

# Media Update

3 April 2017

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## United Nations

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY- GENERAL

### International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

4 April 2017

In today's world, conflicts are multiplying and increasingly interlinked.

Most disturbingly, many warring parties shamelessly target civilians and show a flagrant disregard for international humanitarian law.

Improvised explosive devices are killing and injuring thousands of civilians annually.

These pernicious devices are hidden in homes and schools, terrorizing local populations.

Over the past twenty years, the United Nations and its partners have cleared vast areas of land contaminated by landmines and explosive remnants of war. Land that was once dangerous and unproductive has been returned to citizens, enabling them to rebuild their communities. The removal of landmines from roads and airstrips has facilitated humanitarian access to people in need.

The United Nations has provided medical assistance to victims, and educated millions of people on how to live safely during or in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

We have also trained and employed thousands of men and women in mine action jobs that support and sustain peace.

I thank the brave women and men working in mine action for their life-saving work.



I commend the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action for its needs-driven, people centred approach.

And I applaud the United Nations Mine Action Service, now in its 20th year, for its leadership, courage and commitment to peace.

Peace without mine action is incomplete peace.

I urge all Member States to keep this issue at the top of the international agenda when negotiating peace, when seeking to prevent harm during conflicts, and when deploying emergency humanitarian responses in war zones.

Mine action establishes the foundations for lasting recovery and development.

No one should have to live in fear of dying even after the fighting stops.

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