



Statement from the UN in Syria on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

DAMASCUS, 4 April 2019

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 in Syria is bringing attention to the needs of the people of Syria 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 ordnance devices is a serious threat to the safety of all people, particularly of those who have been displaced by the conflict. This risk can last for years. It curtails access, and threatens everyone, including humanitarian workers providing life-saving assistance to people in need.

In Syria, millions of men, women, boys, and girls, are exposed. Providing explosive hazard risk education, clearance, and victim assistance is one of the main humanitarian priorities in the country. This includes the prevention of risks through awareness raising, survey and clearance of affected areas, as well as addressing the needs of people affected, and importantly the survivors of explosive incidents who often sustain permanent life-changing injuries.

“All people have the right to live in security, and not fear their next step. Mine action clears paths and creates safe ground on which homes can be built or rebuilt. Mine action changes mindsets so that people know how to protect themselves. It gives people and communities new horizons and hope,” stated the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, in his statement marking this Day.

Risk education is the most widespread protection activity in Syria and has enabled the United Nations and its partners to reach millions of people. Children, farmers, herders, rubble removal workers, returnees, and internally displaced persons are the most exposed to these risks.

Today, in Syria, an awareness campaign was launched to inform people about these risks. Help us spread the word and join the campaign #IMAD2019.

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