

NEW ALERT OF EVENT

MINE ACTION DONOR ROUNDTABLE MEETING

Hanoi, 5/12/2011

Note: there's an error in the article. The conference is **not** sponsored by the UN.

1. Vietnam says 100,000 killed or hurt by land mines, other explosives since end of Vietnam War

The Washington Post with Foreign Policy

WORLD Where World News and National Security Intersect



By Washington Post, Published: December 5

HANOI, Vietnam — More than 100,000 Vietnamese have been killed or injured by land mines or other abandoned explosives since the Vietnam War ended nearly 40 years ago, and clearing all of the country will take decades more, officials said Monday.

“The war’s painful legacy, which includes hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs and unexploded ordnance, continues to cause painful casualties every day,” Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung told a U.N.-sponsored conference on ways to deal with the problem.

Dung said 42,132 people have been killed and 62,163 others wounded by land mines, bombs and other explosives since the war ended in 1975. The United States used about 16 million tons of bombs and ammunition while allied with the former South Vietnam government, which was defeated by northern communist fighters who reunified the country.

U.S. Ambassador David Shear told the conference that the United States has provided \$62 million to help Vietnam cope with “this painful legacy.”

“Our efforts to help Vietnam deal with this difficult problem have helped build the mutual trust and understanding between the U.S. and Vietnam that has allowed our bilateral relationship to flourish,” he said.

Bui Hong Linh, vice minister of labor, war invalids and social affairs, said explosives remain on about 16 million acres (6.6 million hectares) of land, or more than one-fifth of the country.

He said only 740,000 acres (300,000 hectares) or 5 percent of the contaminated area has been cleared and a recently approved government plan calls for clearance of an additional 1.2 million acres (500,000 hectares) that would cost \$595 million in the next five years.

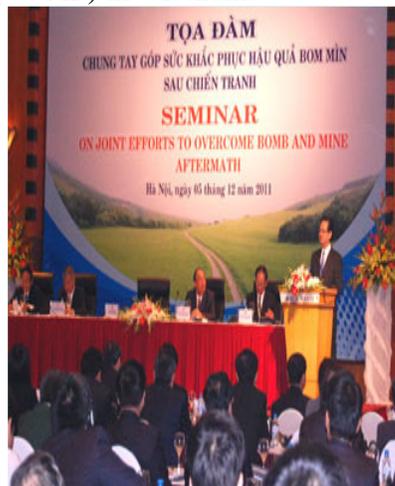
http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia-pacific/vietnam-says-42000-people-killed-by-bombs-ordnance-left-from-vietnam-war/2011/12/04/gIQAL9xeUO_story.html

2. Joint efforts needed to overcome UXO aftermath in Vietnam



QĐND - Monday, December 05, 2011, 21:23 (GMT+7)

People's Army Newspaper Online PANO – The third International Seminar on joint efforts to overcome bomb and mine aftermath was held on December 5th in Hanoi by the Executive Office on Mine Action under the Vietnam National Mine Action Steering Committee (NMASC) in association with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA) in Vietnam.



Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung speaking at the seminar

The seminar drew the participation of a large number of foreign diplomats in Hanoi, representatives of international organisations, donors and local officials.

According to the organising board, the seminar aim was to announce the establishment of NMASC, related legal documents and introduce the National New Mine Action Programme to overcome bomb, mine and explosive aftermath, as well as to discuss the real situation of unexploded ordinance (UXO) pollution in Vietnam, more effective measures and international supports to deal with the problem.

Addressing the seminar, the Vietnamese Prime Minister, Nguyen Tan Dung, said that Vietnam, with great effort, has detected and defused millions of UXO pieces and freed thousands of hectares of land from UXO since the end of the war. Still, over 20 per cent of the country's territory remains polluted with UXO, including millions of hectares with a high rate of UXO being deserted and hundreds of thousands of tons of UXO still present here and there in all 63 provinces and cities across Vietnam threatening the lives of innocent people, he emphasised.

Reports at the seminar show that UXO has been found everywhere in Vietnam. Bombs, mines and explosives are reported in populous areas, on the tops of mountains, deep in jungles, in rice paddy-fields, on the sides of transportation routes and so on. According to statistics, the leftovers of the war have killed over 42,000 people and injured nearly 63,000 others in Vietnam since 1975. Unfortunately, the numbers continue to rise day by day, despite Vietnam's remarkable efforts and achievements for UXO clearance over the past years. It seems that Vietnam alone with its limited technical and financial sources is not enough to deal with this problem.



Ted Paterson (right) with GICHD, Le Vu Binh, Deputy-Chief of the Internal Affairs Section of the Governmental Office (middle) and Nguyen Thu Thao, Director of VVAF in Vietnam are on the sidelines of the seminar

Indeed, a number of international organisations, including non-governmental ones, and foreign governments have rendered supports for Vietnam, especially in recent years. As the world's largest and most prestigious organisation in humanitarian demining, GICHD has been present in Vietnam for many years. Over the past years, it has provided technical supports for the Vietnamese Government, donated humanitarian aid for victims of UXO and called on other international organisations and governments around the world to assist Vietnam. Other important partners that have backed Vietnam in dealing with UXO contamination include the governments of the USA, Japan, Norway, UK, Australia and Germany.

At the seminar, the US Ambassador said: "Many Americans, from our elected representatives and government officials to private citizens working through non-governmental organisations, recognise the special importance of US assistance in resolving this legacy of the painful history shared by our two countries".

Nevertheless, international supports make up only 5 per cent of the total annual costs of US\$ 100 million for the UXO clearance work in Vietnam and the Vietnamese government has to pay the remainder, according to reports. The share of the international supports for Vietnam is so small in comparison to that for other countries with war legacies.

The foundation of NMASC and the adoption of the National New Mine Action Programme show

Vietnam's determination to deal with the problem. "Vietnam has realised challenges and difficulties ahead and will mobilise all of its possible efforts and assets to deal with UXO contamination in the earliest time," the Vietnamese Prime Minister affirmed.

To conclude his speech at the seminar, he called on international organisations and governments to join efforts with Vietnam to overcome UXO aftermath. He said: "Vietnam always appreciates and wishes to further receive cooperation, valuable assistance and commitments from the international community in the hope that Vietnam will soon be free from UXO".

<http://www.qdnd.vn/qdndsite/en-us/75/72/182/155/160/168942/Default.aspx>

Thu Nguyen

3. Efforts to overcome UXO aftermath

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On December 5, 2011 at 6:51 pm (GMT+7)

Vietnam has discovered and handled millions of bombs, mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) to make hundreds of thousands of hectares of land safe for living and production.



Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung was speaking at a seminar in Hanoi on December 5 held by the State Steering Committee on the National Action Plan for Mine .

The PM stressed that the Vietnamese Government has issued a number of policies and spent thousands of billions VND counteracting the damage caused by UXO.

The country has actively disseminated information about bombs and mines to schools and throughout communities to raise public awareness of the issue and help reduce the number of accidents caused by UXO.

It has also provided treatment and rehabilitation for those who have been injured by unexploded bombs and mines, he said.

The huge number of bombs and mines used by the French and US aggressors during the Vietnamese resistance wars has severely contaminated a vast area of land with many UXO that injure or kill both

children and adults across the country every day, PM Dung added.

The Government ratified the National Mine Action Plan in 2010, with detailed measures and targets to ensure Vietnam will no longer suffer from the negative impact of UXO during its ongoing socio-economic development.

Along with mobilizing all available domestic resources, the Vietnamese Government always hopes to receive valuable cooperation and support from the international community to help the country overcome the post-war backwash of UXO, he said.

Representatives from ministries, agencies, embassies and international organisations discussed measures to resolve the issue, setting a goal of de-mining 500,000 ha of land by 2015 and 800,000 by 2025.

The US forces used nearly 16 million tonnes of bombs and mines during their war in Vietnam, leaving hundreds of thousand of tonnes unexploded and covering more than 20 percent of the country's territory.

So far, mines and UXO have claimed more than 40,000 lives nationwide and left over 60,000 people injured.

[http://talkvietnam.com/2011/12/efforts-overcome-uxo-aftermath/;](http://talkvietnam.com/2011/12/efforts-overcome-uxo-aftermath/)

<http://vietnam-consult.de/miscellaneous->

4. Vietnam seeks \$500 mln to clear war-era bombs, mines



Mon Dec 5, 2011 6:06am GMT

HANOI Dec 5 (Reuters) - Vietnam is seeking \$500 million in assistance from domestic and international sources to help clear war-era bombs and mines and reduce the difficulties for its people and land contaminated by unexploded ordnance, officials said on Monday.

Vietnam already has available \$200 million to demine 500,000 hectares (1,930 square miles) in 14 provinces by 2015, or 7.6 percent of the total affected land, Deputy Labour Minister Bui Hong Linh told an international seminar.

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) has killed more than 42,000 people and injured more than 62,000 nearly four decades after the war ended, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung told the gathering.

"The task for the coming time is a difficult one," Dung said. "The Vietnamese government always appreciates and wishes to continue receiving valuable help and support from the international

community to overcome the consequences of bombs and mines left from the war."

Vietnamese officials named no specific amounts sought from the international community.

The U.S. army used around 16 million tonnes of weaponry in the war that ended in 1975, Dung said. The country's impoverished central region was subject to particularly heavy bombing and mining.

The U.S. administration sent troops to back up the South Vietnam government between 1965 and 1973 in a conflict known as the Vietnam War. North Vietnamese forces took over Saigon, the capital of the South Vietnam in April 1975, ending the war and reunifying the country.

Experts have estimated it will take hundreds of years to clear up unexploded bombs and mines which have contaminated a fifth of the total area of Vietnam, the world's second-largest producer of coffee and the second-biggest rice exporter.

The Southeast Asian country launched a UXO action programme in 2010 to raise awareness, apply the latest demining technology and reduce accidents that have hit mostly children and workers.

U.S. Ambassador David Shear told the seminar Washington had already provided \$62 million to help survivors of UXO accidents. The U.S. Humanitarian Mine Action Program has provided a further \$37 million since 1989, the embassy said. (Reporting by Ho Binh Minh; Editing by Ron Popeski)

<http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL3E7N50RU20111205>

5. Vietnam seeks US\$500m to clear mines

TAIPEI  TIMES World News

Reuters and AP, HANOI

Tue, Dec 06, 2011 - Page 5

Vietnam is seeking US\$500 million in assistance from domestic and international sources to help clear war-era bombs and mines and reduce the difficulties for its people and land contaminated by unexploded ordnance, officials said yesterday.

Vietnam already has available US\$200 million to demine 500,000 hectares in 14 provinces by 2015, or 7.6 percent of the total affected land, Vietnamese Deputy Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs Bui Hong Linh told an international seminar, adding that only 300,000 hectares, or 5 percent, of the contaminated area has been cleared.

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) has killed more than 42,000 people and injured more than 62,000 nearly four decades after the war ended, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung told the gathering.

“The task for the coming time is a difficult one,” Dung said. “The Vietnamese government always appreciates and wishes to continue receiving valuable help and support from the international community to overcome the consequences of bombs and mines left from the war.”

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The Southeast Asian country launched a UXO action program last year to raise awareness, apply the latest demining technology and reduce accidents that have hit mostly children and workers.

US Ambassador to Vietnam David Shear told the seminar Washington had already provided US\$62 million to help survivors of UXO accidents as well as to help Vietnam cope with “this painful legacy.” The US Humanitarian Mine Action Program has provided a further US\$37 million since 1989, the US embassy said.

“Our efforts to help Vietnam deal with this difficult problem have helped build the mutual trust and understanding between the US and Vietnam that has allowed our bilateral relationship to flourish,” Shear said.

“The war’s painful legacy, which includes hundreds of thousands of tonnes of bombs and unexploded ordnance, continues to cause painful casualties every day,” Dung said at the UN-sponsored conference on ways to deal with the problem.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/archives/2011/12/06/2003520071>

6. World help sought to clear unexploded bombs, mines



Mine clearing activities in central Quang Tri Province. Government

Updated December, 06 2011 09:22:10

HA NOI — High-ranking Government leaders met with international donors in the capital yesterday to seek ways to deal with the danger of unexploded ordnance still present years after the wars in Viet Nam.

The country of Viet Nam and its people had to fight invasion wars, which left behind severe consequences and suffering due to a huge number of bombs, mines and other types of munitions that the invading forces used in their attempts at destruction, said Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung.

The stark fact is that 16 million organ of munitions were used by US forces during their war in Viet Nam, he said.

“That the wars have been behind us for decades does not mean that the scars of suffering have disappeared nor that the losses are over since hundreds of thousands of unexploded ordnance (UXO) are here to stay, inflicting casualties and injuries on ordinary people in Viet Nam, causing great tragedies and burdens on many families in this country,” Dung said.

Government statistics reveal that more than 20 per cent of the country’s total area is contaminated by UXO.

The PM also said that despite a lot of effort and investment poured into land clearance activities, UXO contamination in Viet Nam was still a serious issue.

He called for continued co-operation and assistance from the international community to help Viet Nam overcome the UXO legacy and its consequences.

US Ambassador to Viet Nam David Bruce Shear said the scale of UXO contamination in Viet Nam remained significant in terms of the size of the affected area and, most importantly, in its impact on the lives of affected residents, both as victims and in reduced economic opportunities.

“This is why it is so important that Viet Nam, with international support, develop an effective, sustainable national capacity to deal with UXO contamination,” he said.

“We are determined to maintain our strong commitment to UXO and mine action assistance and look forward to continued co-operation with Viet Nam’s Government and the NGO community,” he said.

US assistance to mine action in Viet Nam has organiz over US\$62 million to date, spent on the provision of equipment, grants made to non-governmental organizations and capacity-building for national institutions.

This year marked the successful creation of a national mine action data centre under the Viet Nam Bomb Mine Action Centre, which provided a platform for the collection and analysis of operational

data from mine action organizations to enable better co-ordination.

“I encourage all operators to provide standardised inputs, including geoco-ordinates, to the new data centre to ensure the accuracy of the integrated information and resulting reports and maps,” he said.

Norway’s Ambassador to Viet Nam Stale T Risa said Viet Nam was the second most bombed country in the world.

“Norway stands ready to support and strongly encourages Viet Nam to consider signing the Convention on Cluster Munitions Convention in Oslo next year which is about preventing people from becoming victims of cluster munitions and securing proper assistance for those who have already become victims of this indiscriminate weapon,” he said.

“The convention is not only a ban on production, use and stockpiling of cluster munitions but also a framework for positive actions to address the harm caused,” he said.

Many participants pointed to the need for the Government to adopt policies to ensure that donors’ assistance went directly to target groups and to create conditions for the press to spread related news to the world to encourage international friends to help Viet Nam deal with this issue.

The Government approved a national mine action plan last year which targets clearing 15.2 per cent of the total contaminated inland area by 2020 which is estimated at nearly 6.6 million hectares.

Only 300,000ha of contaminated land has been cleared so far, accounting for 5 per cent of the total.

To achieve target objectives, Viet Nam needs to organize around \$700 million for the 2011-15 period.

With the current average demining rate of 20,000ha of land per year, it will take 300 years to complete clearance of contaminated land in the whole country at an estimated cost of more than \$10 billion.

On average, there are about 1,370 mines and explosive accidents per year nationwide, killing or injuring more than 3,800 people.

Over the past ten years, international non-governmental organizations assisted and implemented projects and aid packages in the field of landmine and unexploded ordnance clearance worth nearly \$100 million. — VNS

<http://vietnamnews.vnagency.com.vn/Social-Issues/218364/World-help-sought-to-clear-unexploded-bombs-mines.html>

7. Vietnam seeks \$500 million to clear war-era bombs and mines

Posted By Reuters On December 5, 2011 @ 11:58 am



Belarus' Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikov with his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Tan Dung at the Government Office in Hanoi. - Reuters Photo.

HANOI: Vietnam is seeking \$500 million in assistance from domestic and international sources to help clear war-era bombs and mines and reduce the difficulties for its people and land contaminated by unexploded ordnance.

According to the Deputy Labour Minister, Bui Hong Linh Vietnam already has \$200 million to demine 500,000 hectares (1,930 square miles) in 14 provinces by 2015, or 7.6 percent of the total affected land.

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) has killed more than 42,000 people and injured more than 62,000 nearly four decades after the war ended, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung said that, “The task for the coming time is a difficult one. The Vietnamese government always appreciates and wishes to continue receiving valuable help and support from the international community to overcome the consequences of bombs and mines left from the war.”

Vietnamese officials named no specific amounts sought from the international community.

The U.S. army used around 16 million tonnes of weaponry in the war that ended in 1975, Dung said. The country’s impoverished central region was subjected to particularly heavy bombing and mining.

Experts have estimated it will take hundreds of years to clear up unexploded bombs and mines which have contaminated a fifth of the total area of Vietnam, the world’s second-largest producer of coffee and the second-biggest rice exporter.

<http://www.dawn.com/2011/12/05/vietnam-seeks-500-million-to-clear-war-era-bombs-and-mines.html/print/>

8. Funding sought to clear unexploded ordnance

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Vietnam needs more funding to clear unexploded ordnance (UXO) from hundreds of thousands of hectares of land, and will continue to seek it from local and international sources, a senior official has said.

Col Vu Ngoc Diem of the Technology Centre for Bomb and Mine Disposal under the Engineering Command told the Quan Doi Nhan Dan (People's Army) newspaper that US soldiers dropped 15.35 million tonnes of bombs and mines during the American War, and current UXO volume was estimated at 800,000 tonnes.

The centre estimates that about 10 billion USD is needed to clear the remaining UXOs.

According to an official survey done in 2002, the area contaminated by bombs and mines nationwide was about 6.6 million ha, accounting for 21.12 percent of country's total area.

From 1964 in the northern part of the country and from 1975 in the south until 2000, 42,135 people have been killed and 62,163 injured by UXOs. Most of the victims are farmers and their children.

The UXOs are a major hindrance to socio-economic development because people living in contaminated areas refrain from farming and other activities for fear of losing their lives and limbs.

To deal with the post-war consequences of bombs and mines, the country needed to spend hundreds of billions of dong, Diem said.

Last year, the Government developed a national action plan until 2025 to deal with the UXOs left behind by the war.

The plan expects to make people more aware of the danger of the UXOs and to attract local and international assistance for removing them and rehabilitating affected citizens./.

<http://en.baomoi.com/Info/Funding-sought-to-clear-unexploded-ordnance/3/131727.epi>