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High numbers of civilian landmine casualties in Ukraine, Myanmar, Syria, Yemen Annual Monitor report charts marked increase in mine action funding

(Geneva, 14 November 2023) New use of antipersonnel landmines drove a rise in new casualties from the weapons in 2022 and is a stark reminder of the need to respect the Mine Ban Treaty, said the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) today upon releasing its *Landmine Monitor 2023* report. Increased levels of mine action funding and of land cleared reflects the collective determination to reach a mine-free world.

“The Mine Ban Treaty must be the cornerstone of all efforts to rid the world of antipersonnel mines given its total ban on their use, transfer, stockpiling, and production, under any circumstances,” said Tamar Gabelnick, ICBL Director. “The only way communities will be truly safe from the scourge of these weapons is when all states have joined and are fully respecting the treaty.”

Adopted on 18 September 1997, the Mine Ban Treaty prohibits the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel mines and requires victim assistance, mine clearance and stockpile destruction. Currently there are 164 States Parties to the treaty; the last countries to join it were Palestine and Sri Lanka in 2017.

The *Landmine Monitor 2023* report by the [ICBL](#) has been released ahead of the Mine Ban Treaty’s Twenty-First Meeting of States Parties, which takes place at the United Nations in Geneva from 20 to 24 November.

Antipersonnel landmines are explosive devices that kill and wound people during and long after conflicts. They are placed above, under, or on the ground and explode from a person’s presence, proximity, or contact. Antipersonnel mines are typically placed by hand, but they can also be scattered by aircraft, rockets, and artillery, or dispersed from specialized vehicles. Uncleared landmines destroy livelihoods, deny land use, and disrupt access to essential services in more than 60 countries and territories.

According to the Monitor report, 4,710 people were injured or killed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) across 49 states and two other areas in 2022. Civilians accounted for 85% of landmine and ERW casualties recorded in 2022, half of them children (1,171). The highest number of annual casualties was recorded in Syria (834) and Ukraine (608). Amidst the conflict in Ukraine, the country saw a ten-fold increase in the number of civilian landmine and ERW casualties compared to 2021 (58). Yemen and Myanmar both recorded more than 500 casualties in 2022.

New use of the weapon represents one of the greatest challenges to the norm against antipersonnel landmines. The annual Landmine Monitor report finds that states not party

Myanmar and Russia used antipersonnel landmines in 2022. Russia has used antipersonnel mines extensively in Ukraine since its all-out invasion of the country in February 2022. Ukrainian authorities are investigating the circumstances of its forces using antipersonnel mines in and around the city of Iziium, in Kharkiv oblast, in 2022 when the city was under Russian control.

Non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in at least five states—Colombia, India, Myanmar, Thailand, and Tunisia—also used antipersonnel mines during the reporting period. Additionally, new use has been attributed to NSAGs in countries in or bordering the Sahel region of Africa.

“In a world where conflicts rage and civilians bear the brunt of the impact, the total eradication of landmines remains a crucial step towards ending that suffering,” said Katrin Atkins, editor for reporting on mine action and a trained demining expert. “Landmine clearance is not just a worthy goal, or an obligation of the Mine Ban Treaty, it's a humanitarian imperative.”

According to the Monitor report, 60 countries and other areas are contaminated by antipersonnel mines. This includes 33 States Parties with current clearance obligations under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty, in addition to 22 states not party and five other areas. Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Cambodia, Croatia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Türkiye, and Ukraine are the States Parties with the highest level of contamination, having reported more than 100km² of contaminated land in 2022. In Ukraine, the ongoing conflict is adding to the existing contamination.

A total of 30 States Parties have reported clearance of all mined areas from their territory since the Mine Ban Treaty came into force in 1999. Affected States Parties continued to clear contaminated land in 2022, collectively clearing 219.31km² and destroying 169,276 antipersonnel landmines. Almost 60% of the land cleared in 2022 was cleared in just two countries: Cambodia and Croatia.

Healthcare and physical rehabilitation services remained under-funded. Massive disruption of healthcare systems—and in some cases damage and destruction – were reported in several States Parties with significant numbers of mine victims in need of assistance, including Afghanistan, Sudan, Ukraine, and Yemen.

Although global mine action funding was on the rise, with a 52% increase in 2022 compared to 2021, States Parties with smaller mine contamination continued to lack support. Of the total US\$913.5 million allocated to mine action during the reporting period, 18% went to mine action activities in Ukraine. Funding allocated to victim assistance increased by 47% compared to 2021, but still represented only 5% of total mine action funding.

“Alarming increases in the number of civilians killed and injured by recently placed mines in several countries further demonstrate the dire need for increased resources to ensure all the rights of the victims are addressed,” added Loren Persi, editor for casualties and victim assistance reporting. “Victims need much more vital assistance that saves lives, restores mobility, and supports their wellbeing and regaining positive employment.”

MORE INFORMATION

About the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor (The Monitor)

Landmine Monitor 2023 is the 25th annual Monitor report by International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), 1997 Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Issued in advance of the Mine Ban Treaty's Twenty-First Meeting of States Parties at the United Nations in Geneva on 20–24 November, this report provides a global overview of efforts to universalize and fully implement the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, ensure clearance of mine contaminated areas, deliver risk education to affected communities, and assist victims of these weapons. More generally, the report assesses the international community's response to the global landmine situation, focusing on calendar year 2022 with information included up to October 2023 where possible.

Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor is the civil society initiative providing research and monitoring for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC).

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