



Review Conference against landmine:

20 years of progress threatened by recent rise in casualties

Oslo 25 November 2019 - 164 States Parties to the Ottawa Convention banning landmines are invited to gather from the 25th to the 29th of November in Oslo for the Conference on a Mine-Free World. This Fourth Review Conference aims to assess progress made in banning antipersonnel mines, clearing minefields, and helping victims, and it should provide a roadmap for the work ahead. Present at the conference, HI will share its experience of demining in protracted conflict settings, and present two innovative projects: innovative techniques like 3D-prosthetics and the use of drones in clearing operations. The organisation calls on states to strengthen earmarked support for victim assistance and advocates for clearance efforts in order to achieve a mine-free world in 2025.

The Fourth Review Conference

- The Fourth Review Conference aims to assess progress made to date in banning antipersonnel mines, clearing minefields, and helping victims and provide a roadmap for the work ahead. It marks a critical moment in the Convention's history, taking place 20 years after the Convention's entry into force and the First Meeting of States Parties in 1999.
- The conference will take stock of the implementation of the Convention since the adoption of the Maputo Action Plan 2014-2019 and adopt a new action plan (Oslo Action Plan) for the five years to come. States should commit to achieving a mine-free world in 2025, as declared in the Maputo Action Plan.

The resounding victory of the Ottawa Convention

- In 20 years of application, the Ottawa Convention has proved effective: 164 States are parties to the Convention. The use of antipersonnel mines is almost eradicated. Government forces of Myanmar (not state party to the Convention) and several non-state armed groups were reported to have used this weapon in 2018. The number of new annual victims has dropped from 9,807 victims in 1999 to 6,897 in 2018.
- There is no information on the production of this weapon by any arms companies; commercialisation seems to have been abandoned. Remaining stockpiles continue to be destroyed: stockpiles were estimated at 160 million mines in 1999, against less than 50 million in 2018.

New challenges of the Convention

- However, after 15 years of steady decrease, the number of casualties **nearly doubled between 2014 and 2018** (6,897 new casualties in 2018 compared with 3,998 in 2014).
- 2018 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).**
- Users of improvised mines are mainly **non-state armed groups and pose a real challenge to the Convention.**

Complex environment and innovative solutions

- **Clearance increasingly takes place in challenging environments: urban areas where explosive remnants are buried in rubble, protracted conflict settings, very remote areas where it is difficult to send teams, etc.**
- To face these challenges, HI will present two innovative projects:
 - The use of a 3D scanner and printer to produce prostheses and orthoses. This technology can be helpful in very remote areas or conflict situations.
 - HI and its partners Mobility Robotics will present data to show how buried landmines were located **in certain conditions** using drones equipped with infrared cameras. Tested in Chad, this technology has the potential to save time and make the work of mine clearance experts safer. **It marks a major step forward for humanitarian demining.**
- HI will also share its experience of demining in **conflict-affected contexts** like in Colombia and Iraq.
- **To reach the 2025 goal, HI calls for increased financial support for clearance, including through innovation in mine action.**

To support victims and affected communities

- Strong commitment of States Parties to provide victim assistance is urgently needed as the number of victims has dramatically increased over the last four years.
- Plus, in countries where clearance has been completed, assistance is still needed for the victims. Mine-free does not mean victim-free but, in many countries, the achievement of demining operations unfortunately often means a decrease of victims assistance funding and activities, which has a long term impact on victims and their communities. States should continue and increase funding, particularly for victim assistance.

The Ottawa Convention bans the acquisition, production, stockpiling and use of anti-personnel mines. The Convention 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 Convention and one **State** (the Marshall Islands) has signed but not ratified the **Convention**.

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.

Learn more: hi-canada.org

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Available HI spokespersons

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