



October 2015 News

Ministerial-Level Reception for Mine Action

The Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) co-hosted a ministerial-level reception on mine action at the United Nations Headquarters on 29 September 2015. The reception brought together high-ranking officials from affected countries, donor states and the United Nations. Mr. Daniel Craig attended the reception in one of his first official appearance as United Nations Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards.

His Excellency Bert Koenders, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, opened the reception with comments encouraging Member States to support the mine action community. Mr. Koenders lauded the work of Dutch partners in mine action, and celebrated Mozambique's recent declaration of mine-free status. Guest speakers included His Excellency Dr. Ibrahim al-Jaafari, Foreign Minister of Iraq and His Excellency Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Vice Foreign Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Lao. Both called upon the international community to provide assistance to their respective countries and remove the explosive remnants of war (ERW) contaminating their land.



(left to right) Mr. Daniel Craig, the UN Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Other Explosive Hazards; Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, UNMAS Director; and Mr. Albert (Bert) Koenders, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands pose for a photo. UNMAS/Catianne Tijerina

The Head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Under-Secretary-General Mr. Hervé Ladsous, delivered a statement by the Secretary-General stressing the critical work of UNMAS and the need for sustained donor support.

UNMAS Director, Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, emphasized that contributions ensure UNMAS readiness as a first responder to humanitarian crises at the request of UN entities and Member States. She thanked donors for recognizing the value and effectiveness of UNMAS work citing recent deployments to protect civilians in Syria and Iraq from the threat of IEDs and other explosive hazards.

Mr. Craig underscored the effects of landmines and ERW, reminding attendees that “we are fortunate that we need not worry about such dangers when our loved ones walk down a road or cross a field, but the risk is very real for anyone living where there is, or once was, conflict.”

UNMAS thanks the Kingdom of the Netherlands for its generosity and efforts to ensure that the reception was a resounding success. The Netherlands is one of the leading donors of to mine action globally, providing EUR 3.5 million to UNMAS through the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action last year.

For more information, please contact Donor Relations Officer Kurt Chesko at chesko@un.org.

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