

# Cyprus mine rescue: The final chapter

In the June 2006 edition of *Platypus Magazine*, former AFP member Jack Thurgar wrote of reuniting with Chrysos Seas, a Cypriot farmer whose life Jack had saved in a 1979 mine accident.

Jack had travelled to Chrysos' home in Cyprus after hearing Chrysos was in bad health. The reunion was emotional for both men as they recalled the

day Jack entered a minefield after seeing Chrysos' tractor explode on impact with a mine.

In the story's final chapter, the Mine Action Centre announced the field had been cleared of mines and the tractor returned to Chrysos, at his request.

The United Nations provided photos of the event.



In July last year, the United Nations Mine Action Centre (MAC) completed mine clearance operations in the Kaimakli area of Cyprus, releasing 117,000m<sup>2</sup> of land. For the first time in 27 years, a crop of barley was harvested in June 2006.

Clearance of the field allowed access to the tractor damaged in the 1979 accident that seriously injured Chrysos Seas. The field had since become known as the "blue tractor minefield".

At Mr Seas' request, the United Nations Force in Cyprus, along with the MAC, removed the tractor from the area it had rested for 27 years, and transported to Mr Seas' home in Strovolos.

Since November 2004, the MAC has cleared 23 minefields, totalling 1,431,135 square metres of land and destroying 2318 mines.



The blue tractor can be seen in the UN-patrolled buffer zone, below, where the accident occurred in 1979. UNFICYP peacekeepers and MAC de-miners, above, help lift and remove the blue tractor.

