

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR MINE AWARENESS AND
ASSISTANCE IN MINE ACTION**

4 April 2022

The International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action reminds us how far we have come in clearing the world of explosive remnants of war – and how far we still have to go.

Exactly thirty years ago, civil society activists came together to launch the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Within five years, the Mine Ban Convention was opened for signature.

Today, more than 160 states have signed the Convention and landmines have become almost universally unacceptable.

Over 55 million mines have been destroyed, more than 30 countries across the world have been declared mine-free, and casualties have dramatically decreased.

But the world is still rife with millions of stockpiled landmines and over 50 countries remain contaminated with these abhorrent weapons.

Mines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices continue to kill or injure thousands of people every year – many of whom are children.

We must do more to protect people living under the shadow of explosive ordnance, from Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan to Myanmar, Cambodia, and beyond.

In Ukraine, the legacy of a single month of war – in the form of unexploded ordnance, landmines, and cluster munitions – will take decades to tackle, threatening lives long after the guns fall silent. Already today, they restrict emergency humanitarian aid delivery and prevent people fleeing to safety.

I call on all states to accede to the Convention without delay. Permanent members of the Security Council in particular have a special responsibility.

Mine action is an investment in humanity. It is a prerequisite for humanitarian relief efforts and the foundation of lasting peace and sustainable development.

On this International Day, let us build on past progress and rid the world of the scourge of landmines once and for all.
