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# news release

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## **Canadians to help with Croatia's demining effort**

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**Vancouver, British Columbia**—The Canadian Croatian Foundation for Demining Society (CCFD) is pleased to announce its official launch on Tuesday, the 24th of November, 2009 during Vancouver's annual Night of a Thousand Dinners. The launch will occur at Vancouver's Marriot Pinnacle Hotel located at 1128 West Hasting Street at 6:30 pm.

Sara Shawesh, President of CCFD stated, "The launch of the CCFD coincides with the 10th Anniversary of the Ottawa Mine Ban Treaty, a treaty which Croatia has signed and implemented. Although Croatia has made substantial progress in clearing landmines, an area equivalent to eight times the size of Vancouver or 908 km<sup>2</sup> is still suspected to be mined or to have unexploded ordnances. Many of us who have visited Croatia have been struck by Croatia's beauty, culture, world heritage sites and infrastructure. We have forgotten that Croatia, Canada's NATO ally and soon to be EU member, has 834 000 people living in close proximity to suspected mine fields. There is more suspect mined land in Croatia than in Afghanistan. CCFD's goal is to see that all landmines are removed from Croatian soil."

The Canadian Croatian Foundation for Demining is a Canadian registered non-profit society whose objective is to raise awareness and fundraise for the clearing of landmines in Croatia. CCFD's goal is to harness Canadian expertise and resources in our effort to remove landmines that have been plaguing Croatians and visitors to Croatia for nearly a generation. CCFD has established a team and relations with institutions that will ensure all raised funds and resources are directed to the demining effort.

Sara Shawesh further added, "We are very thankful to the UBC International Relations Students Association for allowing us to launch CCFD at Vancouver's annual Night of a Thousand Dinners 2009. They have provided CCFD with a platform to promote our fundraising efforts and to direct interested support to our website." For more information on CCFD, please visit [www.deminecroatia.org](http://www.deminecroatia.org).

UBC International Relations Student Association's (IRSA) Night of a Thousand Dinners (N1KD) is an annual, global event that raises awareness and funds for Adopt-A-Minefield®. N1KD dinners have been held in over 50 countries around the world, with tens of thousands of participants raising millions of dollars for mine action.

"We are excited about this partnership and congratulate the CCFD for taking on this project and continuing to raise awareness about Canada's role in the Ottawa Treaty. Just like the efforts of N1KD, every little step in the right direction will bring us closer to a complete ban on landmines worldwide," said Nader Ben Aissa of IRSA.

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