



Press Release

24 April 2025

International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action



On 8 December 2005, the General Assembly declared that 4 April of each year shall be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. This year, for **4 April**, the United Nations Mine Action Service in Syria (UNMAS) would like to stress the need for enhancing the protection of people who face the dangers of explosive hazard contamination every day, in both rural and urban areas throughout the country.

The presence of abandoned and unexploded bombs, mines, and improvised explosive devices is a serious threat to the safety of people living in or going to affected areas, even long after the conflict has ended. This contamination causes death and grave injuries, in addition to hampering access to services, homes and lands. Humanitarian workers are also exposed to this risk on a daily basis while providing life-saving assistance to people in need.

The urgent need to address the increasing number of landmine casualties in Syria cannot be overstated. Following almost fourteen years of armed conflict, Syria entered a new phase in early December 2024. The retreat from former front lines has opened previously restricted areas, leading to the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons. While the change in authority has generated expectations of enhanced freedom of movement, the ability to reconnect with families, reconstruct dwellings, and restore livelihoods, these aspirations are tempered by the severe problem of widespread unexploded ordnance contamination and the extensive presence of landmines in agricultural zones. This lethal inheritance of minefields and unexploded ordnance (UXOs) presents a critical danger to civilians as they strive to rebuild their lives in the evolving Syrian context.

“This year’s theme — ‘*Safe Futures Start Here - Ban Stigma - Take Action*’ — reminds us of the critical role of mine action in rebuilding shattered communities, supporting survivors and forging peace” said UN Secretary-General.¹ **“Together, let’s commit to build safe futures — starting here and now”** SG added.

Today, in Syria, the United Nations Mine Action Service, UN agencies, INGOs and NGOs acknowledge the day under the campaign “*Safe Futures Start Here*” to educate the public on the risk of unexploded ordnance, to mobilize political will and resources to address the problem of explosive ordnance contamination, and to celebrate and reinforce achievements of the humanitarian community in Syria.

Damascus, 24 April 2025

For more information:

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¹ United Nations Secretary-General’s message for the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action observed on 4 April 2025: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/mine-awareness-day/messages>