

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: July 5th, 2011

SUBJECT: EQUATORIA – A WALK ACROSS AFRICA - Explorer/anthropologist completes trip in support of MAG

LOCATION: Luanda, ANGOLA

Julian Monroe Fisher, renowned African explorer, Anthropologist, Fellow with The Royal Geographical Society in London and Fellow with The Explorer's Club in New York City, has successfully completed his EQUATORIA – A WALK ACROSS AFRICA 'coast to coast' Mozambique to Angola overland crossing of the African continent.

Based upon recommendations from the expeditions security advisors, land mine specialists with MAG Angola and the Angolan consulate in Zambia, Julian's EQUATORIA – A Walk Across Africa ended with the MAG Angola field team in the village of Lucusse, Moxico Province, Angola. It was simply deemed to dangerous to walk across the Angolan province of Moxico, one of the most heavily land mined regions on the planet.

The ending was appropriate in that the stated goal of EQUATORIA – A Walk Across Africa was not just to walk coast to coast from Mozambique to Angola but also aimed to bring global awareness to the work of MAG International (<http://www.maginternational.org/>) and their efforts to clean up the remnants of war in places like Angola. The simple truth, remnants of conflict continue to pose huge threat to civilians and their communities.

This reality became ever so poignant to Julian when he arrived to the village of Lucusse, Moxico, Angola, where a MAG Angola field team had in the previous few days removed no less than eight land mines that had been in the ground lying in wait to reap their havoc since the mid 1980's. Yes, some 31 years waiting for a farmer or his kids to take the wrong step.

In an interview with local media in the Moxico capital of Luena, Julian said, "MAG and their field teams are not just removing land mines and other remnants of warfare long after the peace treaties have been signed and all the warriors have all gone home. The dedicated men and women that comprise MAG Mine Action Teams in Angola and around the globe right now are also clearing vast areas, in the case of Lucusse village, more than 180,000 square meters, in order that the villagers and their children can once again have a safe place to live, grow and prosper. Indeed MAG saves lives, builds futures!"

Fisher concluded his interview in Luena by saying, "Africa is a complex mixture of beauty and ugliness all wrapped up into one vast space. What MAG is doing is trying to reduce that ugliness and allow the opportunity for that natural beauty to shine! I applaud MAG Angola's work and I am ever grateful for the warm hospitality they and the people of Angola have extended to me along with the amazing experience MAG Angola has provided me with."

Following his visit with the MAG Angola field team, Julian's EQUATORIA – A Walk Across Africa went on to reach the Atlantic Ocean, he was welcomed by Antonio Lemos, Country Office Manager for Mag Angola, upon his arrival to an isolated strip of beach just outside the capital city of Luanda, Angola.

Having successfully travelled coast to coast walking through towns and villages and national parks comprising parts of the territories of Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, DR Congo and Angola, Fisher was asked what he and his expedition discovered. With a smile he replied, "I have learned a lot about the you and me in this life. I can't really speak for you, but for me, well I know that if we do not start listening to each other more and more, the future of our species is questionable. We need to put politics and greed and the focus on self aside; we need to put the future of our children first. As the Kenyan proverb goes, "Treat the Earth well. It was not given to you by your parents. It was loaned to you by your children."

For post expedition interviews and additional information:
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Julian Monroe Fisher (left) welcomed by Antonio Lemos, Country Office Manager for Mag Angola, upon his arrival to Ilha de Luanda, a beach along the Atlantic Ocean just outside the city of Luanda, the capital of Angola. (Anna Kudarewska)

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Julian Monroe Fisher (right) is given a first-hand look at what MAG's work is all about by Technical Field Manager Abel Tesfai. (Chelsea Moore)

IMG_3130

Julian Monroe Fisher walking in a land mine field just outside the village of Lucusse, Moxico Province, Angola. (Chelsea Moore)

IMG_3158

Julian Monroe Fisher with a Mine Action Team in the field just outside the village of Lucusse, Moxico Province, Angola. (Chelsea Moore)

IMG_3170

Julian Monroe Fisher holding a deactivated land mine in the field just outside the village of Lucusse, Moxico Province, Angola. (Chelsea Moore)

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