



Press release

Landmine Monitor 2019 report

A fourth consecutive year of exceptionally high casualties

An alarming step back

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Montreal, 21 November 2019. Published today, the Landmine Monitor 2019 reports a fourth consecutive year of exceptionally high casualties caused by landmines, particularly explosive remnants (ERW) and improvised mines. The Monitor recorded 6,897 mine casualties in 2018. This heavy figure is mainly due to intense armed conflicts in Afghanistan, Libya, Nigeria, Syria and other conflict areas. The Ottawa Treaty banning the use of landmines entered into force 20 years ago. As States Parties to the Treaty will gather from 25 to 29 November in Oslo, Norway, HI 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 number of victims has doubled since 2014

- The Landmine Monitor 2019 report measures the impact of the Ottawa Treaty, which bans the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines for calendar year 2018, with information included up to November 2019 when possible.
- The report reveals that the number of new casualties of anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war remain high for the fourth year in a row (6,897 in 2018, 7,253 in 2017, 9,439 in 2016 and 6,971 in 2015). The number of casualties has **nearly doubled between 2014 and 2018** (6,897 new casualties in 2018 compared with 3,998 in 2014). In 2014, the Monitor recorded an average of about **10 casualties per day; in 2018, the rate nearly double to just below 20 casualties per day**. Numerous casualties went unrecorded due to difficulties in some areas to gather information.
- From the total of 6,897 mine casualties recorded in 2018, **3,789 people were killed or injured by improvised mines, which is the highest toll ever recorded by the Monitor**.
- The vast majority of people killed by anti-personnel mines are civilians: **71% of casualties were civilians in 2018, of whom 54% were children. Explosive remnants caused the most child casualties (871, or 51%)**.
- In 2018, the majority of new casualties of anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war were recorded in Afghanistan (2,234), Myanmar (430), Syria (1,465), Ukraine (325) and Yemen (596). Mine casualties were recorded in **50 States and territories** around the world.
- The Landmine Monitor confirmed new uses of anti-personnel mines by government forces in Myanmar between October 2018 and October 2019. Non-State groups also used anti-personnel mines, including improvised mines, in at least **six countries**: Afghanistan, India, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan 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 **60 States and territories have been contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war** around the world.
- Since there is a serious increase in casualties over recent years, states should reinforce **their efforts to provide assistance to victims now and in the future**. HI is also calling on states to support mine risk

education, mine clearance and victim assistance programmes, which are absolutely necessary for affected countries and territories.

Improvised mines, at the core of new challenges for Mine Action

- This year also saw the **largest number of improvised mines casualties** recorded by the Landmine Monitor since the publication of its first annual report in 2000: **3,789 people were killed or injured by improvised mines in 2018, which represents 54% of the total of new victims recorded by the Monitor (6,897).**
- **Though mainly used by non-state armed groups**, improvised anti-personnel landmines fall within the scope of the Ottawa Treaty and its prohibition of the use of any indiscriminate weapons. **Dialogue with some non-state armed groups to convince them to abandon such practices and to join the Treaty is possible.** Mine clearance – which is an obligation of the Ottawa Treaty - is a way to deny these groups access to weapons and munitions as many improvised mines are made using disposed of explosives or remnants of them.
- **Casualties from improvised mines were identified in 18 States in 2018, mainly in Afghanistan (1,586) and Syria (1,076).**
- **Quote 1:** “For the fourth year in a row, the Landmine Monitor recorded a high number of new casualties, mainly due intense armed conflict in Afghanistan, Syria, etc. The use of improvised mines caused half of the casualties in 2018. War has rules: the Ottawa Treaty banning landmines (including improvised mines), 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:** “Landmines 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 survivor to return to normal life. We must constantly remind all parties to conflicts that the use of these weapons is banned and that international law must be respected.”
- **Quote 3:** “The Ottawa Treaty entered into force 20 years ago causing a sharp decline in the use of landmines and of landmine casualties. But in recent years we are witnessing an alarming upsurge in the use of mines, with an unacceptable number of casualties. Our work against landmines is not over. We must defend the application of the Ottawa Treaty, advocate for the support of victims and face new challenges with the use of improvised landmines. We still need the support of citizens to completely eradicate landmines from the earth ”

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 164 States are party to the treaty and one **state** (the Marshall Islands) has signed but not ratified the **treaty**.

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 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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