaty. During the Second Annual Conference, the Netherlands made an informal proposal for intensive consideration of whether to amend the CCW to cover “explosive remnants of war.” Belgium co-sponsored this proposal along with many other countries. Belgium submitted the annual report as required by Article 13 of Amended Protocol II on 15 October 2000.<sup>6</sup>

## Conference on Disarmament

Belgium “considers that the Conference on Disarmament, at the same level as other international and regional forums, may contribute to the promotion of the universalization and the reinforcement of the international norm created by the Mine Ban Treaty.”<sup>7</sup> On 1 March 2001, Belgium's Ambassador to the CD, Jean Lint, reminded the CD that this date

was the second anniversary of the entry into force of the Mine Ban Treaty. He encouraged States that had not yet joined the Mine Ban Treaty to do so.<sup>8</sup>

## The use of antipersonnel mines by a non-signatory

Belgium's position regarding the use of antipersonnel mines by a non-signatory of the Mine Ban Treaty during joint military operations with a State Party was elaborated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in June 2000 and again in March 2001: “Any Belgian unit engaged in joint operations outside national territory cannot use antipersonnel mines, in any circumstances, whatever framework and subordination mode this engagement is undergoing.

Belgium will also continue to make diplomatic and political efforts to NATO partners who have not ratified the Ottawa Convention and to encourage them to adhere to it.”<sup>9</sup> This issue has been raised by the ICBL in the General Status Standing Committee several times, and as co-chair, Belgium has proposed that a constructive debate on the scope of the obligation take place in that Standing Committee.<sup>10</sup>

There has been much activity in Parliament and elsewhere in support of a ban on antihandling devices

# Production, Transfer and Stockpiling<sup>11</sup>

Belgium has become one of the first countries to complete destruction of its antipersonnel mine stockpile

Belgium has not produced antipersonnel mines since demilitarization of facilities in 1990, and has stated that “the actions in which Belgium participates, whether as a promoter or as a participant, are by no means aimed at conceiving or developing munitions whose operation would be similar to the operation of antipersonnel mines.”<sup>12</sup>



photo: © Jane's Mines and Mines clearance

In September 1997, Belgium became one of the first countries to complete destruction of its antipersonnel mine stockpile. Its most recent Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 report indicates that at the end of reporting period on 31 December 2000, Belgium retained 5,433 M 35 Bg antipersonnel mines, after using 383 mines during the year for permitted training purposes, which are

reported in detail.<sup>13</sup> By March 2001, the number had been further reduced to 5,426.<sup>14</sup>

On 1-2 February 2001, a representative of the Armed Forces participated in a technical meeting in Budapest on the destruction of the PFM1 “Butterfly” mine.

## ANTIHANDLING DEVICES

An issue of particular concern has been certain antivehicle mines with antihandling devices which may act like an antipersonnel mine and thus be banned under the Mine Ban Treaty. This issue has been discussed in various fora, including the meetings of the Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention. On 13-14 March 2001, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) hosted an expert meeting on antivehicle mines with sensitive fuzes or sensitive antihandling devices in Geneva, which Belgium attended.<sup>15</sup>

On 11 May 2001, when the results of the ICRC meeting were discussed at the Standing Committee on the General Status, the Belgian delegation stated that Articles 1 and 2 of



the Mine Ban Treaty constitute an “interdiction on using antivehicle mines with antihandling devices conceived or modified to activate when no attempt is made to tamper with or disturb them.” The delegation went on to say that Belgium considered such devices as booby-traps, which are banned under Belgian national legislation.<sup>16</sup> Belgium welcomed the ICRC contribution to keep with the objectives and purpose of the Convention to take all possible steps to minimize the risk to civilian populations of certain antivehicle mines, including by considering and adopting as appropriate relevant best practices of the type identified in the report of the ICRC Expert Meeting.

Within Belgium, substantial progress has been made on this issue. Following a public awareness day on 11 November 2000 at the Federal Belgian Parliament, a number of members of the Chamber of Representatives and the Senate (from very different political parties) initiated work on a ban on antihandling devices.<sup>17</sup> HI Belgium forwarded a document on antihandling devices to parliamentarians, encouraging them to ban the devices.<sup>18</sup> Five legal proposals to ban antihandling devices were initiated within fifteen days.

On 8 March 2001, three proposals by members of the Chamber of Representatives were formally considered.

On 22 February 2001, two proposals by Senate members were

discussed in the External Affairs and National Defense Commission, were adopted unanimously,<sup>19</sup> and put on the agenda of the plenary session for voting by the Senate on 8 March 2001.<sup>20</sup> But no vote was taken and the issue was referred back to the External Affairs and National Defense Commission.

To consider more fully the technical, humanitarian and international consequences of a ban on antihandling devices, a mixed commission of the Chamber of Representatives National Defense Commission, and the Senate Foreign Affairs and Defense Commission was organized on 21 March 2001. HI Belgium, the Head of the Foreign Affairs Cabinet and a number of military experts, including Minister of Defense Flahaut, were invited. HI Belgium presented the humanitarian effects of antihandling device and expressed its view that the 1995 Belgian law banning antipersonnel mines also bans the use of antihandling devices. Mrs Dardenne, co-author of the 1995 law, explained that its objective was to cover the widest possible range of weapons having the same effects as antipersonnel mines. Given the possibility of different interpretations of the law, Martine Dardenne suggested that an interpretative law be passed to make the precise scope of the 1995 law on antipersonnel mines clearer. Parliamentarians have declared that they have the political will to pursue a ban, and have noted that the international context may

change if Belgium does this.<sup>21</sup>

The Minister of Defense has said, "I can tell you that the legislation related to antipersonnel mines, booby-traps and other devices of the same nature is fully respected by our national forces, as well in the text as in the spirit. I'm glad to know that today, a proposal of law and resolution has been initiated by Senator P. Mahoux to apply the Belgian law and the Ottawa Treaty on antihandling devices.... The proposal of Senator P. Mahoux is a step in the right direction."<sup>22</sup>

But the Minister of Defense has also pointed out that destroying antivehicle mines fitted with antihandling devices would be very expensive and collaboration with multinational forces would have to be reconsidered. The Minister agreed to consult with EU and NATO members on whether they have already a national law prohibiting sensitive antihandling devices, and the consequences for NATO of prohibiting such devices. In response to a question from two members of the Chamber of Representatives the Minister said, "Belgium has, as has its partners and allies, a stock of antivehicle mines, of which a certain percentage is equipped with antihandling devices.... There is an established political position of Belgium to continue its fight against antipersonnel mines. I officially informed the Senate that I was in favor of the law proposal such as it has been initiated.... We could decide not to use them any-

more but we would need some time to dismantle them. The delays would be different in relation to the numbers of the existing devices. We also have to take into account the problem of replacement and the fact that we need to keep a certain amount of stockpile in order to train our soldiers, just as we did for antipersonnel mines."<sup>23</sup>

Belgium has one antivehicle mine fitted with an antihandling device, the HPD (or HPD F2). This is a French mine equipped with an antihandling device and a self-neutralizing system,<sup>24</sup> which the Army says is 100 percent effective. An Army officer told parliamentarians, "This kind of antivehicle mine fitted with antihandling device doesn't explode by an unintentional act, as you have to really move it hard to make it explode."<sup>25</sup> The Army states that it does not have any other antivehicle mines fitted with antihandling devices and that it does not use any kind of booby-traps, as they are prohibited by the national law on antipersonnel mines.

photo: B. Hacourt © Handicap International Belgium



# Landmine/UXO Problem, Casualties, Survivor Assistance

Belgium is not considered to be mine-affected, but is still occasionally affected by unexploded ordnance (UXO) and mines from the two World Wars. For instance, on 1 January 2001, it was reported that a landmine had been found in Snellegem.<sup>26</sup> The Armed Forces maintain an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit, the SEDEE-DOVO, which still operates in Belgium on a regular basis.<sup>27</sup>

Deaths and injuries due to UXO occur from time to time. In April 2000, an amateur collector of war remnants and four firemen were injured when an item of UXO exploded, and on 4 October 2000 another collector was killed by UXO in Diksmude in the village of Essen.<sup>28</sup> A Captain in the SEDEE-DOVO said that each year at least one or two persons are killed by UXO in the region where fighting took place during World War I; he said since 1999 only collectors of war remnants have been involved in such accidents and the civil population is no longer at risk.<sup>29</sup>

As a result of the accidents among collectors in this region of

Belgium, the Governor of the East Flanders Province decided to organize a UXO awareness prevention campaign. The briefing is given by the SEDEE-DOVO to local policemen.

During 2000, there were 3,125 notifications to the SEDEE-DOVO unit, and 304 tons of UXO/mines were destroyed.<sup>30</sup> During the last week of 2000, for example, builders on the Belgian coast found grenades remaining from World War II. Owing to the risk of mines or other explosives being present, SEDEE-DOVO completely checked the area.<sup>31</sup>

People injured by mines or UXO follow the general provisions for accident or illness. Amputees unable to work may receive a disability allowance.<sup>32</sup> Healthcare insurance reimburses medical and rehabilitation costs. Families with one or more disabled members may have reduced taxes. Disabled people in general also have other benefits such as reserved parking, and reduced telephone, gas and electricity charges.

During 2000, there were 3,125 notifications to the SEDEE-DOVO unit, and 304 tons of UXO/mines were destroyed

# Mine Action Funding <sup>33</sup>

Belgium describes its position concerning the allocation of financial resources to mine action in terms of the promotion of coordination and integration. A multidisciplinary approach is adopted, which includes humanitarian demining, victim assistance and research in safer technologies. Demining is accorded priority where land is needed for survival, and special attention is given to local capacity building. States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty are given preference, in order to optimize the use of resources and make sure the demined areas will not be re-mined, but in some emergency cases resources may be allocated to States that are not party to the treaty.

In 2000, Belgium contributed about US\$2.068 million to mine clearance, mine awareness and victim assistance programs, another US\$405,407 for implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty, as well as US\$1.276 million for mine action research and development (R&D). In comparison, in 1999, US\$2.3 million was given for mine action and treaty implementation, with an addi-

tional US\$1.4 million for R&D. Financial data for 2000 has been entered on the UN investment database<sup>34</sup>. The financial contributions to mine action in 2000 include:<sup>35</sup>

**Support to advocacy work and public awareness: BEF2,922,044 (US\$64,862)**

- Contribution to support the coordination of the Belgian network of the ICBL campaign, carried out in cooperation with HI Belgium.

**Support for the promotion and implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty: BEF9 million (US\$199,778)**

- To the UN Voluntary Fund, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allocated BEF7 million (US\$155,383).
- To promote the Mine Ban Treaty and the intersessional Standing Committee meetings, BEF2 million (US\$44,395) was allocated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Support for monitoring the Mine Ban Treaty: BEF 6,350,000 (US\$ 140,767)**

- To the Landmine Monitor, BEF2

million (US\$44,405) by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- Additionally, BEF3,350,000 (US\$74,362) was donated from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support a research conference in Brussels in January/February 2000 and enable delegates from developing countries to participate. The Ministry of Defense also supported the conference by organizing an exhibition on anti-personnel mines, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs put the Egmont Palace in Brussels, logistic support and BEF1 million (US\$22,000) at the disposal of ICBL for the event.

### **Support to mine clearance operations (humanitarian or military cooperation projects):**

**BEF59,945,000 (US\$1,330,632)**

#### **Cambodia**



photo: © Handicap International Belgium

BEF11,360,000 (US\$252,160) - financial and in-kind support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of National Defense. Since 1994, three mine clearance experts have

served as technical advisers to the Cambodian Mine Action Center on a development project intended to enable the Cambodian staff ultimately to operate independently.

#### **Kosovo**

In-kind support from the Ministry of National Defense. Belgium has sent three permanent mine clearance experts to this region, who operate under the KFOR mandate and assist local demining organizations.

#### **Croatia**

In-kind support from the Ministry of National Defense. Belgium sent a training adviser for the Western European Union Demining Mission project in collaboration with the EU and the Western European Union.

#### **International Trust Fund**

BEF5 million (US\$110,988) was allocated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for demining operations.

#### **Laos**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributed in-kind three demining experts to provide technical assistance to enable the staff of UXO LAO, the national UXO program, ultimately to operate independently. They also contributed financially BEF16.7 million (US\$370,699).

**A multi-disciplinary approach, including humanitarian demining, victim assistance and research in safer technologies**

## Albania

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, allocated BEF1.1 million (US\$24,417) to the special fund for the destruction of antipersonnel mine stockpiles in Albania.

## Democratic Republic of Congo (Kisangani)

A HI project of mine awareness and destruction of mines and UXO has received BEF25,785,000 (US\$572,364) in funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



photo: © Handicap International Belgium

## Support to mine awareness and victim assistance: BEF33,217,561 (US\$737,349)

- BEF3 million (US\$66,593) for the special appeal launched by the ICRC in late 1999 for the period 2000-2005 for prevention and assistance to victims of antipersonnel mines.
- BEF30,217,561 (US\$670,756) to HI's operations in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, and northern Iraq, as detailed below:

### AFGHANISTAN:

- Mine Awareness program: BEF924,000 (US\$20,510)



photo: © Handicap International Belgium

### ANGOLA:



photo: T. Strickaret

- Support to disabled persons and mines victims: BEF7,392,000 (US\$164,084)

### CAMBODIA:

- Physical rehabilitation:

BEF5,146,667 (US\$114,243)

- Socio-economic reintegration program: BEF9,948,894 (US\$220,841)
- Mine Unit program (includes mine incident database project and studies over spontaneous demining initiatives): BEF924,000 (US\$20,511)
- Community-based program (self-help group and childhood program): BEF770,000 (US\$17,092)
- Provincial rehabilitation centers: BEF2,772,000 (US\$61,532)

#### Northern Iraq:

- Rehabilitation workshop: BEF2,310,000 (US\$51,276)

(US\$743,600).

- HOPE is a project aimed at developing a portable, multi-sensor mine detection system demonstrator. It was allocated in-kind resources from the Ministry of Defense estimated at BEF3,752,000 (US\$83,285).
- Multi Sensor Mine Signature campaign is supported in-kind with approximately BEF2,310,000 (US\$51,276) by the Ministry of Defense.

Support to R&D of new mine detection and clearance technologies: BEF57,470,095 (US\$1,275,697)

- HUDEM (HUMANITARIAN DEMining) is financed jointly by the ministries of foreign affairs and defense with BEF14,375,000 (US\$320,000), plus in-kind assistance.
- PARADIS project is funded with BEF2,222,500 (US\$49,334) for the year 2000, and BEF1,311,250 (US\$29,107) for 2001, through the Scientific Policy Department budget.
- APOPO project has received increased funding from the ministries of foreign affairs and defense with BEF33.5 million

# Research and Development<sup>36</sup>

Belgium has been involved in R&D for new mine-related technologies for several years. Prof. Achero from the Royal Military Academy attended the Standing Committee meetings in Geneva in May 2001, where he proposed the creation of a framework for R&D in humanitarian demining.

**ITEP:** On 17 July 2000, the Memorandum of Understanding on International Test and Evaluation Program (ITEP) was signed between Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States, together with the ISPR Joint Research Center (as representative of the EU). "ITEP will serve as a center to promote the development and sharing of information on new technologies for humanitarian demining, and link existing and potential testing and evaluation sites around the world to provide an independent, standardized means of testing those new technologies."<sup>37</sup>

**HUDEM:** the National Project on Humanitarian Demining, launched in

1997 on the initiative of the Minister for Defense, is coordinated by the Royal Military Academy in collaboration with researchers from eight Belgian universities, two Belgian industrial engineering high schools, King's College in London, the French-German Saint-Louis Research Center, and three units of the Belgian Army. The project covers research on a new generation of detectors such as ground-penetrating radar, metal and infrared detectors, nuclear quadrupole resonance, bio-captors, and detection of minefields from air or space platforms

The **PARADIS** project aims to develop an electronic planning and follow-up tool for demining operations, based on satellite images. The project is conducted by the Royal Military Academy in collaboration with the Free University of Brussels and SEDEE-DOVO. A second mission to Mozambique was planned for April 2001 with an evaluation mission in Laos in June 2001.<sup>38</sup>



The **APOPO** project is researching the use of 'bio-sensors' (African rats) in humanitarian mine clearance operations. The project reached a crucial point on 15 July 2000, when the new APOPO infrastructure was inaugurated at Sokoine University in Tanzania (this involved increased Belgian funding). A ten-person team has been recruited to work on training rats to locate antipersonnel mines from the smell of TNT. Tests in real minefields will take place from spring 2001.

The **HOPE** (Hand-held Operational Demining System) project is conducted by the Royal Military Academy in collaboration with the German aerospace research center, the German radar firm RST, Belgian firms Spacebell and Bats and two NGOs specialized in demining operations (Mines Advisory Group and Norwegian People's Aid). Belgium is in charge of configuring the program that analyses the signals and data-fusion. SEDEE-DOVO planned to test the system in relation to an inert minefield, and field-tests were also planned for 2001 in Bosnia and Herzegovina in collaboration with NPA.<sup>39</sup>

The **Multi-Sensor Mine Signature** project is conducted by the Royal Military Academy in collaboration with demining specialists from the UK, the Netherlands and Germany.

The project aims to set up a database of mine-signatures in order to support researchers testing or developing a new generation of mine detectors.

The **ARIS** Network aims to accelerate European research in the humanitarian demining field by giving information on progress and difficulties in ongoing research, new technologies, procedures and normalization standards.

The **Airborne Minefield Detection Pilot Project** was co-financed by the European Commission, several EU States and organizations. This project has come to an end, and the conclusions are negative in terms of the feasibility of minefield detection by airborne images. There has been criticism of the project's huge budget, the reduction of its objectives, and the negative final results.<sup>40</sup>

photo: © Handicap International Belgium



# NGO Activity

The Belgian Royal Family is fully involved in the mine ban campaign; Her Royal Highness Princess Mathilde has accorded her High Patronage to HI Belgium

In 2000 and 2001 a wide variety of activities have been organized around the mine issue to keep the public informed of recent developments. The Belgian royal family is fully involved in the mine ban movement; in addition to Princess Astrid's speech to the Second Meeting of States Parties in September 2000, Her Royal Highness Princess Mathilde has accorded her High Patronage to HI Belgium.

## National Day

On 21 July 2000, Belgian National Day, the movement against landmines received huge support from the population, the Federal Government, and the entire royal family, as both military and civilians wore HI's blue laces as symbols of their support to mine victims. This event was widely covered by the media in both parts of Belgium. It marked the first time the State, royal family, army and civil society all committed themselves to the goal of an NGO.

## Memorial Van Damme

In August 2000, another public aware-

ness event, an international athletics competition, took place at the memorial Ivo Van Damme, where seven ex-beauty queens ran 100 meters in order to attract attention to the landmine situation. They ran with blue laces (the HI symbol) on their feet.<sup>41</sup> The blue laces were also in the spotlight during several festivals,<sup>42</sup> local and national sports events.

In September 2000, a press conference was organized to present the Landmine Monitor Report 2000, and the report was widely distributed. The Belgian country report was released in a more detailed version. The Prime Minister expressed interest in the reports.<sup>43</sup>

## National Blue Laces Day

On 16 September 2000, HI Belgium organized its National Blue Laces Day, an annual public awareness day on the mine issue.<sup>44</sup> On 21 September 2000, an awareness day also took place at the EU Parliament in Brussels. On 11 November 2000, a youth awareness day on several

current topics, and particularly the landmine problem, was organized with the collaboration of the Federal Parliament, the Army and a number of NGOs.<sup>45</sup>

## AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

In 2000, various other awareness activities were organized around the mines issue in different forum (schools, youth organizations, etc) to keep the public informed of recent developments. A photo exhibition of mine victims was organized in two cultural places in Brussels. The

photographs were taken by five famous female photographers in Cambodia, Kosovo, Nicaragua, Senegal, and Thailand.<sup>46</sup>

To celebrate the second anniversary of the entry into force of the Mine Ban Treaty on 1 March 2001, HI Belgium issued a press release and a delegation visited the US Embassy in Brussels in order to encourage US adherence to the Mine Ban Treaty. Shoes that symbolize mine victims have also been sent to President Bush from different parts of the world where HI is working.

photo: P.Y. Thienpont © Le Soir



photo: P.E. Hublet © Handicap International Belgium



# Notes

- 1 See Landmine Monitor Report 2000, p. 577.
- 2 Discours de son Altesse Royale La Princesse Astrid de Belgique, (translated) to the SMSP, Geneva, 11 September 2000, and reported in "Prinses en Sir willen Verenigde Staten beschaamd maken," *Het Volk* (Dutch speaking newspaper), 12 September 2000.
- 3 "Réponse au questionnaire de Handicap International Belgique sur la position belge en matière d'interdiction des mines antipersonnel," realized in a coordinated approach by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Louis Michel, Minister of Defense André Flahaut, State Secretary for Cooperation and Development Eddy Boutmans, and their administrative representatives under the coordination of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs" [hereafter, Belgian Response to the Landmine Monitor Questionnaire], Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brussels, March 2001, p. 1.
- 4 Belgian Response to the Landmine Monitor Questionnaire, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 2001, p. 1.
- 5 MBT Article 7 reports submitted 2 May 1999 for the period 3 December 1997-30 April 1999; submitted 15 August 1999 for the period 1 May-15 August 1999; submitted 27 April 2000 for calendar year 1999; and submitted 30 April 2001 for calendar year 2000.
- 6 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 report, 15 October 2000.
- 7 Report of the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 15 December 2000, p. 1 (translated).
- 8 "111 States Ratified Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines, Belgium tells Conference on Disarmament," UN press release, 1 March 2001, [www.unog.ch/news2/documents/newsen/dc0109e.html](http://www.unog.ch/news2/documents/newsen/dc0109e.html).
- 9 Interview with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 15 June 2000; Belgian Response to the Landmine Monitor Questionnaire, March 2001, p. 5.
- 10 Belgian Response to the Landmine Monitor Questionnaire, March 2001, p. 5; oral remarks from Amb. Lint at the meeting of the Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention, Geneva, 11 May 2001.
- 11 Details of past production and transfer were reported in the Landmine Monitor Report 1999, pp. 540-543.
- 12 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Belgium's Position regarding Action against Antipersonnel Mines," April 2000, p. 1.
- 13 MBT Article 7 report, submitted 30 April 2001, for calendar year 2000, Forms B, D, G.
- 14 Belgian Response to the Landmine Monitor Questionnaire, March 2001, p. 5.
- 15 The participants were Major Jones, Military Adviser, and Captain Muylkens, Bomb Disposal Unit, Belgian Armed Forces, and Mr. Angelet, Deputy Chief of Mission, Permanent Mission to the CD. Belgium made statements on various points such as: magnetic and acoustic systems fall under the "fuze system" category and not under "antihandling device" category; infrared and magnetic fuze systems are never used alone but in combination because of their nature; Belgium recommends self-neutralization instead of self-destruction as it is non-pollutant; once self-deactivation batteries expire, the mine is completely inoffensive.
- 16 Landmine Monitor notes, Standing Committee on the General Status, Geneva, 11 May 2001.
- 17 A Landmine Monitor researcher was present in the meeting with Martine Dardenne (French-speaking Green Party), a member of the Chamber of Representatives, 25 January 2001, with Karine Lalieux, (French-speaking Socialist Party), a member of the Chamber of Representatives, 29 January 2001, and with Senator George Dallemagne (French-speaking Social Christian Party), 30 January 2001.
- 18 HI Belgium, Mines Unit, "Antihanteerbaarheids-mechanisme," Brussels, February 2001.
- 19 Senate of Belgium, External Affairs and Defense Commission, Bulletin of the Commission, Agenda, 22 February 2001. In the report, Mr. Mahoux's proposal (2-647/1) was adopted and Mrs. Thijs's proposal (2-648/1) was not pursued due to the

- adoption of Mr. Mahoux's proposal on the same issue.
- 20 Senate of Belgium, Plenary sessions, Bulletin of the Commission, Agenda, 8 March 2001.
  - 21 A Landmine Monitor researcher was present at the Parliament of Belgium, Senate, Mixed Commission with members of the Senate's Commission for External Affairs and National Defense and members of Chamber of Representatives' Commission for National Defense, Brussels, 21 March 2001.
  - 22 Answer of the Minister of Defense to the parliamentary question asked by Senator Dallemagne (Social Christian party), Plenary session, Senate, 8 February 2001 (unofficial translation).
  - 23 Oral joint questions from members of Chamber of Representatives Dirk Van der Maelen and Martine Dardenne on "dispositifs antimanipulation" to the Minister of Defense, Commission of National Defense, Chamber of Representatives, Integral Bulletin CRIV 50 COM 403, 6 March 2001, pp. 9-12.
  - 24 Colin King (ed.), Jane's Mines and Mine Clearance (Coulson, UK: Jane's Information Group Ltd., 2000), p. 463.
  - 25 Captain Muylkens explained to the parliamentarians the functioning of the HPD antivehicle mine he had brought with him. Mixed Commission, Senate, 21 March 2001.
  - 26 "Snellegem landmijn blootgelegd," Het Laatste Nieuws (Dutch-language newspaper), 1 January 2001.
  - 27 SEDEE-DOVO also has ten deminers abroad in order to protect Belgian troops and undertake humanitarian demining (three in Cambodia, four in Laos and three in Kosovo).
  - 28 Telephone interview with Captain Muylkens from the SEDEE-DOVO, 23 January 2001.
  - 29 Telephone interview with Captain Muylkens from the SEDEE-DOVO, 23 January 2001.
  - 30 E-mail from Captain Muylkens, SEDEE-DOVO, 23 January 2001.
  - 31 "Vrees voor mijnenveld onder pier," Het Volk (Dutch-language newspaper), 2 January 2001.
  - 32 "Guide de la personne handicapée," Public Health and Environment: Disabled Person Policy Service, Ministry of Social Affairs, Brussels, 1999.
  - 33 Unless otherwise specified below, the source of information in this section is: Belgian Response to the Landmine Monitor Questionnaire, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 2001, pp. 6-10.
  - 34 Website: <[www.un.org/Depts/dpko/mine](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/mine)>.
  - 35 Totals given are for 2000, unless otherwise stated; exchange rate at 23 March 2001: US\$1=45.05.
  - 36 Belgian Response to Landmine Monitor Questionnaire, March 2001, pp. 11-13.
  - 37 "Agreement for International Test and Evaluation Program for Humanitarian Demining," US Department of State, Office of the Spokesman, Media note, 17 July 2000.  
Website :  
<[www.useu.be/ISSUES/demin0717.html](http://www.useu.be/ISSUES/demin0717.html)>.
  - 38 E-mail from Captain Muylkens, SEDEE-DOVO, 23 January 2001.
  - 39 E-mail from Captain Muylkens, SEDEE-DOVO, 23 January 2001.
  - 40 Interview with Prof. Acheroy, Signal and Image Center, Electrical Engineering Dept., Royal Military Academy, 4 January 2001.
  - 41 "Rennen met...blauwe veterans!," TV Story (Dutch speaking newspaper), 31 August 2000.
  - 42 "Dwars door Brake!" (walk), 30 April 2000, Mano Mundo Festival Boom (Music Festival), 14 May 2000, Jogging Party du Solstice (Walk), 24 June 2000, Dodentocht 2000 Bornem, 10 August 2000, Tennis competition for persons in wheelchairs in Ath, 1-3 September 2000.
  - 43 Letter received from Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, Brussels, 18 December 2000.
  - 44 Interview with Koen Schelkens, co-organizer of the event, Belgium Communication Department, HI, 5 January 2001.
  - 45 "En bref: Activité de sensibilisation au Parlement belge," Ban Mines Newsletter No. 3, HI Belgium, Brussels, November 2000, p. 6.
  - 46 "Exposition Terres Minées," HI Belgium, intranet, HIB02.

© September 2001 / Handicap International Belgium  
Printed in Belgium  
All Rights Reserved  
Design : Thomas Lagneau / Carbone & Spirito  
Photo Cover : Corinne Dufka  
Research : Véronique Royen  
Editor : Ian Doucet



*Support landmines victims,  
wear blue laces.*



HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL  
67 RUE DE SPASTRAAT,  
1000 BRUSSELS  
TEL.: +32 (0)2 280 16 01  
FAX: +32 (0)2 230 60 30  
[www.handicapinternational.be](http://www.handicapinternational.be)