

## MAG Republic of Congo Programme Update, October - December 2008



*Preparations for destruction: an OFAB500 Soviet aircraft bomb.*

### Summary of outputs:

- A total of **1,258** items destroyed, weighing **11,973 kg (11.9 metric tons)**
- Items destroyed included
  - 21 x OFAB 500 aircraft bombs
  - 7 x 122mm 9M22M rockets
  - 29 x 100mm(APDST, HE, HESH) artillery shells
  - 1,038 x 30mm artillery rounds
  - 75 x 23mm artillery rounds
  - 34 x PG 2 rockets
  - 54 x POMZ 2M antipersonnel mines

### Key activities :

- MAG operations restart in Republic of Congo
- Refresher training is carried out with destruction teams
- Demolitions are re-initiated and new demolition site identified
- Community visits are undertaken

### ACTIVITIES

After a 3-month stand-down in order to source funding, MAG was pleased to be able to re-start destruction operations in the Republic of Congo in October 2008. Refresher training courses were held to ensure that destruction personnel had up-to-date knowledge and would continue to operate safely and efficiently. Residents close to the area of operations were visited and briefed on the work that was to be carried out in order to ensure community support and involvement.



Verifying ammunition for destruction



Rigging an OFAB 500 (HE) for controlled demolition

Two international Technical Field Managers were deployed, managing teams of 7 local staff. CWMD<sup>1</sup> destruction activities restarted in mid-October, supported by funding from the US Department of State, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, and the British Government's Conflict Prevention Pool. MAG Country Programme Manager, Frédéric Martin, said: "The demolition undertaken is an important step in ensuring a safer and more peaceful future for the Republic of Congo."

In addition, in October, November and December MAG technical staff visited the Central Armament Depot in Brazzaville and made recommendations to improve storage practices in order to reduce the likelihood of unplanned explosions, increasing safety for communities living near the sites.

MAG was honored to become the 56th organisation to sign a comprehensive Accord de Siège with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Francophony in the Republic of Congo. The Accord will make it easier for MAG to operate in the country and carry out its stockpile management and demolition activities.



From left to right: US Ambassador to the Republic of Congo, Alan Eastham; Maurice Badila, Treaties and Conventions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Frédéric Martin, MAG Country Programme Manager; Ambassador Daniel Owassa, General Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Anne Kröning, MAG Programme Officer; and Commissaire Colonel Germain Ickonga, General Director for Equipment, Ministry of Defence.

MAG RoC would like to thank the authorities in the Republic of Congo for facilitating this important work. In addition, MAG would like to express its gratitude to the following current donors to the RoC programme:

- The Conflict Prevention Pool (British Government)
- US Department of State, Political Military Office of Weapons Removal And Abatement

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<sup>1</sup> To more accurately reflect the range of activities being implemented and types of munitions being dealt with, MAG is using the term CWMD - Conventional Weapons Management and Disposal rather than the Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW) used previously.