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Issue 22.3 Message from the Director

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Ken Rutherford

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Looking back on another year of successful events and productive programs in humanitarian mine action (HMA) and explosive hazards clearance, we recognize the broad range of ongoing work in the field. In looking toward the future, we are excited to announce our new round of topics, published in *The Journal's* 2019 Calls for Papers.

Next Spring, we will explore the community's thoughts on the direction of future HMA work in an editorial on **Planning for the Future: Advancing Solutions for Unforeseen Threats**. We also encourage organizations to submit on their experiences with anti-lift and anti-handling devices, and explosive ordnance disposal spot tasks, especially as they pertain to Ukraine and Eastern European countries. Next Summer, we will examine the ongoing remediation's efforts in Mosul, Iraq, Yemen, and Afghanistan, as well as the issues involved in **Distinguishing Conflict and Post-Conflict Environments**. And next Fall, we encourage those working in HMA to exchange ideas on **How Should We Assess New Technology** as we look at the monitoring and evaluation methods of various HMA organizations as well as different demining training aids. As ever, we also welcome and encourage our readers to submit their ideas for topics they feel are underrepresented or particularly timely.

For this issue (22.3) of *The Journal*, we are thrilled to present an editorial on "Landmine Free 2025: A Shared Responsibility" by Camille Wallen from The HALO Trust (HALO) and Chris Loughran from MAG (Mines Advisory Group). Wallen and Loughran share their insight on the Landmine Free 2025 Campaign's call to action, its background, agenda, reception, and future plans. As we look to South/Central Asia, Jennifer Dathan from Action on Armed Violence considers "The Effects of ERW Contamination in Sri Lanka," specifically the socioeconomic impact of ERW on civilians and ex-combatants as well as the ongoing clearance challenges. CISR's Suzanne Fiederlein and Paige Ober, and OSCE's Nazira Shozodaeva and Takhmira Akhmedovu discuss their ideas on how their experience with previous trainings, workshops, and Senior Managers' Courses promote innovative ideas for future areas of development in "Opportunities for Regional Training and Information Exchange Reap Benefits for Central Asia."

Due to the ever-growing industry and versatility of drones, we are particularly happy to have received so many submissions on unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in mine action, as this issue features related articles from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), HALO, MAG, and Binghamton University (New York, USA). Presenting their UAS case study on "Enhancing HMA in Angola with High-resolution UAS Imagery," Inna Cruz (GICHD), Luan Jaupi (HALO), Shadreck Njamba (MAG), and Olivier Cottray (GICHD) methodically break down the benefits and challenges of the technology. In "The Added Value of Integrating UAVs into the HMA Toolkit," Shathel Fahs (MAG) and Greg Crowther (MAG) provide an overview of UAS current and potential uses. Moreover, Oliver Gerard-Pearse (HALO) presents an in-depth UAS case study on how "Drones Support Mine Clearance in Sri Lanka." Lastly, in this issue's Research and Development article, Professors Tim de Smet and Alex Nikulin and undergraduate researchers William Frazer, Jasper Baur, Jacob Abramowitz, Daniel Finan, Sean Denara, Nicholas Aglietti, and Gabriel Campos collaborate on a Binghamton University study on detecting PFM-1 "butterfly mines" in "Drones and 'Butterflies': A Low-Cost UAV System for Rapid Detection and Identification of Unconventional Minefields."

I hope you enjoy this issue of *The Journal* and consider becoming involved by sharing your work with the rest of the community. Moreover, please feel free to provide feedback on *The Journal* and suggest future topics that you would like to see covered. Please email all inquiries and suggestions to: cisr-journal@jmu.edu.

Ken