

**Landmine Monitor 2017 report  
Continuous and alarming annual increase in the number  
of new casualties over the last three years,  
reversing a 15-year decline.**

**EMBARGO 14 DECEMBER 00.01 - (WASHINGTON TIME, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) - UTC-5**

**Montreal, 14 December 2017.** Published today, the Landmine Monitor 2017 report has revealed a dramatic increase in the annual number of new casualties of mines and explosive remnants of war for the third year running. At least 8,605 people were killed or injured by these weapons in 2016, compared with 3,450 in 2013. This 150% increase is due to particularly heavy casualty rates in conflict zones in Afghanistan, Libya, Ukraine and Yemen. To coincide with a Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Treaty, which bans the use of anti-personnel mines, from 18 to 22 December in Vienna, Austria, Handicap International is calling on States to enforce international humanitarian law and to put pressure on belligerent parties to end the use of these barbaric weapons.

- The Landmine Monitor 2017 report measures the impact of the Ottawa Treaty, which bans the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines, for the period December 2016 to November 2017 when possible.
- The report reveals that the number of new casualties of anti-personnel mines - factory-made or improvised - and explosive remnants of war increased by almost 25% in one year, rising from 6,967 casualties in 2015 to 8,605 casualties in 2016. The number of casualties nearly doubled between 2014 and 2015 (6,967 new casualties in 2015 compared with 3,993 in 2014). Rising from 3,450 in 2013 to 8,605 in 2016, the annual number of new casualties **has increased 2.5 times in three years.**

**This is the largest number of casualties recorded by the Landmine Monitor since the publication of its first annual report in 2000 (9,228 casualties recorded in 1999). The number of new casualties increased for the third year running after 15 years of almost steady decline.**

- The vast majority of people killed by anti-personnel mines are civilians: **78% of casualties were civilians in 2016**, of whom 42% were children.
- **The Landmine Monitor also recorded the highest number of child casualties of these weapons and casualties of improvised mines** (explosive devices produced by belligerent parties acting as anti-personnel mines) **since the publication of the first annual report in 2000: 1,554 children were casualties of mines in 2016.** A total of 1,805 people were casualties of improvised mines in 2016, including 1,180 casualties recorded in Afghanistan alone.
- In 2016, the majority of new casualties of anti-personnel mines - factory-made or improvised - and explosive remnants of war were recorded in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. Mine casualties were recorded in **56 States and territories** around the world.
- The Landmine Monitor confirmed new uses of anti-personnel mines by government forces in Myanmar and Syria between October 2016 and October 2017. Non-State groups also used anti-personnel mines, including improvised mines, in at least nine countries: Afghanistan, India, Iraq, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen.

- These uses have caused high-level contamination that will endanger the lives of thousands of people over the long-term. A total of **61 States and territories have been contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war** around the world. Handicap International is calling on States to support mine risk education, mine clearance and victim assistance programmes, which are absolutely necessary for these countries and territories.
- **Quote 1:** "With 8,650 people injured and killed in 2016, mines have caused a number of casualties equivalent to that recorded by the Landmine Monitor when it published its first annual report in 2000. After 15 years of steady decline, the annual number of new casualties since 2013 has increased 2.5 times, marking an unacceptable step backwards. We need to constantly remind people that war does not justify everything. International rules already exist: the Ottawa Treaty, the Oslo Convention banning cluster munitions, and the Geneva Conventions are all designed to protect civilians. It is the responsibility of all States to champion these rules, apply them and make sure they are enforced."
- **Quote 2:** "Anti-personnel mines are, by their very nature, 'cowardly weapons'. They have a serious and lasting impact on casualties: the explosive charge is very often designed to tear off its victim's leg. Mines kill and cause complex injuries, often with serious disabling sequelae, and serious psychological trauma. The onset of disability caused by mines - most often following the amputation of a lower limb - is often accompanied by social stigmatisation, making it difficult for the victim to return to normal life. We must constantly remind States and armed groups that the use of these weapons is banned and that international law must be respected."
- **Quote 3:** "We are witnessing an alarming upsurge in the use of mines, and an unacceptable increase in the number of mine casualties. These new uses have caused a high level of contamination in several countries, which will require the intervention of mine clearance experts for many years to come. There is also an urgent need to enhance victim assistance. These activities require the support of the international community, which must systematically condemn any violation of international humanitarian law."

**The Ottawa Treaty** bans the acquisition, production, stockpiling and use of anti-personnel mines. The treaty was opened for signing on 3 December 1997. It entered into force on 1 March 1999. A total of 163 States have signed it to date and 162 States are party to the treaty.

#### **About Handicap International**

Handicap International is an independent international aid organisation. It has been working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster for 30 years. Working alongside persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, our action and testimony are focused on responding to their essential needs, improving their living conditions, and promoting respect for their dignity and basic rights. Since it was founded in 1982, Handicap International has set up development programmes in more than 60 countries and intervenes in numerous emergency situations. The network of eight national associations (Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States) works constantly to mobilise resources, jointly manage projects and to increase the impact of the organisation's principles and actions. Handicap International is one of six founding organisations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), the co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 and the winner of the Conrad N. Hilton Award in 2011. Handicap International takes action and campaigns in places where "living in dignity" is no easy task.

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