



May 09, 2006

Chairman Jim Kolbe
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations
U.S. Capitol, Room HB-26
Washington, DC 20515-6021

STEERING
COMMITTEE

Re: Humanitarian Demining

COORDINATOR

Dear Chairman Kolbe,

Friends Committee on
National Legislation
245 2nd Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-547-6000
Fax: 202-547-6019
landmines@fcnl.org
www.banminesusa.org

We urge you to show Congress' support for humanitarian demining and fund the State Department (NADR) portion of the demining budget at \$70 million.

When the Bush administration announced a new United States policy on landmines in February 2004, it pledged to increase the funds available to support the State Department's portion of the US Humanitarian Mine Action Program by an additional 50% over FY03 baseline levels. The administration's International Affairs (Function 150) Budget Request, however, does not meet this commitment made in 2004. At \$64.3 million, the administration's request falls short. Meeting the increase of 50% would raise the level to about \$70 million per a year. When the president fails to live up to his pledge, the Congress should step in and act.

Evangelical Lutheran
Church In America
202-783-7507

Physicians for
Human Rights
617-301-4200

Human Rights Watch
202-612-4321

Jesuit Refugee
Service/USA
202-462-0400

Landmine Survivors
Network
202-464-0007

Humanitarian demining is a critical first step for reconstruction of post-conflict countries. The U.S. government's humanitarian mine action program assists countries in relieving human suffering and in developing an indigenous mine action capability. Several countries crafted strategic demining plans years ago as part of their reconstruction and development efforts. Many, however, are at risk of not meeting these strategic demining commitments. By helping to remove lingering remnants of war, US assistance allows refugees to return home, land to be used for farming, and critical infrastructure to be rebuilt.

Center for International
Rehabilitation
312-926-0030

Roots of Peace
415-455-8884

The U.S. has consistently been the world's strongest supporter of humanitarian mine action. Providing more than \$1 billion in mine-related foreign assistance since 1993, its efforts to help countries clear landmines and provide aid to survivors is commendable. We urge Congress to maintain U.S. leadership in this area and show support for strategic demining plans by fulfilling the administration's pledge and providing \$70 million to this vital life-saving program.

Save the Children
Federation USA
202-293-4170

Sincerely,

United Methodist Church
General Board
of Church Society
202-488-5600

Adopt-A-Minefield, UNA-USA
212-907-1305

Scott Stedjan
USCBL Coordinator

U.S. Conference
of Catholic Bishops
Office of International
Justice and Peace
202-541-3199

cc: members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations

U.S. Fund for UNICEF
202-296-4242

Vietnam Veterans of
America Foundation
202-483-9222