A regional approach that works

“Convert the Americas into the world’s first antipersonnel-landmine-free zone.”

- OAS General Assembly, 2009
  Resolution 2453

Since 1991, the OAS has assisted ten of its member states with financial, technical, logistical and administrative support, leading the fight against the scourge of landmines in the Western Hemisphere.

Completed Programs
- Chile (Stockpiles – 2003)
- Argentina (Stockpiles – 2004)
- Guatemala (2005)
- Suriname (2005)

Active Programs
- Nicaragua
- Ecuador
- Peru
- Colombia

National Programs
- Chile
- Venezuela
Colombia: A complex dynamic

- Ongoing clearance of 34 minefields under government jurisdiction
- Continued indiscriminate use of mines by armed non-state groups
  - Impact in 31 of 32 departments
  - 80 municipalities seriously affected
- Extent of mine problem not clearly defined
- Some 2 to 3 million internally displaced Colombians -- many unable to return because of mine contamination
- Security is a primary consideration for people in affected communities, as well as for demining organizations
Colombia: Objectives

• Support completion of clearance of government minefields
Clearing government minefields

- Three 41-member units
- 34 military minefields
- 8 areas remaining to be cleared
- Complete by March 2011

Map showing mined areas:
- Mined Areas
- Uncleared
- In progress
- Cleared
Colombia: Objectives

- Support completion of clearance of government minefields
- Support expansion of national humanitarian demining capacity for affected communities
Challenges

- Develop reliable, actionable information on contaminated areas from military sources, community liaison and MRE campaigns
- Release land through non-technical survey
- Assess balance of risk reduction and potential threats while building support among affected communities
- Protect deminers and communities
- Foment timely support for socio-economic recovery of cleared areas
- Identification of landmine victims in remote areas
National capacity

Military Minefields
Affected Communities

575 deminers
Expanding structure

2009

Military Minefields

- CO Army

- CO Navy

- CO Army

- CO Navy

2010

- CO Army

- CO Navy

- CO Army

2011

Completion by March 2011

Affected Communities

- CO Army

- CO Army

- CO Army

- CO Navy
Colombia: Objectives

- Support completion of clearance of government minefields
- Support expansion of national humanitarian demining capacity for affected communities
- Integrate clearance, MRE, survivor assistance and socio-economic recovery components
Concept for humanitarian demining in communities

- Identify priority areas and coordinate with local and military authorities
- Conduct community liaison and non-technical survey
- Clear mined areas
- Turn over cleared land
- Support productive projects
- Provide access to physical and psychological rehabilitation services
- Identify victims and evaluate socio-economic impact
- Initiate and sustain MRE campaign
Victim assistance role

Fill gaps in existing support
- Survivor identification and registration
- Transportation, lodging and meals to access rehabilitation centers
- Support rehabilitation for ocular and auditory disabilities
- Social reinsertion

Work with partners and associated organizations
- CIREC
- ICRC
- Rotary Club
- CCCM
- FIDES
- Avianca Airlines
- Private sector donors
Colombia: Objectives

- Support completion of clearance of government minefields
- Support expansion of national humanitarian demining capacity for affected communities
- Integrate clearance, MRE, survivor assistance and socio-economic recovery components
- Facilitate development of national structures and processes for integration of humanitarian demining by civilian organizations
Supporting a mixed approach

PAICMA developing:
- National standards
- Accreditation procedures
- Legal framework for authorization of explosive use by civilians

OAS providing:
- Technical advice to PAICMA
- Monitoring of all demining organizations on behalf of PAICMA
- Quality control for land cleared by all demining organizations
- Advice to NGOs seeking assistance in initiating activities in Colombia
Accreditation, monitoring and quality control

Accreditation, Monitoring, Internal Quality Assurance, Post-Clearance Inspections

National Authority, OAS

Demining Organizations
Final thoughts

- OAS has supported PAICMA as an implementing partner with noteworthy successes.
- Essential complements (community liaison, MRE, survivor identification) to government demining efforts are carried out by OAS staff.
- Successful integration of civilian demining organizations will benefit Colombians and is strongly supported by OAS.
- OAS needs significant donor support to continue to back expansion of government clearance capacity, complement civilian demining, MRE and victim assistance initiatives.
Thank you