

So you want to publicise your campaign?

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO BAN LANDMINES -
SEPTEMBER 2000

International TO
CAMPAIGN BAN
LANDMINES



MINE

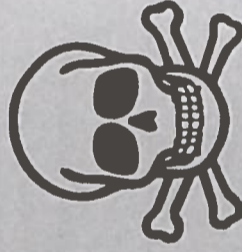
fermiamo il massacro

NON C'È PACE CON LE MINE

DANG

MINE

ប្រយ័ត្នគ្រាប់មីន!!



Danger!! Mines!!

SO YOU WANT TO PUBLICISE YOUR CAMPAIGN?

This section looks at ways of publicising your campaign - through the media and through your own materials.

Getting your message out is important: it helps to persuade decision-makers to adopt favourable policies around antipersonnel landmines, keeps our allies informed and engages with neutral players and opponents.

Included in this section are tips on:

- A. Talking to the media: who to speak to, media lists and setting up new contacts
- B. Writing a press release
- C. Organising a media conference or photo call
- D. Interviews: radio, television and difficult interviews
- E. Letters to the editor
- F. Producing your own materials: posters, stickers, brochures and banners

So you want to talk to the media

Because there are so many media sources — local and international newspapers, daily papers, weeklies, radio stations in different languages broadcasting to different regions or areas, television stations aimed at different audiences and so on — it can sometimes feel quite daunting to choose which ones you should talk to! Consider the following:

- their circulation/audience ratings - are you spending a lot of time with a newspaper that is not read by many people for example? Are you spending enough time on the large circulation publications/radio stations or television stations? Find out about the circulation/readership rates of different media sources in your country by phoning up their advertising or marketing department.
- their audience/readership - Does the newspaper have a small but influential audience (eg. Politicians, decision-makers)? Are you reaching a new audience of potential active



supporters (eg. Reaching mothers in a women's magazine)? What are the kinds of people reached by this media source - their age, language, income group, interest, political persuasion? This information will help you to know what kinds of information will interest them. The best way to get to know this information is to get familiar with the media sources by listening, reading and watching them!

- their track record - some media sources are much better at covering the landmine issue. You will find that they run your press releases and come to your news conferences or events. You may wish to give specific stories to old contacts or prioritise giving them interviews, for example.

Who to speak to within a radio or TV station/publication?

- reporters who have given you a positive response (eg. Have written reports on your media release, come to your news conference). See below for more about keeping your media list of regular contacts.
- the relevant beat reporter: Mostly, reporters on the politics, international affairs, defence/security or general news beats cover our press releases. However, depending on the angle of your landmine story, you could target another beat reporter or different section of the paper/TV/radio programmes eg. business, travel, health, science, sport or religious beats. Also approach columnists and commentators.
- news editor (radio, TV, wire services) or bureau chief (wire service or foreign media source). If you don't have a contact at a particular media source, it is useful to introduce yourself to the news editor and ask for their suggestion about who you should speak to from the news desk or

SO YOU WANT TO PUBLICISE YOUR CAMPAIGN?

other beats. They are also the people to speak to if there is a mistake or inaccuracy with an article.

- know whom you are talking to. Read the newspapers and magazines, watch the television programmes and listen to the radio shows. That is the best way to pick up which reporters are most likely to be interested in your story.

Media lists

Develop a list of media contacts and if possible computerise this list onto a data base including: name of reporter, name of media source, telephone number, fax number, email and postal address. Increasingly, media sources are going on-line and email is a faster and cheaper way to send out media releases, so make sure you have their email addresses. Encourage each group in the country campaign to share their media lists. Keep it updated. Keep files of press clippings and add to this list when new reporters cover your stories or call you up for interviews.

If you are beginning to compile a list, rather than maintaining an existing one it is good to ask similar organisations or allies to share their contacts with you. Then a few days of phoning around should make your list comprehensive. Your media list should include local and foreign media sources, and people in the following positions:

- television news assignment editors, reporters and producers
- radio news directors and reporters
- wire service bureau chiefs, assignment editors, photo editors and reporters
- wire service day book editors
- daily and weekly newspaper city or metro editors, news/politics and foreign affairs reporters, defence/security reporters, columnists, editorial page editors, op/ed page editors, features editors and photo editors
- talk show producers, bookers and hosts
- weekly newspaper editors
- locally based magazine editors and reporters
- managing editors at community or special interest newspapers (eg. religious, defence etc) who may be interested in individual speakers at media conferences
- diary editor/input editor on newspapers/radio/wire services/television

Always circulate a contact list at news conferences, with space for each reporter to write their name and contact details. You may find new people to add to your list, or update old contact details.

The more, the merrier

Do not be exclusive in your media list - it is far better to inform disinterested people than to miss out on reporters who might want to cover your events. The glossary of Who's Who in the Media in this kit will help you to better understand the jobs of the people you put on your list and perhaps help you to decide how to approach them with your story.

Develop a relationship

Develop a relationship with the reporter and let them know you are available if they need more information for another story. Be consistent in the contact details you provide to the media as different telephone numbers can be confusing. Address media releases to a specific person: either your contact, or if you do not have one yet then to the news editor. Follow up faxing with a phone call to check if they have received it and offer to provide further information. Other tips:

- **props:** provide everything that the media need for a story eg. if you are interviewed bring a visual "prop" so they can take a photo of you in your campaign T-shirt or with a campaign poster in the background. Other props such as fake landmines, prostheses and photos/videos can also be helpful. Your story has a better chance of being run if accompanied by a photo. Develop an identity or "face" for the campaign such as a logo, use of specific colours, or image.
- **schedule:** keep an eye on the calendar and use upcoming events/dates to your advantage. Schedule any media event wisely: in time to meet reporters' deadlines, to take advantage of "slow" media days and to keep media on the issue a day or two longer. Find different angles to the mine issue for different parts of the paper.
- **feedback:** let a reporter know what you thought of their article or programme. Be pleasant but also say if there were factual errors in the piece, that way they will know better for next time. Be tactful however and don't imagine that you can dictate how a reporter covers a story!



Making new contacts

If you would like to make a contact with a reporter in a newspaper or media source you haven't approached before, or there is a new media source, be proactive! You will probably find that they are looking for contacts and possible stories so they will be happy to meet you and receive information on the landmine issue. Here are a few guidelines:

- if you do not know which reporter to contact speak to the news editor and ask them for their suggestion
- phone them and make a time to go and meet them (bear in mind they will not be available around deadline time!). If you visit them in their news room it will give you a "feel" for the kind of environment they are working in, the pressure, the kinds of people working there etc. Also a face-to-face meeting will help to develop a relationship with your new contact. Sometimes you may wish to meet them in a more social setting, such as in a café over coffee.
- take along a package of information and have some concrete ideas for stories they can take up eg. A demining site,

people they can interview, news about the Mine Ban Treaty, an upcoming conference which your campaign will be attending etc. Offer to accompany them on a trip, offer the use of photographs or other resources (video, cassette clips, and further information). And leave your contact details with them.

- Follow up your brief meeting by sending them further information if they had asked for it, sending them press releases and inviting them to future news conferences.

Spokespeople

Appoint a spokesperson for your country campaign - both at home and at international conferences in which you are participating. Include their biography in the information you give to the media, but also give a diverse range of other contacts such as survivors, deminers, ex-military, youth, lobbyists and provide recent stories and photos of landmine survivors from your country or region.

So you want to write a press release!

Is this article important? That is the first question editors and writers ask when they pick up a news or media release and start reading. And the conclusion they reach will determine whether they keep reading it and run it in their newspaper or television/radio show or throw the release in the dustbin.

The writer has one paragraph - maybe 20 seconds - to seize the readers' attention.

Important means that the article announces something NEW. It is based on a development that the reader or listener will find interesting. Remember that your media release will be competing with many others that the editor or reporter looks at each day.

Who is your audience?

Many press releases never get opened or read because they are sent to the wrong person or using the wrong address or fax number. Make sure your media list is up to date. If your contact has changed then send it to the chief of staff or news editor.

Getting it right

Producing a news release requires care to ensure your message is eye-catching, topical and easy to read. The first paragraph (journalists call it the "lead" or "intro") must explain the headline and highlight the main news point clearly and vividly. As the lead often makes or breaks the entire releases, the first 20 or 30 words are crucial.

The five W's and one H

As in a typical news report, the lead (or first two paragraphs) should include the 5 W's and 1 H: Who? When? What? Where? Why? And How?

For example:

On the day that the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty becomes binding international law [WHEN], the Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) [WHO] praised the remarkable progress made in eliminating anti-personnel landmines, condemned those who continue to use the weapon, especially treaty signatory Angola, and called for more assistance for mine action and mine victims [WHAT AND WHY]. The ICBL has organized bell-ringing and other events around the world today to mark the ban treaty's historic entry-into-force [WHAT AND WHERE]

(Source: ICBL press release, 1 March 1999).

Headlines

The headline helps to sell the story at a quick glance. Aim for a complete but short sentence. Avoid the past tense and passive tense and use verbs and active words.

For example:

Mine ban treaty enters into force — ICBL praises progress, condemns users

WHO'S WHO IN THE MEDIA

When you speak with a representative of the media it's useful to know who you are dealing with and what part they play in the news production process. This list will give you an idea of the roles and titles of people you may be dealing with in the media, although sometimes the jobs will be combined or the names slightly changed.

Writers (Editorial page, national, city or metro, lifestyle or features, Sunday, health, TV, sports...) assigns reporters who are on their staff, tries to coordinate coverage at the newspaper, may do some reporting. Note: larger papers have an assignment desk from which the city or metro editors and their staff may function

Radio Stations

News director: at most stations assigns reporters, at small stations may report and read the news as well

Reporters: covers newsworthy events as assigned, may read wire copy on air

Wire Service Bureaus

Bureau chief: coordinates stories with national office and other bureaus, may assign or report at small bureaus

Assignment editor/assignment desk staff: assigns reporters to stories, takes statements over the phone, check facts

Daybook editor: publishes daily calendar of news events distributed to all major media outlets and used by editors to assign reporters to cover stories

Reporters: covers newsworthy items assigned

Newspapers

Executive or managing editor: makes business as well as news decisions for the newspaper, at smaller weekly and special interest papers may also assign stories

Columnists: has license to write personal, sometimes first-person opinion pieces

Reporters: covers stories as assigned, often suggest topics for coverage

Staff writers: junior reporters who may conduct interviews over the phone or fact-check

Magazines

Publisher/owner: may write occasional stories or columns, sometimes involved in the running of the magazine but often is not

Editor-in-chief: hires, fires, participates in planning and story assignments

Senior editor/contributing editors: develops story ideas and sources, may write for magazine

Reporters: do the legwork and most of the writing of stories

Staff writers: aspiring writers who are usually based at the magazine's main office fact-checking



Datelines

Include the date at the top of the release, for example,

For Immediate Release — 1 March 1999

Or

Embargoed for release until Monday, 1 March 1999, 06h00

It is best to avoid putting embargoes on your releases. However if you have to use an embargo, for example to distribute the advance text of a speech, then make sure that your release carries clear details on the time, day and date of your intended release (for example, when the speech will be given).

You can also include the time and place of release at the beginning of the intro for example:

LUANDA, 18 February — The UN Mine Action Programme in Angola has...

Inverted pyramid: important things first

Write the release in the form of an inverted pyramid - with the main points at the top and less important information further down. This format is used for news writing and if you follow the style a journalist will be able to use the release as it is or adapt it easily. A sub-editor may cut the story to size at any point, so even the lead should be able to stand on its own and make sense as a single paragraph.

Avoid putting important facts later on in the release because the reader or editor may not bother to look for them. As a test of your release: blank out the last paragraph with a sheet of paper and see whether important facts have been lost, then move the sheet of paper up to cover the lower half of your release and check again - the visible text should make sense on its own.



Quotes and naming parties

Include direct quotes from a campaign spokesperson to bring the story to life, but make sure the quote says something - is it both concise and relevant? Include the first name and family name of the person quoted and their title or position in the organisation. Eg.

"The momentum has continued unabated since the signing of the ban treaty in December 1997," said Jody Williams, ICBL Ambassador and Nobel co-laureate. "Today, this treaty enters into force more quickly than any other major treaty in history, demonstrating the world's commitment to eradicate this insidious weapon now," said Ms. Williams. "While the treaty and the ban movement have already had a huge impact..."

If you are using an ICBL statement, you could add in a quote from the spokesperson of the local campaign to make it more relevant or interesting to your local media.

Also spell out the name of the campaign or organisation the first time you use it and then use an abbreviation afterwards.

Facts and background

Make sure that you include enough background information on the mines crisis (statistics and affected countries), the treaty (dates, purpose) and our opinion (the treaty as a solution to the crisis, concerns about country positions). Back up statements with facts: if your release raises concerns about countries where antipersonnel mines are being laid, then name the countries. If you are not entirely sure about something you are suggesting then include a word such as "reportedly" as in "mines are reportedly being laid in parts of Angola".

Also, avoid ICBL-speak and explain technical terms - remember reporters and the reading public are not experts on APMs! For example, the ICBL March 1 release mentioned "level one surveys" but then went on to explain that these are taking place "in about a dozen countries to identify the locations of mined areas and their socio-economic impact, to help establish appropriate priorities and demining programs".

Using the active voice

Write the release in the active voice, as it is more direct and punchy:

"We have always viewed demining and the ban as two essential, mutually reinforcing goals and activities" instead of "Demining and the ban have always been viewed by us as two essential, mutually reinforcing goals and activities".

Design

Use your campaign letterhead. Double spacing between lines is good as it helps the journalists to edit the text. Make sure that the release is labeled: "Media Release" or "Press Release", and include contact names and telephone numbers of contacts in your organisations who can provide further information (remember to include up-to-date contact numbers and after hours numbers too). These contacts can be provided at the top or the bottom of the release.

When to send and to whom

Timing can mean the difference between success and failure. Sometimes your releases will coincide with days on the ICBL calendar eg. 1 March, the date the Mine Ban Treaty entered into force was a day to highlight the landmines issue and reflect on progress made and concerns. However also look out for days and times of the day when news is thin and you are likely to get more attention. For example, early mornings are a good time to contact daily newspapers. Try to avoid Friday afternoons or the eve of public holidays. Check on the deadlines of your target media sources.

Address your release to your contact, or to the News Editor. If you are sending out an advisory on future events, then address the release to the Diary Editor (sometimes also called Input Desk Editor).

Media advisories

Media Advisories are very similar to Press Releases, except that they are usually shorter and provide information in advance of newsworthy events such as conferences, campaigning activities, speeches, meetings and so on. They are also sometimes called Media Alerts or Media Invitations.

The format is as follows:

MEDIA ADVISORY/MEDIA ALERT

HEADLINE eg. Meeting of States Parties to Assess Progress...

For immediate release/or Embargoed until...

INTRO: 5 Ws and 1 H — What is taking place? Where is it taking place? Who is organising it? Why is it happening? When? How?

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: if the event is a conference you will have a timetable of different events that reporters could attend, list these. Remember to include possible photo opportunities such as vigils, pickets or other activities in addition to media briefings, opening speeches and receptions.

CONTACTS: give contact details of members that can be reached before the event and at the venue (if possible give a mobile telephone number).

Luck

As in life, luck plays a role. You may have the greatest story, done the best press release, made many phone calls to follow it up, but if there is other big news eg. Important statement from the president or an earthquake your issue may not be covered or may receive more low-key coverage. On the other hand if you have your event or release out on a slow news day, you may get lots of coverage. Good luck!

Checklist

- Is it NEW?
- Are the main points at the top?
- Does it follow the pyramid pattern?
- Is it short, sharp and simple?
- Does it include direct quotes and give the spokesperson's full name and position in the organisation?
- Does it provide a contact name and contact details for further questions or a radio interview?
- Have you avoided jargon, flowery language, generalisations and superlatives, which cannot be supported?
- Have you asked a colleague to check the facts?
- Have you circulated a copy to anyone in the campaign who may be contacted?
- Have you made follow-up calls to journalists you know?

Press release format

PRESS RELEASE

HEADLINE (highlighting the main news point)

For immediate release, or Embargoed for release until... (Day, date, time)

Intro/Lead

Start with a bang. Aim to answer as many of the five W's and 1 H as possible in your first sentence. Ideally you should state what happened (or is happening), where, when and who says.

Source

If you have not already done so, answer the question: "How do I know?" Journalists need the answer as a source to give credibility to their story.

Essentials

The essentials of the release and the perspective - the reason why the story is significant. Unless the facts speak clearly for themselves (and they often don't) you may have to answer the question "So what?" Tell the reader the answer to any other unanswered questions: Why? How? Who?

Quotes

Press releases gain "life" if you include a direct quote from the most important person involved. It should be brief and to the point. Give the speaker's full name and job title.

Anything else?

Have you said anything that needs explaining or backing up? If the release spreads to a second page (ideally it shouldn't) type "more follows" at the lower right-hand corner.

Ends

Make clear where your story ends by typing in "ENDS".

Note to editors

Your last chance to tell journalists how they can get copies of a report, survey, photograph or other information.

Contact: name and telephone/fax/email of people in your campaign that can provide information. Remember to include after hours telephone numbers.



So you want to organise a news conference or photo call

A news conference, or informal briefing, should be called when your organisation or campaign wishes to announce something of importance. If it is a general statement or response a press release will do the job better. Most news organisations have limited staff so they need to make careful decisions about who to send to which news conference or event.

Timing

Plan the event carefully. Are there other major national events on the same day (eg. Key government announcements, elections, national holidays or celebrations) that your event will be competing with? Is the conference held in time for journalists to meet their deadlines?

Media sources should be informed about the conference well in advance by a media advisory or press release, but not too long in advance - otherwise they may forget about the event. So send out a release or advisory about a week in advance of the conference and then follow up with calls or personal visits in the days leading up to the conference. If possible, also call key contacts on the day of the conference to remind them. In some countries, journalists carry beepers, which provide information on news events so they are a useful way to remind reporters of news conferences or other events.

Speakers and venue

Choose a few speakers who can speak on different aspects of the mine issue or your particular campaign. Try to pick good public speakers, and people who can put across the position of the organisation. Bear in mind issues of geographic, religious, ethnic and gender representivity when selecting your speakers and aim for a good mix. Also try to have speakers who are

fluent in a range of languages, and who are able to give interviews in these languages after the conference.

Choose a central and accessible venue. It may be a church hall, community centre, conference room in a hotel or sometimes large NGOs have a meeting room which can be used for the purpose. It is important that the venue has parking, is easy to reach for the media, has power points, exhibition display board and refreshments. Set up a table near the entrance to lay out press packs, a register of attendance and name badges. Also set up the chairs facing the front table where the speakers will be seated (this way of setting up the room is called school room or cinema style). A podium for the main speaker is sometimes useful, though not essential.

Make sure that there is a good visual backdrop behind the speakers at the news conference - use banners, posters, photographs etc. In that way a television clip of the news conference will illustrate the ICBL message twice - visually (through a bold slogan on the wall behind the speakers) and through the spoken message given by the speakers. Without a good visual backdrop you can probably forget being shown on TV at all - as few camera operators will be inspired by a boring scene of speakers seated at a table in a drab conference centre!

Ask staff or members to come to the venue an hour or so beforehand to hang the banners and arrange the displays. Have a few staff available to meet the media as they arrive, answer questions and introduce them to spokespeople and others they will want to interview. Sometimes tea and coffee or light refreshments are served as the media arrive.



Programme of the news conference

Most news conferences are fairly quick events - do not be surprised if everything is over in less than an hour. Aim to have the following programme:

- introduction of speakers and welcome media representatives
- short inputs by each speaker (try to stick to 3 speakers or less) and each should have a different angle





- questions from the media and answers
- closure: thank the media for coming and sum up

Most interviews by radio and television take place after the conference. You may need to facilitate these by introducing or suggesting possible interview subjects to the media - though they will almost certainly have their own ideas.

After the news conference

- Drop off copies of the press packs to media sources that did not attend the conference but are interested in covering the story.
- Keep copies of the media coverage of your event - print and electronic copies for your records.
- Update your media lists with details gathered from the attendance register.
- Evaluate how the news conference went: attendance, speakers, coverage, organisation and other aspects of the event and use your learning points for future news conferences.

Photo calls

Photo calls sometimes take place after news conferences, though they may happen as part of other events or independently. For a successful photo call you will need to think up, and create, a strong visual image — think of activities, people and symbols. Here are some pointers for your planning:

- It can be effective to organise an activity (such as a march or picket) with an important national landmark in the background eg. The national parliament buildings, defence headquarters or a well-known monument.
- Think of powerful visual symbols that you can use (possibly symbols that have a special meaning in your country or region) eg. shoes, prosthetic limbs, death masks, balloons, flowers and candles.
- Colours are another important part of the visual message: steer clear of party political colours and choose colours that will have a visual impact by limiting yourself to one or two strong colours. You may decide to use colours with a symbolic meaning such as white for peace, black for death etc.

- It can be useful to involve local artists in staging a happening or open air exhibition, such as the broken chair sculpture built by Handicap International, and find ways to use and illustrate local craft such as batik paintings, beadwork, baskets and so on.
- Consider involving a well-known public figure, such as a singer, sports player, religious leader, politician or ICBL ambassador. It is important that this celebrity takes part in an action or activity, as this will inspire television crews as well as still photographers (working for newspapers or magazines). The celebrity could lay a wreath, walk through an artificial minefield or meet landmine survivors in a hospital, for example.
- At the event, make sure that you have lots of ICBL props: posters, banners, stickers, postcards and T-shirts.

Examples of successful photo opportunities include: children painting banners in a park in Geneva, the shoe pyramid in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, landmine survivors removing their prosthetic limbs outside the White House in Washington DC and a candlelight vigil for mine victims in a cathedral in Maputo.

Once you have planned your photo call you will need to alert picture editors giving them details of the time and place of the event (see the section about Media Advisories). At the event, hand out press packs and be prepared to give the full names of anybody who will appear in the photograph and other details to the photographers. Also, invite your own photographer to take pics for use in future campaign brochures or exhibitions. Their photographs can also be offered to members of the media who did not show up at the event.

So you want to come across well in interviews!

Speaking on radio, television or in the print media, is one of the most powerful and immediate way of getting your messages across - because people relate to other people and the human interest pushes your story to the front of the queue.

Types of interviews

There are different types of interviews: "On location" interviews when the radio reporter or TV crew come to you, "down the line" when the interview is transmitted from location to the studio and interviews over the telephone. They may also be live or edited. Most campaigns do a mixture of on location and telephone interviews both live and edited.

Make it easy for them

To succeed in the world of media, with its tight deadlines and quick turnover of stories, you need to be prepared. When asked for an interview at short notice, do everything possible to meet the deadline. If you send out a press release have a calm spokesperson available to conduct interviews. Also make your home telephone number available to the media as many radio interviews for example are conducted early in the morning, before your office will be open. If you make the effort you could get onto prime time radio or television - and it's definitely worth the effort to get our message across!

Before the interview

Find out about the interview, its length and context. Ask about the programme's target audience ask the interviewer for the questions beforehand (if possible). If you are on a talk show or one of several interview subjects, find out who the other guests are to gauge which message you will need to get across or which opponents you will be up against.

Decide on three or four main points you would like to make. Then prioritise what you will say if you are not able to talk about everything. Keep it Short and Simple (KISS). Practise making these points. Think how to turn a negative question into a positive answer. If you are appearing on TV think about what to wear. Don't write out a speech or get bogged down

by too many facts. If it helps you, then jot down a few main points and phrases!

During the interview

- Give yourself a pep talk, reminding yourself that you know your subject best.
- Concentrate on getting your main points across.
- Bring them to life with real examples.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Remember that unless the show is being recorded live, the broadcast version will almost certainly contain only edited quotes. Short, sharp "sound bites" are more likely to survive the editing process.
- Make sure the ICBL or your campaign gets mentioned at the beginning. If appropriate say what it does and what it stands for in your opening remarks.
- Keep eye contact with the interviewer. Have a conversation with your interviewer - imagine you're talking to a friend.
- If you don't know the answer, then say so (don't lie or make up facts or um and ah!). Remember to limit yourself to what the journalist wants to know - don't feel compelled to go on if you don't think it will help your cause.
- Be careful not to let the journalist put words in your mouth and don't respond to hearsay as this may the reporter's way of getting an emotive response from you. Never allow untrue statements to go unchallenged.
- Be clear that you do not say things that you do not want to be quoted on. Sometimes journalists make you feel comfortable so that they "get" information that they might not otherwise obtain if the environment is not "friendly". If you are giving information for background only and do not want to be quoted, be absolutely clear to the reporter.
- As a general rule, the "no comment" approach should be avoided, because it alienates people and allows the "other side" to have the final and only say in a story.

On radio

Radio is the most immediate medium, so address the needs of radio journalists first, then television, then newspapers. Avoid calling radio journalists in the countdown times - 15 minutes before the hour. The ideal time is about five or ten minutes after the hour, when the bulletin has been read and things have calmed down a little. Resist the temptation to do radio inter-



views then and there. Give yourself five or ten minutes (at least) for preparation.

- avoid microphone popping - don't get too close to the microphone or speak into it, but instead speak over it
- never speak on an intercom phone or mobile phone - the sound gets distorted
- when doing a telephone interview don't speak straight into the mouth piece - keep it a bit away from your mouth and don't move the phone around because the noise will transfer
- bring it to life - tell a story, talk normally but in an animated and lively way
- assume the expression relating to what you are saying (smile or frown) as this will help your voice to reflect this feeling. For example if you are saying, "We are celebrating the treaty coming into force today. It is a proud moment for us", then smile as you are saying it and your voice will come across as positive.
- Soundbites: use short, catchy phrases, short sentences
- Breathe!

On television

- look the part but be comfortable. For example, wear a suit if appropriate, but don't wear something that will make you feel ill-at-ease
- don't wear red, white or stripes as these blur the TV cameras. Pale blue is a good colour.
- Sit comfortably and try not to fidget
- Make eye contact with the interviewer
- Interrupt gracefully or firmly if you disagree with another guest or the interviewer. For example, say "If you'll allow me to come in here...the facts speak for themselves, there are few cases where minefields have been properly mapped and marked in conventional warfare..."
- Remember that communication is about information and presentation. It is about what you say and how you say it and come across
- Have a last line ready as a concluding statement. If you have nothing further to say, simply repeat your main point.
- Strive to be: credible, clear, warm, professional, yourself
- Practise with your colleagues and ask for feedback from colleagues and the interviewer after an interview.

Hostile interviews: how to deal with them

These interviewers generally fall into a number of categories in relation to the techniques they employ. All are controllable if you adopt the right approach.

The machine gun interviewer

This journalist usually asks multi-point questions in rapid succession, which are designed to confuse. You don't know where to start.

Approach: firstly do not allow yourself to be flustered (you can only answer one question at a time). Select one question you can deal with and answer it calmly, in a way that allows you to include one of the points you have decided to make in the interview. Then move on to the next question and repeat the process.

The interrupter

This journalist rarely allows you to finish any statement before cutting in with another question, which is a technique that leaves inexperienced interviewees flustered and angry. This proactive style often achieves what it aims to elicit - an angry, emotional outburst.

Approach: always employ the interjection - listen to it, broadly acknowledge it and then return and complete your original point.

The paraphraser

This journalist incorrectly (and often unfairly) re-states everything you have said. Unfortunately, in this scenario, inexperienced interviewees often find themselves agreeing to something they haven't said.

Approach: first, indicate firmly that their interpretation is wrong. Then proceed to restate your position calmly, giving emphasis to the positive aspects of your case.

The dart-thrower

This journalist usually combines a poisonous statement with a following question. For example, "You obviously don't care much about your members - why is this issue so important to your campaign?" The barb is ignored in favour of answering the question.

Approach: immediately address the erroneous statement by using the reverse-positive approach. For example, "In fact our members are our priority, and this is reflected in the way we are dealing with this issue now", then proceed to address the question in equally positive terms.

Interview checklist

- Have you done your homework on the show/programme/target audience etc?
- Have you written your main points on a card and memorised them beforehand? Concentrate on putting across only a few points, and only one or two telling facts.
- Have you practised to avoid using technical language and jargon, long answers, a "public speaking" tone?
- Did you NOT relax and slump into your chair when the interview was still in progress?
- Did you set the record straight, politely but firmly?
- Did your quotes or "sound bites" survive editing?
- Did you remain calm throughout the interview?



So you want to write a letter to the editor

Writing a letter to the editor is often the easiest way to get your message in print and the letters pages of some publications are often the most widely read section of a publication.

A letter is usually written to educate the reader or make them look at an article published in the newspaper or magazine in a different way. In general a letter to the editor is published if the writer:

- has been injured by something published in the paper;
- disagrees with something that was published;
- can offer expert opinion or additional information on something published; and
- can offer an interesting opinion about a current news event.

The letter may refer to an article, editorial, opinion-editorial (op-ed) piece or column in the publication. Alternatively, the letter may comment on a public statement or a recent news event (eg. Destruction of stocks, international landmines conference, recent mine incident). The letter will begin by noting the article in question or the news event. Then the author will point out an omission or incorrect aspect of the story and then put forward a different argument or supply additional information. The letter may include a personal perspective or experience or that of the organisation, which the writer represents.

Some tips

- Write and submit your letter to the newspaper as near to the publishing date of the offending article, or as near to an event or public statement, as possible. Your letter is more likely to be published if it is still of interest to the readership.
- Call the publication and ask to speak to the "letters to the editor" department: ask how long the letter should be, ask for the name, title and fax number, email and postal address. Check whether they will accept faxed or emailed letters - because some publications require the original letter.
- Write a first draft of the letter that reflects your immediate feelings and reactions to the story. Then follow this with a second and third draft that analyses the story or event and puts forward a strong argument.



- Make sure that you have your facts right - check with colleagues in your campaign and other experts in the ICBL and other structures. Ask other campaigners and friends or family to read the article and give you their comments.
- Keep it short - editor's hold the right to cut letters, so don't take several paragraphs to introduce the argument. Also, make sure that the opening two lines are strong and simple: note the title and date of the article you are referring to and state your position.
- Focus your argument on the article and don't make your letter a personal attack on the author.
- Use quotations marks to indicate phrases or sentences that are quoted from the original article.
- Sign the letter and put your telephone number and address under your signature. If you would like to use a pen-name (such as "ban campaigner", "outraged" etc) then you will still need to put in your real name underneath and contact details. The newspaper may need to contact you to discuss an editing change they have made.
- If your letter is published: take note of what changes were made or parts cut out for next time. If your letter is NOT published: phone the editor and ask politely why this happened. Sometimes it is simply the luck of the draw - your letter was one of many competing for space on that day!

So you want to design materials: posters, leaflets, stickers, banners, ...

Planning your poster/leaflet/stickers/banners

- 1. Get the idea**
 - What is the purpose of your poster/leaflet/sticker/banner?
 - Who is the audience? (the educational level, age, community background and many different factors will affect the kind of material you produce)
- 2. Plan the content or message**

The headline: a simple slogan is called for in most posters, leaflets, stickers or banners. The fewer words used to get the message across is better; the main thing is not to waste any space or time. But make sure that the slogan you choose reflects the message of the campaign however, and is not simply a clever "gimmick" and also check that it does not offend the reader. It can be helpful to test the slogan with your members and with non-members (ask your friends, family and neighbours what they think). Don't use much punctuation, except for perhaps exclamation marks in your "punch line" or question marks where there is a question. Posters, particularly, often include a call to action - asking the viewer to do something - so this could be part of your slogan. Some slogans used by the ICBL and other organisations include:

 - Landmines must will be stopped
 - Ban mines, clear mines, help survivors!
 - Negotiate a true ban treaty: no exceptions, no loopholes, no reservations
 - Are we the enemy? Ban mines now!
 - Working together for a landmine free world - for the children!
- 3. Plan the visual**

The material used for the visual or image in the poster, sticker or leaflet may be a photograph, artist drawing, campaign logo or drawing by a child — they can all be highly effective. Take



care to use only the parts of a photograph that are necessary to get the desired effect - crop the pictures if necessary. Just as drawings must be bold and easily comprehensible from a distance, so photographs must be close-up examinations of faces, figures, things or situation that dramatise the theme.

The best materials have a strong pictorial element and brief word message that hang together to form a highly appealing and easily understood whole.

4. Produce the product

When you have already decided what the poster is for and for whom, how to say it in the least number of words and have found the appropriate photograph or graphic that will go along with the text, then you are ready to execute your plan.

Decide how you will get the design ideas on to paper. Is there a campaigner who knows about desktop publishing (DTP)? Do you know of a DTP studio or professional you can contract in? Also find out if the printers or a local newspaper or magazine would provide this service. You might also think about commissioning an artist to do the illustration and lettering.

Then decide how you will reproduce the materials. Silk-screening methods and hand painting have largely been replaced by cheaper, quicker and more professional methods of printing and photocopying. Find out from your printer about the different options and the costs. Ask them what kind of artwork they will require - sometimes a printer will typeset your text and scan in a photograph or image and sometimes you will need to supply them with the art work on disc or on paper.

Also ask about ways to keep your costs down, for example by using cheaper paper or printing in fewer colours instead of full colour. Usually too, the more copies you have printed, the cheaper each item will be (but think carefully about whether you will be able to use or distribute everything you get printed before printing 1000s).

Tips for posters

- if the poster should be read from a few metres away (say you are planning to tie them to lamp posts in the street), make sure the text is bold enough
- make sure that the layout is composed so that the eye moves easily from illustration to headline, to subtitle to text
- check that there is a focal point - to attract you to look at and

read the poster and to guide the reader

- there should be enough white space around the text and illustration. Remember: simplicity is often more effective than complexity

Tips for leaflets

- find a good photograph or graphic to include on the front of the brochure to attract the reader and to illustrate your main point
- write a headline that will grab attention and outline your main points
- put the action last and in bold - eg. do you want the reader to make a donation, join the campaign or write a letter to a decision-maker?
- Include the name of the campaign and contact details at the end of the leaflet

Tips for stickers

- choose your sticker size carefully and check how many stickers can be printed on each sheet (for eg. 10 stickers may be printed on one A4 sheet)
- think about how they can be used in different ways - on folders, in campaign packs etc - and make sure that their size and message is suitable for this
- because they are fairly small - keep the design and text simple
- as stickers are often cheap to produce you may want to produce the same designs in several languages

Tips for banners

- think about where and how these will be used. Will they be carried on a march? Will they form the backdrop for a conference? If you choose text that is quite general a banner can be used again and again
- how will the banner be hung or held? If you are using the banner at a conference, visit the venue and work out how it will be fixed in place. Ask the banner makers or printers to include eyelets (for string and rope) or a hem (for wooden sticks) for this purpose.

Checklist

- Idea: check whether the theme can be brought out in a



SO YOU WANT TO PUBLICISE YOUR CAMPAIGN?

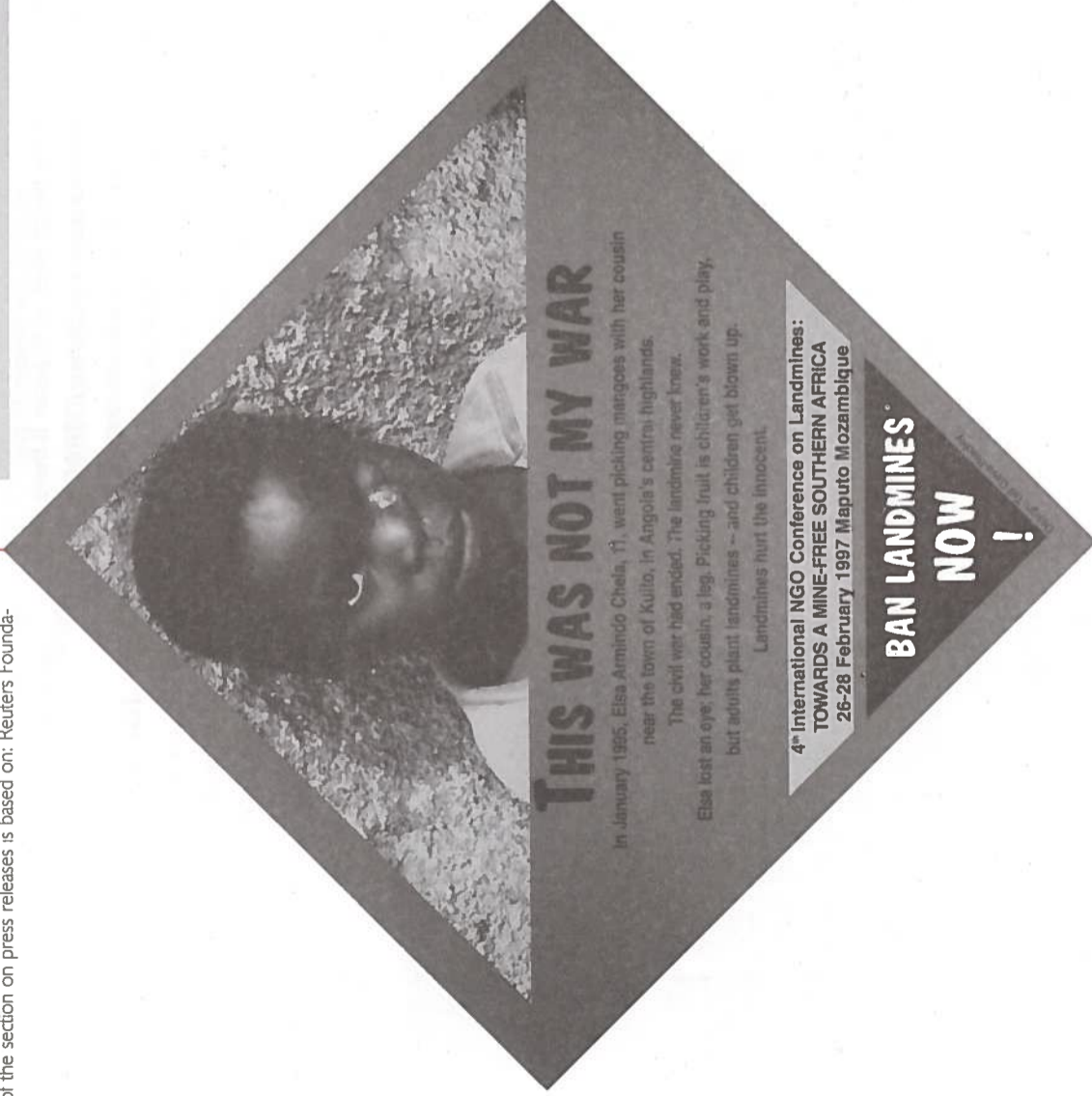
single brief slogan

- Immediate impact: a viewer will decide at a quick glance whether they will read on - does your design and text grab them?
- Interest: have you made the information interesting and relevant to the reader? Are they drawn in on the human-interest angle for example?
- Information: are the facts introduced logically and well illustrated?
- Impulsion: will the material bring about an impulsion to act or feel?
- Insistence: is the viewer called into action?

Footnotes

1 Much of the section on press releases is based on: Reuters Founda-

- 1 ton, Making News, "Writing a News Release" and Cambodia Communication Institute's, "How to Write a Media Release"
- 2 The section on interviews draws from: Reuters Foundation, Making News, "TV and Radio Interviews", the ICBL's "How to Talk to the Media".
- 3 This section is based on a leaflet produced by Amnesty International USA, entitled: "How to... Write a letter-to-the-editor"
- 4 This section draws from "What is a good poster", from a media resource pack produced by the National Land Committee (a land rights NGO, South Africa).



Design & Layout MANIK Design (011) 788 7050, Printed by PRINT ART © 219784 Sana'a-Yemen

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO BAN LANDMINES - SEPT. 2000

