



Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA)

International Mine Action Day a Celebration of Achievements and Reminder of Task Ahead for Afghanistan

30 March, 2009. Landmines and explosive remnants of war continue to kill or injure thousands of people a year. In Afghanistan alone, an average of sixty Afghans are injured or killed by landmines or Explosive Remnants of War every month, making it one of the worst affected countries in the world.

This year's global commemoration of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action (April 4) will focus on the needs of the ever-growing number of landmine survivors and other victims and celebrate the vigorous movement towards the United Nations vision of a world free from the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war.

In Afghanistan, April 4th will be both a day to celebrate the achievements of the past year, which have marked a high point in the success of the programme, as well as a call to action to make sure the task is completed within a matter of years, not decades.

In 2008 alone, more than 84,000 anti-personnel mines, 900 anti-tank mines and 2.5 million Explosive Remnants of War were destroyed by the MAPA. This resulted in the clearance of over 50sqkm of minefields and almost 113sqkm of former battle area. In terms of number of hazards, the programme is now 76% of the way towards achieving the target set by the Afghanistan Compact and 53% towards the complete clearance required by the Ottawa Treaty (otherwise known as the Mine Ban Treaty).



Dr Haider Reza, Programme Director, Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan said: “All the mine action staff throughout Afghanistan should be proud of the achievements of the programme over the last year. However, the challenges ahead remain great and we call upon all stakeholders to commit to supporting us through to the completion of the task so that all Afghans can be free from the fear of mines and explosive remnants of war and the development of our country is not held back by the threat of mines.”

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About the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan

The concept of humanitarian mine action was developed in Afghanistan in 1988/9. Mine action encompasses all pillars of mine action: advocacy, demining (survey, marking and clearance), stockpile destruction, mine risk education (MRE), and victim assistance (VA). The programme is funded both bilaterally and through the UN Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)¹. Due to the scale of the problem, the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is one of the largest mine action programmes in the world. It has a twenty year history of successfully delivering mine action in Afghanistan and has cleared over 12,000 hazard areas throughout the country. The MAPA is coordinated by the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), which is funded through a UN modality. The MACCA has sub-offices, known as Area Mine Action Centres (AMACs) in Herat, Jalalabad, Mazar, Kunduz, Gardez, and Kandahar.

¹ Administered in NY by United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)