REGIONAL PROFILE
INTERNATIONAL BORDER ECUADOR-PERU

Dimensions of the Problem

During a brief conflict between Peru and Ecuador in 1995 resulting from a longstanding border dispute, an extensive area of their common international border was mined. Six Ecuadorian Provinces (El Oro, Loja, Morona Santiago, Zamora Chinchipe, Orellana and Pastaza) and four Peruvian Departments (Tumbes, Piura, Cajamarca, and Amazonas) were affected. The most heavily-mined section of the border is the area known as the “Cordillera del Condor,” which was at the center of the border conflict.

The completion of impact surveys in most of the Ecuadorian mine-affected areas indicate there are some 10,910 mines in Ecuadorian territory. Reports on dangerous areas prepared by the Peruvian National Demining Authority indicate that 29,084 mines were planted in the border area with Ecuador. Of these totals, Ecuador estimates that 5,800 mines remain in the border area, while Peru indicates that the number of mines still planted amount to 27,911 located in the Cordillera del Condor region.

Subsequent to the signing of the Peace Accord between Ecuador and Peru on October 26, 1998, demining activities began in the border area. In 2003 both countries conducted joint demining operations in the El Oro-Tumbes, and Loja-Piura sectors.

The remaining mines in both countries are located in areas with different population densities. For example, in the eastern sector known as Cordillera del Condor, the population is sparse but antipersonnel mines threaten the indigenous communities especially because they depend on hunting, fishing, and subsistence farming. By contrast, on Peru’s northern border, along the Ecuadorian Oro and Loja Provinces, a much larger population is at risk. According to Peruvian registers landmines have caused more than 300 military, civilian and police casualties. Likewise, Ecuador has recorded 69 mine victims, of which 50 are members of the armed forces and 19 are civilians.

Since October 2006, Ecuadorian and Peruvian demining units have conducted simultaneous, parallel operations along their common border in the Cordillera del Condor region in the vicinity of the Shirumsa - Chiqueiza border marker.

The 2011 project proposals for Ecuador and Peru include detection, removal and destruction of 4,991 antipersonnel mines and 28 antitank mines, with the objective to restore the security of the inhabitants that live and transit in affected areas in both countries. Also, with the technical research support of the Humanitarian Demining Program of the United States, mechanical demining equipment will be integrated into mine action operations in Ecuador’s southern border area of Rio Chira/Rio Catamayo. The clearance of this sector is necessary for the safety of the population as well as for development of tourism and trade, hence contributing to the area’s economic development. With Peruvian authorities
AICMA plans for a comprehensive victim assistance project that includes locating the victims, providing for a medical diagnosis, medical rehabilitation, provision of prostheses, psychological assistance, and vocational training to facilitate social reinsertion.

**National Mine Action Structures**

The National Demining Center of Ecuador (CENDESMI) was established in September 1999, and the Peruvian Mine Action Coordination Center (CONTRAMINAS), was formed in December 2002. CENDESMI and CONTRAMINAS are the national authorities responsible for the coordination and execution of mine action activities in their respective countries.

Ecuador and Peru carry out their mine action responsibilities through their respective mine action centers. The OAS Program for Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines (OAS-AICMA) provides technical, logistical and financial assistance.

CENDESMI and CONTRAMINAS have increased contacts and mutual collaboration since 2003, working jointly to complete technical surveys in the Rio Zarumilla area and in 2006 in the Rio Chira/Catamayo sector and coordinated operations in the Cordillera del Condor region. The OAS AICMA Coordinator for Ecuador and Peru facilitates bilateral coordination.

Peruvian and Ecuadorian demining unit commanders have established mechanisms for Memoranda of Understanding to strengthen cooperation on demining activities. A signed memorandum establishes specific areas for clearance, provided for periodic information...
exchanges, defined a combined medical evacuation and treatment plan, approved exchange of equipment, joint training, working meetings between each country’s units, and provided for joint terrain reconnaissance. Moreover, both countries agreed to carry out joint fundraising for international cooperation. Additionally the national demining authorities have institutionalized their regular meetings between CONTRAMINAS and CENDESMI. These activities are coordinated in the annual meeting called 2+2, in which the Mine Action National Authorities, the Ministries of Defense, and Foreign Affairs personnel of both countries participate.

The OAS Mine Action Program

In 2001, the governments of Ecuador and Peru signed separate agreements with the OAS to participate in the design and execution of a comprehensive program against antipersonnel mines and to solicit international cooperation. Shortly after signing the agreements, the OAS established AICMA Program offices in Quito and Lima to coordinate efforts in favor of mine clearance operations.

The AICMA program assists the demining national authorities, CONTRAMINAS and CENDESMI, to strengthen national institutional and technical capacities seeking to return mine affected areas to productive use, while providing comprehensive assistance to surviving mine victims, and conducting mine risk education campaigns. AICMA also coordinates financial support with international donors and supports both countries in obtaining additional resources to ensure adequate financing to support these objectives.

Since 2003 the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) has responded to OAS requests for support in demining operations in both countries with international monitors. The IADB provides a team of international monitors who make up the Mission for Assistance in Removal of Mines in South America (MARMINAS). MARMINAS carries out its functions under AICMA’s operational control and provides technical advice to AICMA. The monitors work directly with Peruvian and Ecuadorian demining units along the border from the current base of operations located in Morona Santiago province, Ecuador.

National Goals

The national mine action goals of Ecuador and Peru are stipulated by their respective National Demining Plans, highlighting those activities which must be accomplished in order to fulfill commitments as signatories of the Ottawa Convention.

In March, 2008, Peru and Ecuador requested to the President of the Eighth Conference of State Parties, and of the Coordination Committee of the Ottawa Convention the extension of the deadline to complete the destruction of antipersonnel mines according to Article 5 of the Convention. In November of 2008 this request was granted for each of the two countries, during the IX Meeting of Member States. One of the key goals of both national plans is to complete clearance of all known mined areas by 2017. To this extent both countries
are committed to increment the number of deminers, projecting other measures such as fundraising and equipment.

Mine-risk education campaigns targeting mine affected communities are to accompany these mine clearance efforts in order to decrease the risk of accidents and promote mine safe behavior among the population. An additional goal of mine-risk education programs is to identify all landmine survivors, regardless of gender, in order to provide them with the required physical and psychological rehabilitation services as well as seeing to their successful reintegration as productive members in their respective communities.

**International Donors and Financing**

Since the establishment of the AICMA Program in Ecuador and Peru, financial assistance has been provided by the governments of Belgium, Canada, the European Union, Italy, Japan, Norway, Spain, and the United States. The governments of China, Korea, and the United States have provided bilateral assistance for Peru; while China, Japan, and Germany provided bilateral assistance for Ecuador.

**Accomplishments**

In Peru, demining operations in the International Canal of Zarumilla and in the departments of Tumbes and Piura were completed in 2003. Since the last quarter of 2006, humanitarian demining operations have been carried out in the Chiqueiza sector, in the Amazonas department.

In Ecuador, humanitarian demining operations have been supported in the provinces of El Oro, Loja, and Morona Santiago, in the vicinity of the army outpost at Teniente Ortiz, Tigre Camp (subsector of Tte. Ortiz) and Soldado Monge.

Likewise, mine risk education campaigns have been conducted in communities in the provinces of El Oro, Loja, and Morona Santiago. Since the programs inception, physical and psychological rehabilitation assistance has been provided to landmine survivors.

Joint operations between humanitarian demining units of the Ecuadorian and Peruvian armies have completed the clearance or marking of all minefields on the border between the Ecuadorian provinces of El Oro and Loja and the Peruvian departments of Tumbes and Piura. Remaining minefields in that region have been surveyed and marked, but not all cleared, because of the limitations of available clearance technologies. Final clearance of these areas will be addressed as specialized mechanical equipment becomes available. Since the middle of 2006, joint humanitarian demining operations have been concentrated in the Cordillera del Condor region, in accordance with the peace treaty signed between the two nations in 1998.

In Lima, Peru as in Quito, Ecuador, Seminars on National Standards were developed with the co-sponsorship of the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining and
AICMA-OAS. This seminar permitted analyses of advantages of the demining unit structure that would prove most versatile. The main objectives were ensure results in demining operations, and continue safe procedures in safe work areas in order to comply with timeline extensions granted.

An important achievement by the middle of 2010 is that there have been no accidents among the civilian population caused by antipersonnel mines in the border areas of the Cordillera del Condor and the Rio Chira/Catamayo. This achievement is thanks to the frequency and effectiveness of mine risk education campaigns and to the maintenance of the markings and signs in fields awaiting the application of mechanical solutions. However, the growth and movement of the population presents a constant challenge to the efforts of ensuring the safety of the population, and keeping accidents from occurring.

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