



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

[Home](#) » [Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs](#) » [Bureau of Public Affairs](#) » [Bureau of Public Affairs: Press Relations](#) » [Press Releases](#) » [Press Releases: 2012](#) » [Press Releases: January 2012](#) » [US Conventional Weapons Destruction Program in Iraq](#)

## U.S. Conventional Weapons Destruction Program in Iraq

### Media Note

Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC

January 20, 2012

The United States has invested more than \$209 million in Iraq since 2003 toward the clearance and safe disposal of landmines, unexploded ordnance, and excess conventional weapons and munitions. The goals of the U.S. Conventional Weapons Destruction (CWD) Program in Iraq are to protect victims of conflict through innovative Risk Education and Victims Assistance projects; to restore access to land and infrastructure by introducing innovative mechanical technologies and Mine Detection Dogs (MDD); and to promote Iraqi development of its humanitarian mine action capabilities.

### 2011 Accomplishments

During Fiscal Year 2011, the Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs provided \$22 million in Iraq for CWD efforts that:

- Cleared landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) from more than 3.9 million square kilometers of land across Iraq, which has revitalized economic and agricultural development throughout the nation.
- Destroyed more than 50,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance.
- Provided outreach education to more than 30,000 Iraqi men, women and children about potential dangers from landmines or unexploded ordnance in their communities.

U.S.-funded partner initiatives include:

- **Danish Demining Group (DDG).** DDG implemented U.S.-funded clearance operations that returned nearly nine million square meters of land to communities for safe use for agriculture, grazing, infrastructure and development in central and southern Iraq.
- **Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).** With U.S. support and funding, the GICHD is conducting an assessment of Iraq's mine action capabilities and will develop a development plan for Iraqi training and capacity development.
- **Information Management and Mine Action Programs (iMMAP).** With U.S. support, advisors continue to provide operational management, strategic planning, and Victims' Assistance support. iMMAP conducted five workshops, 13 training courses, and trained 146 students in a variety of information management, data collection, and mapping. In

addition, iMMAP also trained 82 rehabilitation technicians to treat thousands of landmine/unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive device (IED) victims.

- **Iraq Mine/UXO Clearance Organization (IMCO) Central/Southern Iraq.** As a result of clearance operations, IMCO returned over 2.5 million square meters of land to local communities. The recent delivery of the MineWolf 370 mechanical machine is expected to accelerate clearance of contaminated or suspect hazardous areas.
- **Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI).** In partnership with IMCO, MLI plans to expand the MDD program in southern Iraq and establish the first rehabilitation/vocational training facility in southern Iraq for survivors of incidents involving landmines and unexploded ordnance.
- **Mines Advisory Group (MAG) Northern and Central CWD.** As a result of minefield and Battle Area Clearance, MAG has returned close to two million square meters of land to local communities for safe use for agriculture and economic development.
- **Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA).** Technical Advisors were provided to the Regional Mine Action Center - South (RMAC-S) to assist the RMAC-S in fulfilling its role as a regulatory body that is able to coordinate, monitor and regulate mine action activities. This project has enabled the RMAC-S to implement a Non-Technical Survey (NTS), which is designed to provide a more accurate picture of the mine/ERW situation in southern Iraq.
- **RONCO Consulting Corporation.** RONCO continued to provide secure transportation and accommodation in the center and south for all U.S-funded conventional weapons destruction partners and local staff.
- **Spirit of Soccer (SoS).** In partnership with other implementing partners, SoS expanded its mine/UXO risk education projects throughout Iraq. The SoS is implementing innovative projects using soccer as a means to promote education and outreach to children regarding risks from landmines and unexploded ordnance.

Despite significant progress, much work remains. An estimated 1,863 square kilometers (719 square miles) of land in Iraq are reported to contain as many as 20 million landmines and millions more pieces of unexploded ordnance, [according to the United Nations](#). As many as 1,670 Iraqi cities, towns and villages remain at risk from explosive hazards. Surveys indicate that agricultural land is particularly at risk for landmines and unexploded ordnance, making clearance an economic necessity for communities to regain their livelihoods as well as a security priority for Iraq's future.

The United States is the world's single largest financial supporter of efforts to clear unexploded ordnance and landmines. Since 1993, the United States has invested in peace and security with more than \$1.9 billion in support toward conventional weapons destruction efforts in 81 countries. To learn more about the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement's CWD programs, visit [www.state.gov/t/pm/wra](http://www.state.gov/t/pm/wra).

PRN: 2012/091

[Back to Top](#)