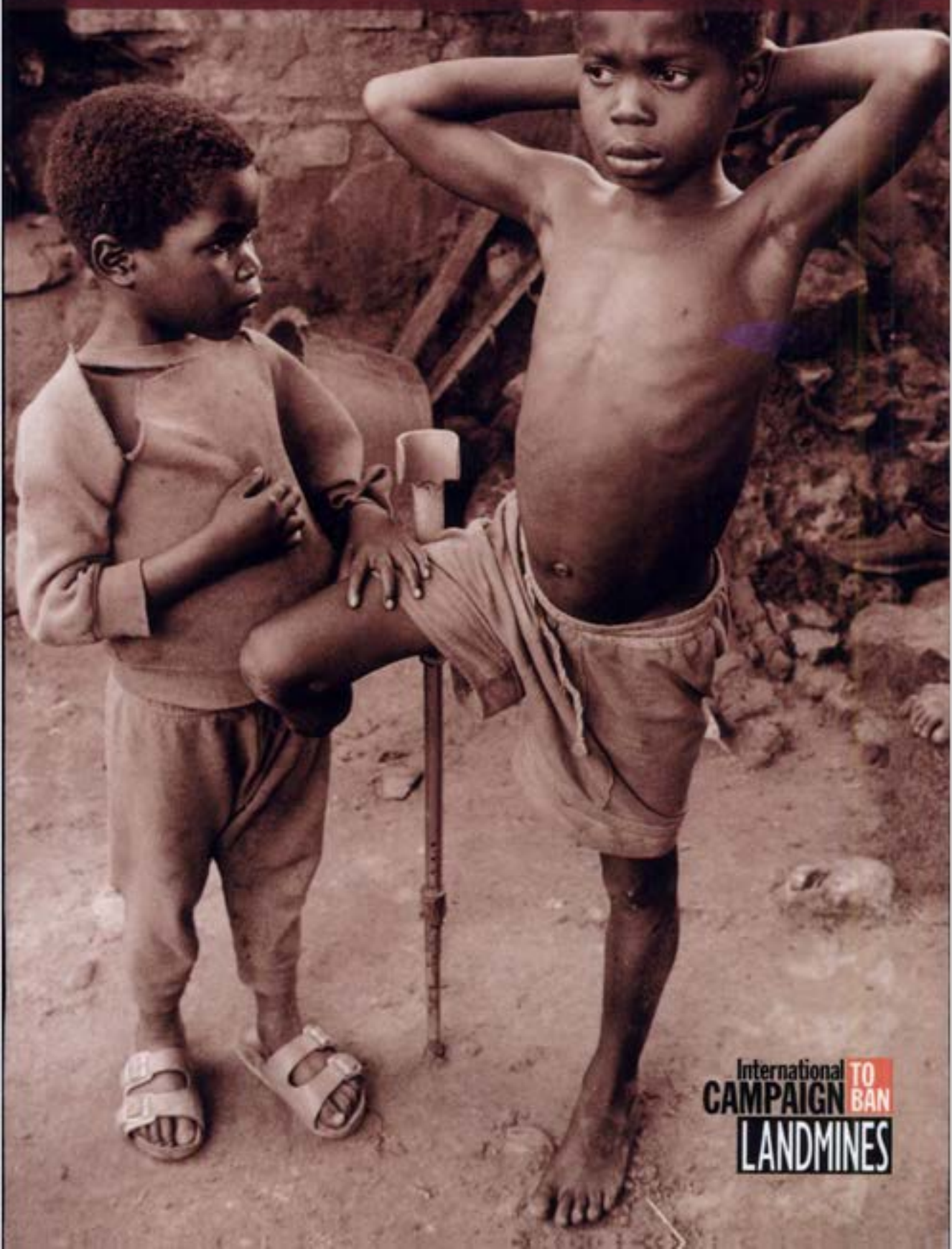


Landmine Monitor **Report**

Toward a Mine-Free World

2002



International **TO BAN**
CAMPAIGN
LANDMINES

LANDMINE MONITOR REPORT 2002

Toward a Mine-Free World

International Campaign to Ban Landmines

Landmine Monitor Core Group:

**Human Rights Watch · Handicap International Belgium ·
Kenya Coalition Against Landmines · Mines Action Canada ·
Norwegian People's Aid**

This One



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HI is concerned that, rather than seeking to establish sustainable programs of rehabilitation in Kosovo, some organizations have sought to provide assistance through transporting those requiring rehabilitation or prosthetics to other countries. HI claims that such approaches are more expensive than local solutions, often of limited benefit for the intended beneficiary, and work against the reestablishment of an effective and well-funded Kosovo-based rehabilitation capacity for mine survivors.¹⁰⁶

In its exit strategy the MACC acknowledged that "more emphasis will need to be applied to rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives because of the relatively low level of attention given to this aspect of mine action to date."¹⁰⁷ Under new arrangements of the provisional self-government, the Department of Health and Social Welfare has been split into the Ministry of Health, Environment and Spatial Planning, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, which will assume responsibility for the long-term aspects of survivor assistance.¹⁰⁸

Legislation has been introduced in Kosovo, which provides all mine survivors with a small monthly stipend.¹⁰⁹ HandiKos has been instrumental in establishing the Disability Council and the appointment of a Disability Adviser with the Prime Minister's Cabinet and the development of a Comprehensive Disability Policy Framework document, which is currently in the process of validation.¹¹⁰

NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Mine Ban Policy

Nagorno-Karabakh is an autonomous region in the South Caucasus. In 1988 it voted to secede from Azerbaijan and join Armenia, which resulted in armed conflict from 1988-1994. The region declared independence as the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR) on 2 September 1991. The NKR has not been recognized by the United Nations.

While Nagorno-Karabakh political and military leaders indicate they are supportive of a global landmine ban, they indicate they would not join the Mine Ban Treaty even if eligible to do so. The NKR Minister of Foreign Affairs Naira Melkounian said Nagorno-Karabakh "will be able to join it only after the establishment of a peace treaty with Azerbaijan."¹ The National Assembly of NKR has never discussed the issue of banning landmines.²

Production, Transfer, Stockpiling, and Use

Nagorno-Karabakh states that it has not produced, exported, or imported landmines since its declaration of independence in 1991. Landmine Monitor has been told that the mines in stock include PMN-2, POMZ-3, and OZM-72 antipersonnel mines. Landmine Monitor has not received any reports of new use of antipersonnel mines by Nagorno-Karabakh forces in the reporting period.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Driton Ukmata, HI, 15 April 2002. These views were also expressed by other participants at the ITF Workshop on Assistance to Landmine Survivors and Victims in South-Eastern Europe: Defining Strategies for Success, Ig, Slovenia, 1-2 July 2002.

¹⁰⁷ "UNMIK MACC Exit Strategy Discussion Paper," 3 January 2001, p. 13.

¹⁰⁸ "UNMIK Mine Action Programme Annual Report 2001," MACC, paras. 39-43.

¹⁰⁹ The Praxis Group Ltd, "Willing To Listen," 12 February 2002, p. 84.

¹¹⁰ Driton Ukmata, Handicap International Kosovo, presentation at the ITF Workshop, Slovenia, 1 July 2002.

¹ Meeting between Nagorno-Karabakh Committee of ICBL and Minister of Foreign Affairs Naira Melkounian, and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Masis Mailian, 1 and 2 February 2002.

² Correspondence from NKR National Assembly Deputy V. Atanesyan to NK Committee of ICBL, 19 December 2001.

Landmine Problem

Mines were laid by both Azeri and pro-Karabakh forces during the 1988-1994 war.³ HALO Trust (HALO) estimates that there are at least 10,000 mines in this territory in need of urgent attention, plus a further 15,000 on the line of contact; to clear after a peace deal.⁴ Additionally, according to HALO, unexploded ordnance (UXO) is "as great a problem in Nagorno-Karabakh as mines," affecting approximately 167 villages.⁵

Officials state that there may be over 150 million square meters of mined territory in Nagorno-Karabakh. This includes roads, land, and forests that remain to be surveyed for future mine clearance operations.⁶

Much of the mined territory is reportedly agricultural land, with 37 million square meters of arable land and 35 million square meters of pastures affected, according to NKR's Deputy Minister of Agriculture.⁷ Also, 80,000 square meters of vineyards are believed unusable as a result of landmines.⁸

Landmines have also been reported to affect other areas of development. For instance, the discovery of a minefield between the towns of Aghdam and Askeran impeded plans to build a water pipeline to the nearby village of Khmormort. HALO clear the area and work on the pipeline has subsequently started.⁹ According to HALO, aid agencies in Nagorno-Karabakh have restricted their operations "due to fears of mines on or just beside roads" and because of UXO located in and around numerous rural villages.¹⁰

The former head of NKR's Mine Awareness Working Group (MAWG), Mels Hakobjanian, identified the areas of Askeran, Mardakert, Martuni and Hadrout as high-risk. Little is known about other areas. "It's very difficult to figure out where the rest of the mines are," Hakobjanian told an Armenian journalist. "Even around Shushi, which is supposed to be clear, a car was recently blown up by an antitank mine."¹¹

Mine Action Coordination

Mine action in Nagorno-Karabakh is carried out by a number of bodies. The HALO Trust is involved in training and humanitarian demining. The Engineering Service of the Army and the Department of Emergency Situations conduct some basic mine clearance. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) carries out mine risk education.

Coordinating this effort among governmental and NGOs is the government's Special Commission on Mine Issues, and its Working Group on Mine Problems (WGMP). HALO, the ICRC, relevant government ministries, and the Nagorno-Karabakh Committee of the ICBL are all members of the WGMP.¹²

HALO established its own Mine Action Center (MAC) when it returned to Nagorno-Karabakh in early 2000. The MAC compiles information regarding landmines, UXO, and safe routes. It disseminates the information to all those who need it, particularly other NGOs and international organizations working in Nagorno-Karabakh.¹³

³ HALO Trust Website, "The Caucasus: Nagorno-Karabakh," <http://www.halotrust.org/cauc.html#C>, (viewed 19 July 2002).

⁴ Email to Landmine Monitor (HRW) from David Frederick, Caucasus Desk Officer, HALO, 1 August 2002.

⁵ HALO Trust Website, "The Caucasus: Nagorno-Karabakh".

⁶ "Azerbaijani president requests Bush's aid in resolving Nagorno-Karabakh conflict," *Associated Press*, 28 March 2002; Onnik Krikorian, "Clearing the Killing Fields," *Transitions Online*, 20 June 2002.

⁷ Onnik Krikorian, "Clearing the Killing Fields," *Transitions Online*, 20 June 2002.

⁸ *Landmine Monitor Report 2001*, p.973.

⁹ Email from David Frederick, HALO, 1 August 2002.

¹⁰ HALO Trust Website, "The Caucasus: Nagorno-Karabakh."

¹¹ Onnik Krikorian, "Clearing the Killing Fields," *Transitions Online*, 20 June 2002.