



Press release

Landmine Monitor 2018

Third year of exceptionally high casualties in 2017.

Paris, 20 November 2018. The Landmine Monitor 2018, published today, reported a third year of exceptionally high casualties caused by landmines, particularly improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and explosive remnants of war (ERW). The Monitor recorded 7,239 mine/ERW casualties in 2017. There were 3,993 casualties in 2014, when numbers rose for the first time after a near 15-year decline. This is due in particular to the heavy toll inflicted by improvised mines in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and other conflict areas. To coincide with the Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Treaty, which bans the use of landmines, from 26 to 30 November in Geneva, HI is calling on governments to support victim assistance in the wake of a dramatic three-year rise in needs.

- The Monitor reports that the number of casualties of landmines - factory-made or improvised - and explosive remnants of war **remained exceptionally high in 2017 at 7,239**. This represents a record number of casualties for **a third year in a row**, after 9,437 casualties in 2016 and 6,967 in 2015. As data is difficult to collect in existing or recent conflict zones, the actual number is probably much higher.
- **There were 2,716 casualties of improvised mines in 2017: the highest number since the Monitor was first published in 2000.** Casualties of improvised mines were reported in 18 countries, mainly Afghanistan (1,093) and Syria (887). **Two thirds of mine casualties were killed or injured by improvised mines (2,716) and explosive remnants of war (2,038).**
- The high total was mostly due to casualties recorded **in countries with armed conflicts or endemic violence**: in 2017, most casualties of factory-made or improvised mines and explosive remnants of war were reported in Afghanistan (2,300), Syria (1,906), Ukraine (429) and Iraq (304). Casualties were identified in 53 **states and other areas** around the world.
- Civilians are still the main casualties of mines/ERW: **87% of casualties were civilians in 2017**, of whom **47% were children**. **2,452 children** were casualties of mines and explosive remnants of war in 2017.
- The Monitor confirms the **new use of landmines by government forces in Myanmar** between October 2017 and October 2018. **Non-state armed groups also used landmines, including improvised mines, in at least eight countries**: Afghanistan, Colombia, India, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Thailand and Yemen.
- High-level contamination puts thousands of lives at risk during and long after the end of conflicts. **A total of 60 states and other areas have been contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war** around the world. HI is calling on states to support mine risk education, mine clearance and victim assistance as an absolute necessity in these countries and areas.
- International and domestic funding for mine action was particularly high in 2017 (\$771.5 million), an increase of 36% over the previous twelve months. **Support for victim assistance activities remained particularly low at 2% of total international mine action funding or \$15.8 million out of \$667.2 million.** As current funding is insufficient to cover the dramatic increase in demand in recent years, HI is calling on the international community to take immediate action to turn the situation around.

- The Landmine Monitor 2018 reports on progress made in 2017, and as of November 2018 where possible, towards implementing the Ottawa Treaty that bans the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of landmines.
- **Quote 1:** “An exceptionally high number of casualties of improvised mines has been recorded since 2015. This new use and the large-scale bombing of several countries has caused high-level contamination that will take years to clear. International rules - the Ottawa Treaty, the Oslo Convention banning cluster munitions, and the Geneva Conventions - exist to protect civilians. All states have a duty to advance, apply and enforce them.”
- **Quote 2:** “Landmines are ‘cowardly weapons’. Mines kill and cause complex injuries, often with serious disabling sequelae, and cause serious psychological trauma. The onset of disability caused by mines - most often following the amputation of a lower limb – is often the cause of social stigma which makes it hard for victims to return to a normal life. We constantly need to remind states and armed groups that the use of these weapons is banned and that international law must be respected.”
- **Quote 3:** “Though the number of victims has almost doubled since 2014, financial support for victim assistance continues to decline and is insufficient to meet demand. The 33 States Parties with significant numbers of casualties lack the resources and skills to assist victims. Services are too centralised and difficult to access for people in rural and remote areas. There is a glaring shortage of physical rehabilitation equipment and resources. Urgent support is needed for victim assistance, without which casualties cannot rebuild their lives and communities.”

The Ottawa Treaty bans the acquisition, production, stockpiling and use of landmines. The treaty was opened for signature on 3 December 1997. It entered into force on 1 March 1999. There are 164 States Parties. One State - the Marshall Islands - is a signatory.

About HI

HI is an independent international aid organisation. It has been working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster for 30 years. Working alongside people 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, HI 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. HI 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. HI takes action and campaigns in places where “living in dignity” is no easy task.

Learn more: hi-canada.org

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