



For immediate release

New Zealand to fund landmine clearance in Cambodia

Annual Mine Ban Treaty meeting underway in Phnom Penh

(Phnom Penh: 2 December 2011) The New Zealand Campaign Against Landmines (CALM) welcomes the New Zealand government's decision to provide US \$1.05 million (NZD \$1.3 million) to clear landmines in north-west Cambodia. New Zealand announced the funding contribution today in Phnom Penh during an annual meeting of state parties to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

"This is a significant and most welcome contribution of funds that will save lives," said Mary Wareham, CALM Coordinator, who is attending the Phnom Penh meeting. "It sends a strong message that New Zealand is committed to matching its political support for the eradication of this weapon with practical financing."

The head of the disarmament division of New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dr. Joan Mosley, announced the contribution during the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties of the Mine Ban Treaty, a major diplomatic meeting that is being held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from 27 November until 2 December. New Zealand's demining contribution is part of a larger contribution of US \$2.5 million (NZ \$3.27 million) for a three-year agricultural development project in heavily mine-affected Odtar Meanchey province. The mine clearance funded by New Zealand will be conducted by the Halo Trust, a British demining organization.

Cambodia is one of the most mine-affected countries in the world. According to Landmine Monitor, there are approximately 44,000 survivors of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the country. An extensive mine action program established in 1992 has resulted in a dramatic decline in the number of new mine victims, but lives continue to be lost. There were at least 286 Cambodian mine, ERW, and cluster munition remnants casualties in 2010.

Representatives from approximately 100 countries, including New Zealand, are attending the Mine Ban Treaty's Eleventh Meeting of States Parties in Phnom Penh. A total of 158 countries have joined the Treaty, most recently South Sudan on 11 November 2011. The Mine Ban Treaty comprehensively prohibits antipersonnel mines and requires their clearance and assistance to victims. The meeting is reviewing a range of treaty compliance issues, including the threat posed to the emerging norm by new landmine use in countries including Israel, Libya, and Myanmar (Burma).

CALM is providing a donation of US \$1,200 to Jesuit Service Cambodia that will be used for the construction of accessible housing for landmine survivors and mobility devices such as wheelchairs. The donation includes funds raised by an online Trade Me auction of bags made from local materials by women landmine survivors in Kandal Province, Cambodia.

In October 2011, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. McCully, confirmed that New Zealand is providing a total of \$2.8 million for mine clearance project in the West

Bank (Occupied Palestinian Territories). McCully also confirmed that a long-standing contribution of New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) military personnel serving in the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in New York was terminated in 2011.

CALM is a long-standing member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and is a sister campaign to the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition (ANZCMC). Both CALM and the ANZCMC are governed jointly by a working group comprised of the following groups: Amnesty International Aotearoa NZ, Caritas Aotearoa NZ, Christian World Service, Engineers for Social Responsibility NZ, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War NZ, National Council of Women NZ, National Consultative Committee on Disarmament, Oxfam NZ, Peace Movement Aotearoa, Soroptimist International NZ, United Nations Association NZ, United Nations Youth Association NZ, UNICEF NZ, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Aotearoa.

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For more information, see:

- CALM website – www.calm.org.nz
- Landmine Monitor 2011 Cambodia - <http://bit.ly/ralBLU>
- 11MSP website - <http://bit.ly/spxxO8>