



**Stop Bombing
Civilians**



To put an end to the bombing of civilians

Humanity & Inclusion (HI) is entering the final stage of its 'Stop Bombing Civilians' campaign against the use of explosive weapons in urban warfare. After eight years of intensive advocacy actions, we have finally succeeded in launching a meaningful diplomatic process: On October 1st and 2nd, Austria gathered States at the Vienna conference to work together for the protection of civilians. This conference opened negotiations on an international political declaration against the use of

explosive weapons with wide area effect in populated areas.

Two rounds of negotiations on the political declaration will follow in Geneva. This phase should close in Spring 2020, when the political declaration should open for signatures.

During this period, HI will be campaigning on all fronts. A Memorial to forgotten civilians was inaugurated in Paris.

BELOW | THE CITY OF KOBANE IN NORTH SYRIA WAS HEAVILY BOMBED IN 2015 AND WAS CONTAMINATED WITH EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR.

We are also inviting members of the public to write to their MPs to urge them to take action against bombing in populated areas.

This is a momentous occasion for HI. Building on the Mine-Ban Treaty in 1997 and the prohibition of cluster munitions in 2008, we now have an opportunity to write a new page in history and to significantly improve the protection of civilians in conflict situations.



What we are asking of states

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STATES MUST:

- Acknowledge that the use of explosive weapons in populated areas causes severe harm to individuals and communities and furthers suffering by damaging vital infrastructure
- Condemn the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.
- Stop the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated area
- Review their policy and national practices regarding the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and share their good practices.
- Provide a framework for assistance to victims and the affected communities, which integrates gender and age discrimination factors.

MAIN PUBLICATIONS ON DISARMAMENT & PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

The Waiting List,

Addressing the immediate and long term needs of victims of explosive weapons in Syria, 2019

Narrative of the 2019 Disarmament Action Plan

African Regional Meeting on EWIPA (nov. 2017) webpage

Everywhere the bombing followed us, 2017, report.

Qasef: Escaping the bombing, 2016, report.

Syria, a mutilated future. Focus on persons injured by explosive weapons, 2016, factsheet.

Victim assistance in the context of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas: Recommendations for a future political declaration, 2016.

The use of explosive weapons in populated

areas: it is time to act, 2016, briefing paper.

The use of explosive weapons in Syria: A time bomb in the making, 2015, report.

Kobani: A city of rubble and unexploded devices, 2015, factsheet.

The way forward on victim assistance, 2014, briefing paper.

How to ensure mine/ERW survivors participate in, and benefit from, disability-inclusive development? 2014, issue briefs.

How to implement victim assistance obligations? 2013, factsheets.

Circle of impact: The fatal footprint of cluster munitions on people and communities, 2007, report.

Landmines and Cluster Munitions Monitor: www.the-monitor.org

AGENDA UNTIL MARCH 2020

2019

26 SEPTEMBER 2019
Inauguration of the Memorial to forgotten civilians

28 SEPTEMBER 2019
French Shoe Pyramid

1-2 OCTOBER 2019
Vienna Conference

1-2 OCTOBER 2019
Launch of MPs Mobilisation Campaign Module

1-2 OCTOBER 2019
Publication of Victims Assistance report

5 OCTOBER 2019
Luxemburg Shoe Pyramid

18 NOVEMBER 2019
First round of negotiations in Geneva

2020

JANUARY 2020
• Second round of negotiations in Geneva
• MPs gathering in Paris

15 MARCH 2020
Anniversary of the Syrian conflict

26 MARCH 2020
Anniversary of the Yemeni conflict

Spring 2020
Opening of the declaration for States to sign on (TBC)

Western Mosul: ghost town

AT THE BOTTOM RIGHT
THE DESTRUCTION IN WEST MOSUL



INTERVIEW OF ANDREA TREVISAN HI PROGRAM DIRECTOR IN IRAQ

Between October 2016 and July 2017, Mosul, in Iraq's Ninewah province, was the scene of heavy fighting. HI Program Director, Andrea Trevisan, explains the consequences of the intensive use of explosive weapons such as bombs and improvised mines on the western half of the city and why a political declaration against bombing in populated areas is crucial.

WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN MOSUL TWO YEARS AFTER 9 MONTHS OF FIGHTING AND HEAVY BOMBING OF THE CITY?

The city is slowly coming back to life, but there is still disruption to cope with. One million people fled the city during fighting. Some 500,000 are still living in camps across Nineveh province. I spoke with a few of the families we are assisting in the camps. They are unwilling or unable to return home for several reasons: They fear for their safety, as the province is still heavily militarised. They are afraid of the explosive remnants of war contaminating Mosul and the surrounding villages. They often have nowhere to go because their neighbourhood has been completely destroyed, along with its social and economic fabric. Removing the rubble is very dangerous. Several months after the end of the military operations, dead bodies are still being recovered from beneath destroyed buildings.

Clearing operations are ongoing but not without difficulties. Last week a member of an INGO's international staff lost his life south of Mosul while defusing an IED. This week, two Iraqis were killed while trying to defuse an explosive device

HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED ANYTHING LIKE THIS IN YOUR CAREER?

I have never seen such a high level of destruction, especially in an urban and densely-populated area. According to the United Nations, 65% of houses and apartments in Mosul have been damaged. Several neighbourhoods, particularly in West Mosul have been virtually destroyed. It is shocking to see the Old City from the river reduced to rubble - not a single building left standing. It's sickening. And the bridges connecting the two sides of the city are barely holding up.

WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE IN THE CITY?

Life has resumed in the eastern half of the city and it's good to see how much resilience the people have and the efforts they're making to get things back to normal: Shops are reopening; there's traffic on the roads; cafes and restaurants are being cleaned and refurbished, there are people outside at night. However, in residential neighbourhoods, a lot of the houses are still abandoned, unlivable - a sign that people are not rushing back to the city. There is much less happening in the western half of the city, although there is some traffic on the roads. Vital infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, water pipes, etc. has been destroyed or severely damaged. Roads and bridges are still impassable and there are still very high levels of contamination by explosive remnants

of war and improvised mines. It's impossible for a family to live normally.

ARE WE SEEING THE START OF ANY RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMMES IN WEST MOSUL?

The western half of the city is trying to return to normal, but it's difficult. Before reconstruction can get underway, we need to remove the rubble and, according to UN estimates, there is about eight million tons of it in the city. And before that, every contaminated neighbourhood needs to be cleared of explosive hazards. This is a very complicated and dangerous task as the rubble is full of them. It will take decades before we can start rebuilding West Mosul. The population is showing some resilience and making efforts with personal initiatives, and this has to be encouraged on a larger and more effective scale. And, very importantly we need to ensure that reconstruction is inclusive and that the needs of people with disabilities and all those injured during the conflict are taken into account. They have a lot to contribute to the rebuilding of the city's socio-economic fabric.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROTECT VENT PEOPLE FROM THE DANGER OF EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS?

HI has started raising the population's awareness to the dangers of explosive remnants of war in the centre of Mosul

and the Nineveh plains. Many families returning to Mosul won't have any experience of explosive remnants of war, especially booby traps. They are forced to take risks because they have no choice. The western half of the city is so contaminated that it's like a minefield under the rubble. Our awareness-raising teams will cover the whole city informing people about what a suspicious device looks like, what the risks are, and what to do if they find one. The aim is to reduce the number of accidents, which remains high two years after the fighting. The level of contamination is still very high.

DOES HI STILL TREAT A LOT OF PEOPLE INJURED BY EXPLOSIONS?

Yes, and not only by explosions. We have to put people on a waiting list for rehabilitation care because the demand is so high and our response capacities have been limited since the withdrawal of emergency funding by

institutional donors. I'm very concerned about the psychological condition of many of the people we are treating. A lot of those that I've spoken to in the camps are totally lost and depressed and have no idea what their future holds. Our teams are doing incredible work to ensure our beneficiaries receive the best care possible and can stand tall again.

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM THE POLITICAL DECLARATION AGAINST BOMBING IN POPULATED AREAS THAT IS CURRENTLY BEING DISCUSSED BY STATES?

We must regulate the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. It seems to us that no parties to a conflict think of the consequences for civilians... NGOs are not here to provide after-war services, our capacities are overstretched. We are caring for so many people who have long-term injuries and will suffer for the rest of

their lives. The extent of the destruction and the long-term consequences for civilians is horrifying. Many of the weapons used during bombings or shelling have wide-area effect, so it's impossible not to harm civilians. This should be prohibited. Today, two years after the main Mosul offensive came to an end, military operations are ongoing and civilians are still falling victim to bombing, shelling and IEDs on a daily basis in Iraq.

The protection of civilians must be a non-negotiable priority when States take part in a conflict, and access to victims must be guaranteed. It is time to step up and take action. We need a serious and tangible commitment. We need States to support a political declaration against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and be made accountable for the protection of civilians in conflict settings.



Wars today

BELOW | YASER IS 12 YEARS OLD. HE WAS WOUNDED BY BOMBS AT HOME WHILE DOING HIS HOMEWORK. SANAA, 2018.

NO CLEAR WAR ZONE

Many weapons used in cities are designed for open battlefields. The strength of these weapons makes it impossible to distinguish between military targets and the population.

90% of the casualties caused by bombings are civilian; it is indecent to talk about collateral damage.

NO BOOTS ON THE GROUND

Voices are beginning to be raised against the military strategy of "no boots on the ground", theorized by the US military at the end of the Vietnam War.

Colonel Legrier, in charge of French operations in Le Levant, recently questioned the coalition's action in Syria in a National Defence Review article, since deleted. "Yes, the battle of Hajin (2018) has been won, at least on the ground, but by refusing to engage on the ground, we have unnecessarily prolonged the conflict

and thus contributed to increasing the number of casualties among the population. We have massively destroyed the infrastructure and given the population a detestable image of what a Western-style liberation can be, leaving behind us the seeds of a new adversary's imminent resurgence," Colonel Legrier, Head of French Operations conducted in the Levant.



The history of civilian casualties in wars

BELOW | NADIA'S DAUGHTER (LOWER RIGHT) LAST PHOTO; SHE WAS KILLED DURING A BOMBING.

There were 15% of civilian casualties in the First World War and 50% in the Second World War. Today war is waged in cities and 90% of the victims of bombing in populated areas are civilians. We cannot call this "collateral damage". Since 2016, the cities of Aleppo, Raqqa, Mosul, Idlib and Donetsk have been literally flattened by massive, disproportionate and indiscriminate bombardments and shelling – tragic proof of a total disregard for civilian lives.

SYRIA

An estimated 80,000 people have been killed or injured by explosive weapons in Syria and 10 million Syrians are now living with the dangers of explosive remnants of war. By the time Raqqa was liberated after a 4-month siege, 80% of the city had been razed to the ground.

IRAQ



In western Mosul, there are more than 8 million tonnes of rubble contaminated with explosive remnants of war waiting to be cleared. Two years after the liberation of the city, 500,000 people are still living in camps and thousands of injured people are trying to rebuild their lives.



Past and current conflicts

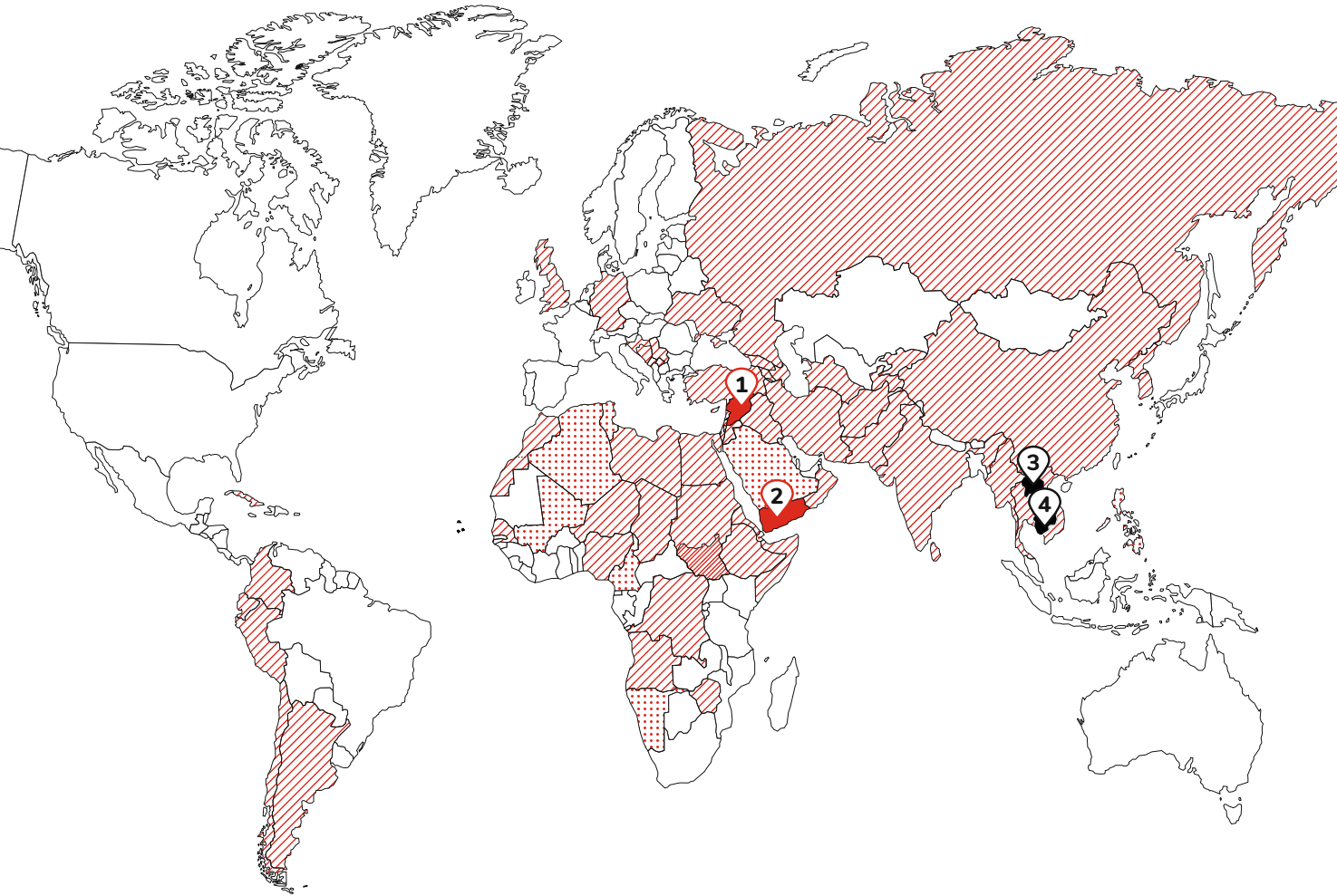
THE DEADLY LEGACY OF ARMED CONFLICTS

COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS IN 2018 *

-  Countries and territories contaminated by mines, cluster munitions and explosive remnants of war
-  Countries with suspected contamination

* Action on Armed Violence(AOAV) 2018

** Landmine & cluster munition monitor - ICBL-CMC - august 2018



CURRENT CONFLICTS*

1 | SYRIA

Since 2011, more than 80,000 people have been victims of weapons explosive, 88% were civilians. 10 million Syrians now live under the threat of explosive remnants of war.

HI estimates that it will take at least 30 years to clear the mines in Syria.

2 | YEMEN

Between 2015 and 2018, 16,300 individuals were victims of weapons of which 77% were civilians. Since 2015, 18,000 airstrikes have hit the population of Yemen.

PAST CONFLICTS**

3 | LAOS

50 years on from a massive bombing campaign by the American army in the 1960s, Laos still lives under the threat of explosive remnants of war. Many accidents are still today caused by explosive remnants of war. Since 1964 there have been 50,754 victims. Laos remains the most contaminated country in the world by cluster bombs.

4 | CAMBODIA

In the late 1970s, following a decade of civil war and the years of repressive dictatorship of the Khmer Rouge, millions of anti-personnel mines are contaminated Cambodia. Since 1979, 64,000 people have been killed or wounded due to explosive remnants of war.



HI CAMPAIGN

SYRIA, YEMEN, IRAQ, LIBYA, CIVILIANS ON THE FRONTLINE

In 2018, 32,102 people were victims of explosive weapons worldwide. In Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Libya, civilians are caught in the middle of the fighting and are the main victims of explosive weapons. In post-conflict situations, thousands of explosive devices which failed to explode on impact pose a permanent threat to populations and hinder reconstruction. Hidden in houses, buried under rubble, these explosive remnants of war are time-bombs just waiting to go off.

YEMEN, THE WAR BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Indiscriminate bombings, food insecurity, devastating epidemics since 2015, thousands of Yemeni civilians have paid a high price in the merciless conflict between the Houthis and Saudi Arabian-led coalition forces.

- March 2015 - October 2018, more than 70,000 victims of the conflict.
- 18,000 air raids, 77% civilian casualties
- With thousands of mines laid to protect the front lines, Yemen is one of the most contaminated countries in the world.

This proliferation of explosive weapons has had a domino effect:

- 600 civilian infrastructures destroyed or damaged per month,
- Disruption of the economic fabric, leading to inflation, food shortages and forced displacement.
- 80% of the population is now in need

of humanitarian aid and thousands of injured civilians are trying to rebuild their lives.

SYRIA, THOUSANDS OF LIVES TO BE REBUILT

Aleppo, Damascus, Hajin, Idlib, Homs, Hama... Since 2011, the Syrian conflict has disfigured the country, with thousands of civilians killed or displaced.

- Nearly 80,000 victims of explosive weapons, 85% of them civilians.

The use of explosive weapons in Syria has had devastating effects. The destruction of essential infrastructure has created desperate living conditions for the country's civilian populations:

- Little or no access to drinking water, electricity, health care, education...
- Nearly 5.6 million Syrians forced to leave the country
- 6.6 million displaced
- 70% of the population still exposed to the dangers of explosive remnants of war and in need of humanitarian assistance. Contamination is now one of the main obstacles to the return of refugee or displaced populations. It will also be a major obstacle to the reconstruction of the country.

ABOVE | OMAR WAS INJURED IN A BOMB ATTACK IN MOSUL IN 2017. HE HAD HIS LEFT LEG AMPUTATED.

Since 2011, HI has been urging the international community to put a stop to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, highlighting the devastating consequences on people with disabilities, older people, women and children. HI joined forces with other civil society organisations in 2011 to create the International Network on Explosive Weapons. INEW, which now has a membership of more than 40 NGOs, is calling for immediate action to prevent the human suffering caused by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

HI also launched a global campaign to stop the bombing of civilians directed at the general public and the media. The campaign, conducted in all the countries in HI's network, combines digital action on social media, petitioning and awareness-raising.

8 years of campaigning

2011

HI co-creates the International Network on Explosive weapons (INEW), a coalition of NGOs to fight the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

2015

A core group of 12 States supported by civil society begin work on drafting a political declaration against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

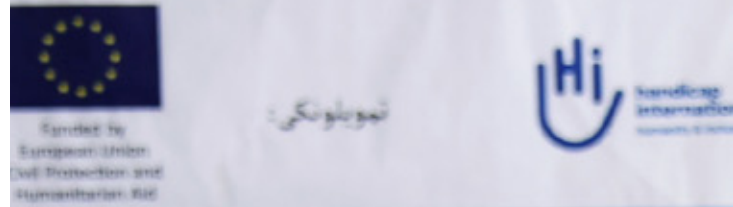
2017

- Representatives of 19 African countries lend their support to HI and INEW in their work against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.
- Launching of the international communication campaign, "Stop Bombing Civilians".

2018

- 23 Latin and Central American states express concern about the devastating effects on civilians of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.
- Launch of an international petition
- Obtaining 465,309 signatures.
- **MAY 2018:** United Nations Secretary General takes position against bombing in populated areas
- **END OF 2018:** HI lobbies MPs in the UK, Belgium, Switzerland and France.

ADJACENT | SANALLAH IS 5 YEARS OLD. TWO YEARS AGO, THE CHILD WAS IN HIS FATHER'S ARMS. THEY WERE WALKING QUIETLY IN THEIR VILLAGE WHEN VIOLENT FIGHTING BROKE OUT IN A NEARBY VILLAGE. A MORTAR SUDDENLY EXPLODED NEAR THEM.



HI HAS MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

Ottawa Convention | 1997

The Ottawa Convention bans the acquisition, production, stockpiling and use of anti-personnel landmines. There are 164 States Parties to the Convention. It is the first treaty to ban a conventional weapon. The number of annual casualties has been divided by 3 in 15 years.

Oslo Convention | 2008

The Oslo Convention prohibiting their use, production, stockpiling and transfer entered into force. 120 States Parties. The use of this weapon is now broadly condemned and users stigmatised.



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