

Report on:

**"Amman Regional Seminar on Military and
Humanitarian Issues Surrounding the
Ottawa Convention"**



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Organized by
**The Regional Human Security Centre
At the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy**

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Report prepared by:
Rawan Fadayel Bahou, Assistant Director
and authorized by:
Dr. Atef Odibat, Director

**The Regional Human Security Centre
At the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy
Tel No.: +962 6 5930253/5930810
Fax No.:+962 6 5930296
e-mail:rhsc@id.gov.jo
<http://www.id.gov.jo/human/index.html>**

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I. Executive Summary:

Since its establishment, the Regional Human Security Centre (RHSC) has been intensively working to achieve its core aim towards promoting human security concept and its agenda in the MENA region. In essence, the basis of the HS concept is the people's freedom from fear and from pervasive threats to people's rights, their safety or even their lives. In this context, the expansion of AP landmines imposes a threat towards the security and safety of people in our region and exposes them to continuous fear that impedes their normal mobility and utilization of natural resources.

Universally and in this context, the Canadian government provided the diplomatic leadership in the elimination of AP landmines with the formation of *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention)*. The Ottawa Convention addresses the global landmines problem. It was first ratified by Canada in December 1997.

Since that date, a great deal of work has been achieved resulting in 141 states ratifying or acceding to the convention. It is worth mentioning that the Convention has become binding by international law on March 1999.

Tangible progress has been well underway to rally support and further ratification/accession. However, the MENA region has been particularly challenging in this context with only few signatory member states. However, Jordan, a signatory state member, and a state with which Canada has already had extensive engagement on the landmines file, has indicated an interest in working with Canada on supporting the Ottawa Convention and rallying efforts of MENA states towards signing.

Consistent with RHSC's main aims, both Canada and Jordan are members of the HSN, and given the important role of Jordan, being a signatory member state in the Convention, the RHSC co-organized, along with the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the *"Amman Regional Seminar on Military and Humanitarian Issues Surrounding the Ottawa Convention", from 19- 21 April 2004*.

Holding Amman Seminar in this time of the year was consistent with the plan to consider year 2004 a crucial milestone in the life of the Ottawa Convention, and in overcoming the legacy of antipersonnel landmines worldwide, as the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World will be held later in the year bringing additional momentum in surrounding the challenges that landmines pose to development, security and peace.

Furthermore, the purpose of the Amman Seminar is to exchange views among countries in the region on various issues, both political and military, surrounding the Ottawa Convention. In particular, the seminar is intended first and foremost as a forum for States in the Middle East and Gulf region to share perspectives on the subject of military issues related to the Ottawa Convention, and more broadly, to discuss the role that the Convention can play in addressing the global landmine challenge. The importance of this region in alleviating the global suffering caused by anti-personnel mines cannot be underestimated.

II. Objectives of the Seminar:

1. To raise the profile of the Ottawa Convention in the region;
2. To encourage Non states parties to move toward accession by:
 - Engaging in dialogue on the military arguments for and against the use of anti-personnel mines (APM);
 - Increasing understanding of the Ottawa Convention and its obligations;
 - Outlining the political and humanitarian rationale behind the Convention, as well as the benefits of joining, to high-level officials from the countries' defense ministries of foreign affairs.

III. Participations:

Fifty- one participants attended the Seminar in addition to the staff members of RHSC/JID (the Seminar's organizing committee).

In addition to Jordan, ten countries form the MENA region participated: Lebanon, Syria, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, KSA, Oman, Yemen and Libya.

Moreover, there were other participations from other countries like Canada, Austria, Switzerland, UK and India, in addition to representatives from the United Nations Development Programme(UNDP), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) from different countries, the Protection organization in Egypt, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Arab Net for Research on Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (LM & ERW), Landmines Resaource Centre at University of Balamand – Lebanon, the Landmines Survivors Network (LSNJO) and the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR) in Jordan.

The participations included international, regional and local experts, retired and currently serving military personnel, delegates from Arab ministries of defense and foreign affairs, and NGOs representatives, overall in relation with landmines, AP landmines, Demining, and influential personnel in decision-making processes.

IV. Structure of the Seminar:

The Amman Seminar was opened with an evening ceremony at which remarks were made by Dr. Atef Odibat, Director, RHSC, H.E. John Holmes, Ambassador of Canada to Jordan, Gen. (ret'd) Maurice Baril, former Canadian Chief of the Defense Staff and Special advisor to Canada's Ambassador for Mine Action, and Mr. Zuhdi Al-Hassan, Secretary-General of the Jordanian Ministry of Interior, on behalf of H.E. Mr. Samir Habashneh, Jordanian Minister of Interior.

The Seminar's two main sessions were distributed on the two other days, each session with a specific theme.

The first day theme was: "The overview of the Ottawa Convention and Related Military Issues". This day provided participants with various presentations in relation to military dimensions of the Convention introduced by experts.

The Seminar's first day had also given good chance for MENA region country representatives to introduce their reports reflecting their countries' perspectives and views towards the Ottawa Convention and its impacts.

Regarding the Second day, its theme was: "The Ottawa Convention as a Framework to Address the Humanitarian Challenge Posed by AP landmines". This day provided in depth ideas on humanitarian impacts of the AP landmines. Furthermore, it provided ideas and insights on international coordination towards achieving the Convention; and it contributed well in presenting future steps, preparations and expectations.

The session closed by ending remarks and special thanks presented by Dr. Atef Odibat. The Seminar's co-hosts cooperated in carrying out a summary which was distributed on participants and given to the media for publishing.

V. Media Coverage:

Press announcements were sent to the local newspapers and the Jordanian television prior to the seminar in which the objectives and aims of the seminar were provided.

As a result, the event was covered for the three days and was followed- up in the daily newspapers of AlRai, Al Dustour, Jordan Times and Al Arab Al Yawm. In addition to that, the Jordanian TV provided 10 minutes prime time for the seminar. It is worth mentioning also that the Kuwaiti TV prepared a report on the seminar in which Dr. Atef Odibat, RHSC Director was interviewed.

VI. Highlights on the Opening Remarks:

1. Dr. Atef Odibat, Director, the Regional Human Security Centre at the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy

In his opening address, Dr. Atef welcomed the participants and introduced some highlights regarding RHSC objectives and activities. He then expressed the importance of the Ottawa Convention in alleviating the global suffering caused by anti-personnel mines, on one hand, and the unique opportunity that the Seminar presents in exchanging views among countries in the region both political and military, surrounding the Ottawa Convention on the other hand.

2. Ambassador John Holmes, Ambassador of Canada to Jordan

Amb. Holmes expressed in his statement how landmines forms a demonstrable threat to human security of the individual where addressing this threat occupies an important place in Canada's foreign policy. In this regard, the Amman Regional Seminar on Landmines is intended to provide the experts and States delegates participating a timely unique opportunity to discuss this issue.

He, then, stressed on the major successes achieved by the Ottawa Convention during its six years, some of which are: the use, production and transfer of AP landmines have virtually ceased; more than 31 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed; vast tracts of previously mined lands have been cleared and returned to productive use; and the number of new mine victims has fallen dramatically.

3. General (Ret'd) Maurice Baril, Former Canadian Chief of the Defense Staff and Special Advisor to Canada's Ambassador for Mine Action

General Baril' opening remarks reflects the real opinion of an experienced military man who had witnessed the devastating effects of the massive use of AP landmines when the Canadian army was involved in peacemaking operations in various countries all over the world. General Baril took his decision to renounce the use of AP landmines, when he had been in service as the Chief of the Defense Staff during the Canadian campaign to ban AP landmines that lead to the Ottawa Convention.

He added that the Canadian forces would not use AP landmines anymore and the Canadian stockpile was destroyed before Canada signed the Convention in Dec. 1997. He stated that the AP landmines are unacceptable weapons to be used anymore, have practically no utility or impact or operational value on battlefield, never stops a determined intruder or enemy, and have devastating and destructive humanitarian consequences in killing and maiming children and innocent people for decades to come. He urges countries to make their efforts to put an end to the use of AP landmines.

4. H.E. Eng. Samir Habashneh, Minister of Interior of Jordan, delivered on his behalf by Mr. Zuhdi Al Hassan, Secretary General at the Ministry of Interior.

Minster Habashneh expressed the importance of the venue in exchanging views on one of the most important dimensions of humanity and its security, which is banning the AP landmines.

In this regard, the Minister clarified that Jordan has used the APL in the sixties of the last century for defending its borders against any attack or infiltration.

However, the distinguished perspectives of the Jordanian leadership has contributed in stopping mines plantation and encouraging Jordanian governments in succession to de-mine the lands affected forming impediments against human and economic development.

He added that in 1993, these efforts came out in launching Jordanian De-mining Programme, one of pioneer projects internationally and first initiative in this regard in the MENA region, to prioritize achieving human, social and economic security to the Jordanian civilian. Afterwards and in the same momentum, Jordan was one of the first states that had signed and ratified the Ottawa convention in the same year of launching the Convention in 1996 believing in the Conventions' unique and extremely important role in addressing this issue.

VII. **Highlights on the Seminar’s Presentations in the Second Day:**
Main theme: Overview of the Ottawa Convention and Related Military Issues

1. **The Human Cost of Anti-personnel Mines and the International Responses, Mouin Kassis, Head of Communications, ICRC Amman**

Mr. Kassis clarified that the Ottawa convention reflects all aspects of ICRC mission, which consists of direct support for tens of thousands of mine victims., for whom ICRC provide medical assistance and physical rehabilitation programmes. The ICRC also works with mine- affected communities and raises awareness about landmines’ dangers.

He added that the suffering caused by AP landmines is particularly horrific; killing and maiming mostly civilians especially that AP landmines are designed to shatter limbs and lives beyond repair.

Then, a video show took place on: The Ottawa Treaty: Towards a world free of anti-personnel mines, providing participants of how the Ottawa Convention is considered a unique treaty marking the first time in history where states agreed to ban completely and on the basis of international humanitarian law, a weapon that was already in widespread use.

He added that the Convention is a humanitarian programme of action designed to respond to the humanitarian consequences of APL. At the end, the ICRC urges the countries that are not parties to be real parties in the convention.

2. **Overview of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Kerry Brinket, Manager, Implementation Support Unit, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.**

Mr. Brinket briefed the audience on the Convention, its aims, provisions, prohibited actions, required actions and its mechanism of work.

The Convention’s purpose is the determination to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines through four core aims:

- Assuring the universal acceptance of and full compliance with a ban on APLM
- Destroying all existing stockpiles
- Clearing mined areas
- Assisting LM victims

He then reviewed prohibited actions. The convention bans the use, production, development, acquisition and transfer of anti-personnel mines. It also prohibits States Parties from assisting, encouraging or inducing anyone to engage in any activity prohibited by the Convention.

He clarified also that the Convention requirements are: each State party to destroy stockpiles of anti-personnel mines of the entry into force; identify all

areas under its jurisdiction or control in which APL are known or suspected to be emplaced; to provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims. He added also the convention works through a variety of mechanisms expressed in the convention's text, through decisions taken by States parties and ones that have emerged on an informal basis.

The Convention, according to Mr. Brinkert, is so important because it poses responsibility on state parties and ensures the multilateralism at work and of the value of collective action to address a pressing humanitarian problem.

Highlights on Open discussion:

- Mr. Ayman Sourour, Director of PROTECTION, ICBL, Egypt intervened with a remark that Ottawa Convention is considered a humanitarian convention not a disarmament convention.

3. Presentation on the Jordanian Experience – Demining in Jordan, Brigadier Falah Ma'aitah, Director of the Jordanian Royal Corps of Engineers

Brig. Ma'aitah overviewed the Jordanian experience in de-mining stating that Jordan through the Hashemite intelligent leadership has always been a strong advocate of the Ottawa Agreement starting from the late King Hussein when he issued his orders to sign and ratify the treaty. In the same momentum, King Abdullah II is backing up the continuous Jordanian efforts aiming at persuading other countries to join this agreement and to abide to its articles.

The presentation was very informative giving statistics of the size of problem in Jordan for landmines and residuals of UXO that Jordan planted in the sixties for defense reasons and against infiltration. However, no new minefields have been laid since 1975. It informed the audience of the casualties and victims among civilians and militants Jordan. In addition to that, it mentioned the impediments that the issue laid among economic and human development. In 1993, Jordan through Royal Engineers Forces has launched the Jordan Mine Action funded by sole Jordanian sources achieving great achievements in limiting the problem, a decreasing the number of casualties and continuing the demining processes through available techniques.

Also, since 1996, foreign donors have started assisting Jordan in its demining processes. Moreover, Jordan started to accomplish its commitments to Ottawa Convention for stockpile destruction in 2003.

Furthermore, in 2002, King Abdullah II commissioned by royal decree, a new civilian demining organization, the National Demining and Rehabilitation Committee (NCDR). Other Convention's commitments were carried out also like rehabilitation processes for casualties and raising demining awareness. The presentation then overviewed the Jordanian demining challenges, amongst all the lack of modern technical equipment towards accelerating the demining process in order to stem this phenomenon from roots.

Open Discussion: Highlights

Comments and Questions:

- Ayman Sourour, Director of PROTECTION, (ICBL), Egypt: remarked that the use of landmines from a military point of view and the feedback was that landmines are no longer useful for military purposes.
- Yaseen Majali, (NCDR), Jordan: remarked that there is a cooperation agreement between the UNDP and the Ministry of planning benefited by NCDR to support its projects in building national capacities.
- Col. Ismail Awad, Yemeni representative: asked about the UN contribution to demining processes in Jordan where it was understood that UN contributes few modest funds and in other fields of assistance rather than funding like raising awareness programmes.
- Mr. Kadhim Al Auraydhi, from the Embassy of Bahrain in Jordan: asked about the regional coordination between the MENA region and the UN on landmines
- Major Gen. Mahohamed Ofasy, Kuwaiti representative: asked about the landmines maps in Jordan
- Ghassan Shahrou, ICBL, Syria: asked about any community participation in the demining process in Jordan

Replies and feedback:

- Regarding the UN financial contribution, Brig. Blagden from the UK clarified that the UN lack financial resources due to states not fulfilling their commitments
- Regarding the cooperation with the UN and among MENA countries: the answer was from Brig. Falah Ma'aitah that there exists limited cooperation with the UN but no real coordination or cooperation between the MENA region countries on the issue.
- Regarding the landmines maps in Jordan: Brig. Falah Ma'aitah answered that Jordan has clear maps for its affected areas but the challenge lies in the demining where the high temperature climate and soil and water movements impede demining process.
- Brig. Falah Ma'aitah answered that Royal Engineers Corps in Jordan conducted solely the demining program in Jordan but now thinking of involving other stake holders like university students, media, NGOs and ICRC.

4. Study on Historical Uses of Anti-personnel Mines by Brigadier (Ret'd)- Anti-personnel Landmines- Friend or Foe, Paddy Blagden, Consultant from the United Kingdom

In his presentation, Brig. Blagden overviewed the historical use of antipersonnel mines, presented assessment of the military value and effectiveness of AP mine in combat or as a necessary defense weapon (if this exists) and overviewed the after-effects of AP mines on civilians.

The presentation clarified that armies use AP mines because they are cheap and a rather high scare factor and flexible in the same time. However, they are not as effective as they might appear, are useless as barriers against infiltration and could easily be ignored by determined armies and they could be tactically constricting.

From his experience, Brig. Blagden said that there are few examples of accurate minefield recording or mapping and few examples of long-lasting minefields fencing or marking, few examples of honest reporting and nor record of complete removal by armies. In addition to that, in emergency, almost all armies leave uncleared mines behind them.

Brig. Blagden suggested alternatives to be used for defense purposes instead of AP mines like changing in the military tactics or more use of traditional non-lethal delaying elements

5. Military Operations without AP landmines, by Gen. (Ret'd) Maurice Baril, former Canadian Chief of the Defence Staff and Special Advisor to Canada's Ambassador for Mine Action

In 1997, as Commander of the Canadian Army, General Maurice Baril, took decision, based on his military experience, his values, military ethics and his responsibilities vis-à-vis the security of Canada and the welfare of military that AP mines would not to be used anymore by the Canadian Army in any circumstances. Furthermore, General Baril took the decision to destroy the Canadian operational stock of AP mines. Upon these experiences and many others, General Baril was very much involved in discussion and decision-making processes during the International Campaign to ban AP Mines leading to the Ottawa Convention.

The study stated that AP landmines are used for defensive and offensive purposes. The study showed that the overall military purposes of using AP landmine in delaying the enemy or protecting own army or securing borders or military bases are no more feasible or valid. The presentation then suggested military substitutions without AP landmines like covering the area with observations, using obstacles, ambushes, early warning mechanisms, light including illumination and night vision devices.

Open Discussion: Highlights

Comments and Questions

- Ayman Sourour, PROTECTION, ICBL, Egypt: remarked that ensuring the borders is a pretext used by MENA region countries to justify their use of AP landmines. Also, he added another note that non-party states use the stockpile of AP landmines in other countries that are not state party in the convention.
- Major Gen. Fareez Galyah, the Syrian representative: remarked that Syria called for clearing MENA countries from mass destruction weapons including landmines, but Israel use AP landmines vastly in occupied territories in Syria and Lebanon.
- Colonel Juma'a Al-Jnaibi, UAE representative: How can Canadian Army in operations in a country deal with landmines in a non state signatory of the Ottawa Convention.
- Ambassador Stingh, ICBL: India asked about Anti Tank (AT) landmines that they are no prohibited by the Convention.
- Lt. Col. Ahmad Ali, Kuwaiti representative: asked if there exists any agreement that suggests using other military solutions without landmines.
- Brig. Falah Ma'aitah: asked Brig. Baril of how could Canada convince other countries to sign the convention.
- Yaseen Al Majali, NCDR, Jordan: asked Brig. Baril about the chances of putting into effect a study that suggests and implements using other military solutions without AP landmines.

Replies and feedback:

- General Maurice Baril answered that Canadian soldiers are aware of restrictions and commitments of the Canadian government in treaties and conventions.
- Brig. Balgden answered Ambassador Stingh that anti tank landmines being not prohibited by the Ottawa convention doesn't mean that military forces can use them.
- Brig. Falah Ma'aitah answered the Kuwaiti participant about the existence of any agreement suggesting other solutions rather than APL that there are many military solutions without using AP landmines which are remote sensors, electronic fences, electronic barriers and electric wires.
- Brig. Baril answered Brig. Ma'aitah that countries of non-state parties could take decisions of signing if they are convinced of using other solutions than AP landmines; for example the usage of early warning system would do the aim.
- Brig. Blagden's answer on Al Majali question on any study suggesting using other solutions than AP Landmines saying that it's a matter of faith and effort by

the country itself to believe that there are many military choices rather than AP landmines.

6. Panel Discussions for participant countries positions' vis-à-vis the Ottawa Convention

The Qatari delegate:

Qatar is a member party of the Ottawa Convention. It joined the Convention in 1997 and ratified it in 1998. Internally, Qatar is not affected with the AP landmines. Also, Qatar has no stockpiles of AP landmines. Internationally, Qatar, encourages non state parties to join the Convention; Qatar is committed to the convention; also, Qatar participates periodically in meetings and conferences related to the Convention..

Qatar provides donations for rehabilitation projects for state parties of the Convention that are affected with AP Landmines.

The Yemeni delegate:

Being a Conventions' state party, Yemen carried out a national strategy by the government to demine and dispose UXO in order to fully implement Conventions' articles. These commitments involved capacity building of personnel involved in demining task force, raising awareness to establish societal culture of combating landmines and coordinating between governmental and non-governmental organizations in this issue.

Yemen is seeking also to receive foreign funds in order to promote the role of the national Yemeni Demining Centre. Moreover, Yemen issued legislations that ban the production, possession, use, transfer and trade of the AP landmines. It seeks also to coordinate with Arab and international governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to exchange views and strengthen dialogue among parties towards full implementation of the Convention.

The Kuwaiti Delegate

Kuwait was affected by AP Landmines by the Iraqi invasion in 1990 which was responsible of planting 1 million landmines of which 70% are AP landmines responsible of killing large number Kuwaitis greater than the number killed during the Iraqi invasion. After the liberation, Kuwait succeeded in clearing the minefields and it reached to a point of disposing the greatest number of mines in its lands by its own funds.

Kuwait is reluctant to join the Ottawa Convention due to the political unrest the region still facing. However, Kuwait supports all efforts in banning AP landmines and encourages all international multilateral efforts in this context.

The Libyan Delegate

Libya encourages international agreement towards addressing human loses of landmines and remained explosive materials as it is one of the countries that had been affected by 20 million of landmines and UXO since the Second World War being a country of battlefield. However, Libya didn't join the Convention due to: the convention neglected the past of many underdeveloped countries affected by

landmines of the II World War and dealt with future procedures; lays responsibility on state parties to demine it minefields planted in their lands without laying responsibility on the countries originally responsible for planting these mines; and the Convention has not considered military substitutes without landmines that could secure thousands of kilometers of land borders in large area countries like Libya.

Libya thinks that there is quite insisting need to develop Ottawa Convention in order to address the phenomenon of AP landmines upon the needs of all countries and to take into consideration the responsibility of countries responsible of mines plantation.

The Omani Delegate

Despite Oman, not being a state party in the Ottawa Convention, it encourages solving international and regional problems and conflicts though peaceful means. Moreover, Oman is not by any means dealing with the production, trade, transfer or use of AP landmines. Oman's situation of the Convention is similar to other Gulf States, which is the reluctance to join the Convention upon political unrest facing the region.

The Syrian Delegate:

Syria has not yet joined the Convention due to continuous Israeli aggression and threat on Syria and due to the Israeli plantation of hundreds of thousands of AP landmines in the Syrian and Lebanese occupied territories. Even, after the Israeli retreat from Southern Lebanon, Israeli refused to provide maps for its landmines that result in victimizing many Syrians and Lebanese.

Syria is currently participating upon request from Lebanese government, in clearing process of Southern Lebanon landmines. Briefly, Syria is ready to join the convention if Israel would accede and sign the Convention.

The UAE'S Delegate:

UAE is not a state member of the Convention in the same status of other Gulf countries. However, UAE is considered one of main donor countries in demining projects carried out in Arab countries affected by AP landmines.

UAE currently funds demining projects in Southern Lebanon, under the name: Emirate Solidarity Operation for Demining in Southern Lebanon. This project contributed at large in safety and security of the Lebanese community in Southern Lebanon and allowed for utilizing the lands in agriculture.

The Saudi Delegate

KSA puts great hopes on international and regional activities related to human issues including this Seminar that helped in introducing the Ottawa convention. The Saudi participation will benefit from views and perspectives in relation to the Convention, which will help better understanding of the Ottawa Convention. The KSA has contributed in supporting technically and financially affected countries from the MENA region in order to limit its devastating impacts on innocent people.

VIII. **Highlights on the Seminar's Presentations in the Third Day:**
Main theme: The Ottawa Convention as a Framework to Address the Humanitarian Challenge Posed by Anti-personnel Mines

1. The Scope of the Mine/UXO in the MENA Region Challenges and Solutions, Mr. Ayman Sorour, Executive Director for PROTECTION, ICBL, Egypt

The existence of landmines in the MENA region is due to many international, regional and internal wars and conflicts. The results of which: 15 Arab countries to be affected by landmines, among them four state members in the Ottawa Convention (Algeria, Jordan, Tunisia and Yemen) and other have not joined yet. Also, reports clarify that there are five Arab countries that are not affected by landmines: Bahrain, Qatar (two member signatory states), UAE, KSA and Morocco.

Mr. Sorour gave statistics and numbers that reflected the status at large briefing that there are between 55 –73 million landmines and other war residues in the Arab region that kill 600 victims annually the majority of them children under 18.

He states the challenges that surround the Ottawa Convention based upon Arab perspectives inclusive of that: the Convention is exclusive on AP landmines but doesn't refer to AT mines; it addresses the AP landmines from a humanitarian perspective ignoring the combating landmines; the Convention focuses also on rehabilitation programmes that request lots of funds mostly unavailable in the Arab region not to mention the high cost of clearing/demining programs.

He then states some suggested solutions amongst: the existence of real political desire to join the Convention and benefit from international assistance and coordination, to establish specialized national committees for action in the MENA states affected by AP landmines and to provide funds by donor countries to affected countries.

2. Mine Action: The International Response to the Landmine Problem, by Ambassador Martin Dahinden, Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

The Ottawa Convention, not only prohibits the use, stockpile, production and transfer of AP mines, but also introduces mine action to signatory states. The objective of mine action is to reduce the risk from landmines to a level where people can live safely and where economic, social and health development can occur free from the constraints of landmines contamination of cleared lands.

In fact, the Ottawa Conventions has four components: demining, mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction and advocacy.

3. The Provision of International Cooperation and Assistance: A Presentation on Article 6 of the Convention, Ambassador John Holmes, Ambassador of Canada to Jordan

Article 6 states that each state party has to receive donation from other state parties. As the mine action requests funds, the significance of financial resources is a real factor towards implementing all Convention's commitments.

Ambassador Holmes states that the Convention has achieved tangible outcomes in decreasing the mine production, clearance of vast areas of mine fields, awareness raising and mine risk education have been promoted and the destruction of stockpiles.

Holmes added that Canada funded Jordan and Yemen in demining activities and announced the Canadian contribution to rehabilitation programs in Jordan through UNDP.

4. Cooperation and Assistance to Achieve the Convention's aims, Ms. Julia Taft, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Crisis prevention and Recovery

UNDP is committed to the Convention due to the fact that AP landmines impede the human and economic development especially among women and children. It looks to the problem from a developmental perspective.

Ms. Taft states that UNDP has been already assisting demining projects in Syria and Yemen. She encourages partnership between countries themselves, and between countries and international governmental and non- governmental organizations.

Open Discussion: Highlights

Comments and Questions:

- Ghassan Shahrour, ICBL, from Syria: remarked that in Mr. Sorour's presentation, there were valuable and unique statistics and numbers that reflect the AP landmines situation in the MENA countries.
- Col. Juma Al-Jnaibi, UAE representative: commented that there are many countries in the Arab region that are not signatory members inclusive Israel. KSA delegate: remarked that the most important component of the Convention lies in the production. If production were prohibited, priorities would be given to mine action.
- Yaseen Majali, NCDR, Jordan: remarked that Arab countries could fund some of their demining projects. Jordan for example began clearing processes by his own resources.
- Kuwaiti representative: urged the Arab countries to join the Convention and to end all disputes and reluctance of not to join.
- General Baril: remarked that Canada is communicating with some countries to join in the Convention like Pakistan.

- Ghassan Shahrour, ICBL, Syria: remarked again that countries could ask for compensation from countries responsible on planting landmines in its territories.
- Qatari representative: stated that there is a responsibility on non- signatory countries to join, so he was wondering why these countries are delaying their efforts in acceding to the convention.

Replies and Feedback:

- Mr. Sorour states feedbacks towards many previous remarks that efforts are made by ICBL to convince all MENA countries without exception in order to urge them into acceding and signing.

He also urges non-signatory countries to communicate through diplomatic relations and to accelerate their efforts in joining the Convention because it has various positive impacts on social and economic aspects where each member country could benefit from.

5. The Road to the Review Conference: Update on Preparations, Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, Austrian Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva and president-Designate of the Convention's First Review Conference

He stated that Nairobi Conference, supported by the UN-System, from 2-3 Dec. 2004 will be the first review of the Convention based upon Article 12 of the Ottawa Convention where all state parties would attend and it would be a good opportunity because:

- It encourages State parties on a regional basis to identify their challenges and the actions taken to fulfill their commitments like their responsibilities in demining and assisting victims.
- It brings landmine issue back into the public consciousness
- It encourages leaders at highest level to participate
- It urges those states that have not yet joined to accede to the Convention.

He added that workshops and seminars are taking place everywhere towards Nairobi Summit, including the Amman Seminar. He clarified also the achievements of the Convention so far which are: the rareness in use, production and transfer of AP mines, 31 million stockpiles mines have been destroyed, major processes have been made in clearing mined areas and the decrease in mine victims. However, more yet to be done, e.g. supporting rehabilitation programmes and sustaining the elimination of anti-personnel mines in the agenda of world leaders.

6. An overview of expectations, Ms. Habbouba Aoun, landmine Resource Centre for Lebanon, University of Balamand, Beirut and Representative of ICBL

Ms. Aoun also overviewed Nairobi's summit expectations especially the Arab perspective of them. She suggested that Arab countries would prepare an Arab

document to be presented at Nairobi summit. She hopes also that the summit would be a good chance for Arab states to resolve the problem of landmines.

She urges Arab countries to work harder on national and regional action plans and to establish networks and partnerships also in order to polarize funds fro demining and rehabilitation programs. Moreover, she encourages non- signatory Arab states to join the Convention.

Open Discussion: Highlights

Comments and Questions:

- Yassin Al Majali, NCDR, Jordan: hoped that Nairobi summit would output a framework for action. Another remark is that some countries use AP landmines stockpiles for training purposes.

Replies and Feedback:

- The feedback was provided by Amb. Petritsch and Brig. Blagden form the UK that there are now highly developing methods used in demining training and personnel capacity building without using mines stockpiles.

IX. Field Visit:

In the second day of the Seminar, participants took part in a visit to the mined areas (in the Jordan Valley and in the area of Baqoura) being cleared by Jordan's Royal Engineers Corps. During this visit, the Demining project's leader demonstrated a presentation on the techniques utilized in demining operations in landmines fields.

Furthermore, the visit highlighted the great challenges facing the Jordanian deminers on a daily basis related to country topography.

Also, the visit provided a demonstration of the excellent work of the Jordanians sparing no effort in clearing mines; therefore meeting the Convention's commitments.

Finally, participants were given an idea about equipment used in demining through an exhibition carried out for this purpose.

X. Recommendations by Participants:

The Seminar's participants highly valued the professional work of the organized committee and the excellent organization and logistics of the seminar. They expressed also their deep appreciation and gratitude to the co-hosts for participating in such excellent activity and such significant theme.

Furthermore, participants stated some recommendations on co-hosts, hoping to be taken into consideration. These were as follows:

- 1- To urge co-hosts to continue holding similar activities that would contribute in raising awareness for global current issues and in addressing international problems that threaten international peace and security;
- 2- To advise co-hosts to translate the proceedings (papers and reports) of the seminar in both languages, Arabic and English, so as to maximize the benefit of the seminar in the region and elsewhere, so as hard and soft copies (through our website) will be available for all to read and know about;
- 3- To involve larger number of participations from other countries, in particular, donor countries and great powers;
- 4- More concentration must be given to countries responsible for the production of landmines in order to hold the responsibility for the production of landmines and to fund demining projects.
- 5- Participants requested that the Ottawa Convention has to consider establishing penal system for countries breaking their commitments to the Convention;
- 6- They also recommended that more discussions must be considered in light of the political aspects of the Ottawa Convention;
- 7- To urge great powers to join the Convention and to hold their international responsibility.

XI. Overall Impression and Closing Remarks:

At the end of the seminar, the Co-Hosts prepared a draft summary that was provided to all participants. The Workshop's participants were granted ten days to check the draft summary and comment on so as to be put in its final copy.

The summary was sent and publicized to the media sources, so as the Seminar's information and outcomes would be available for the public to benefit and learn from. A copy of this summary will be attached as appendix in this report.

Co-hosts expressed the belief that the Seminar was an important step contributing to mutual confidence among countries in the region. They noted the commitment of States Parties to the Convention in the Middle East to implement the Convention, and welcomed the will of States not parties in the region to engage in a dialogue on addressing the threats posed by AP mine to peace and security.

Moreover, the Co-Hosts invited these states to take necessary steps towards the acceptance of the Convention.

Finally, the Co-Hosts reiterated the call for all States and relevant organizations to participate at the highest possible level in the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free world.

Before closing the session, Dr. Odibat, RHSC Director, conveyed his sincere thanks for the experts, participants, observers and chairmen sessions for their commitment and active participation. Dr. Odibat, once again, emphasized his thanks to: the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and in particular, the Mine Action Team including Ms. Karen Mollica, who co-hosted and funded the Amman Seminar, the Canadian Embassy in Amman represented by H.E. John Holmes and the Embassy's professional Staff, and in particular, Mr. Mark Glauser and Mrs. Josephine Mushahwar, the Jordanian government for supporting the Ottawa Convention, Minister Samir Habashneh, Minister of Interior of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Minister's Secretary General Mr. Zuhdi Al Hassan, the Jordan's Royal Engineers Corps for their efforts in organizing the trip to the cleared mine fields in Jordan and his colleagues at the RHSC and the JID.