

## First "Big Bang" in Africa

**S**ome 4 700 anti-personnel mines were blown up at the Alkantpan Testing Range at Copperton on 21 May 1997. Altogether 550 kg of explosives were used to destroy the mines. The then Minister of Defence, the late Mr Joe Modise, emphasised South Africa's commitment - "We want to give the world the assurance that, in this country, anti-personnel mines will never be manufactured again for war". Some mines were kept in stock for research and development purposes. A total of 5 000 high explosive anti-personnel mines will be used for research and deployment and 13 000 practice anti-personnel mines for demining training. *(For more information please read the article as published in SALUT, July 1997, p 12-13).* 



Mr Ronnie Kasrils, the then Deputy Minister of Defence, looks at an army boot after it was in an anti-personnel mine explosion.

## Co-operation for a greener military environment

**T**he establishment and activities of the RSA-USA Environmental Security Working Group has been one of many success stories in the Logistics Division over the past decade.

The Environmental Security Working Group (ESWG) got down to work and at the outset identified several areas for co-operation. Right from the start it was agreed that we should work towards producing lasting products that would also be made available to other militaries in the world.

The two countries work on an equal footing and both contribute equally to the joint projects. This contributed largely to the success of the ESWG. The Americans do have bilateral relations for environmental security with scores of countries. However, they regard the South African ESWG as one of the most successful and productive. On 10 February 1999 the then South African Minister of Defence, the late Mr Joe



The US Secretary for Defence, Mr Cohen (left), and the then South African Minister of Defence, the late Mr Joe Modise, at the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Agreement.

Modise, and the US Secretary for Defence, Mr Cohen, signed the Memorandum of Agreement regarding Co-operation on Military Environmental Matters during a ceremony in the Castle in Cape Town. An environmental management conference was held at the Kwalata Game Lodge, north of Pretoria, in August 2003. The conference was attended by 120 delegates from 26 countries from five continents, the first global conference on this subject. The conference was a huge success and the

participants were impressed by the South African hospitality and the arrangements for the conference. The latter was largely due to the dedicated efforts of the RSA project officer, Lt Col Hannes Potgieter, and his large team of co-workers. The conference laid the foundation of a worldwide network of military environmental practitioners. It was fitting that this conference was co-hosted by the two oldest countries with formal military environmental management programmes, the USA and the RSA. 