

Peace ‘incomplete’ without demining, UN chief says ahead of World Mine Awareness Day

3 April 2017 – On the eve of the International Day for World Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres urged all Governments to remember landmines and explosive remnants of war when discussing peace agreements or when sending urgent humanitarian aid to conflict zones.

“Peace without [mine action](#) is incomplete peace,” the Secretary-General said in his message for the Day, which is centred this year on the theme of ‘Needs driven. People centred.’

“I urge all Member States to keep this issue at the top of the international agenda when negotiating peace, when seeking to prevent harm during conflicts and when deploying emergency humanitarian responses in war zones,” he added.

Each year, landmines and other explosive hazards kill or maim thousands of people around the world.

“Mine action establishes the foundations for lasting recovery and development,” added Mr. Guterres. “No one should have to live in fear of dying even after the fighting stops.”

This year marks 20 years since the creation of the UN Mine Action Service, a collaboration of UN departments, agencies, programmes and funds. Known as [UNMAS](#) for short, the entity currently works in 18 countries and territories to save lives and rebuilds communities.

To promote mine action and raise funds for its work, the UN Global Advocate, actor Daniel Craig – aka James Bond – has lent his likeness to a campaign to give away [a customized Skyfall Silver 2016 Aston Martin Vantage car](#). The winner will also have an opportunity to chat with Mr. Craig in a secret location.

In his message for the Day, Mr. Guterres applauded UNMAS for “its leadership, courage and commitment to peace.”

He also commended the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action – which brings together representatives from all UN mine-action entities – for its “needs-driven, people centred approach.”

So far, UNMAS and its partners – much of the demining and mine-risk education is carried out by non-governmental organizations and commercial contractors – have cleared and returned 72 per cent of known contaminated land to communities, and cleared 31 hospitals and 35 education sites, as well as markets and water wells.

To honour this work and raise awareness about eradicating landmines and unexploded ordinance, the UN General Assembly, in 2005, established 4 April as the [International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action](#).