

1st ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF MOSUL

1,500 explosive remnants found in Al Shifa hospital, Mosul, a city sieged by improvised explosive devices and bombs

Montreal, 9th July 2018 - One year after Mosul's liberation, 8 million tons¹ of conflict debris, littered with explosive remnants of war. Thousands of injured are trying to access medical treatment and more than 300,000² displaced people are still surviving in camps and communities as Mosul, trapped by explosive remnants of war, remains a ticking time bomb. Humanity & Inclusion (the new name of Handicap International), released a fact sheet about the situation in Mosul. [Download it here.](#)

Unprecedented contamination

Between October 2016 and July 2017, 1,717 airstrikes & 2,867 explosive hazard incidents hit the city of Mosul, leaving behind an unprecedented amount of explosive remnants of war. Added to this are the thousands of victim activated improvised explosive devices left as traps by the Islamic State group. In Al-Shifa hospital alone, 1,500 explosive remnants of war were found³. Even today, accidents are numerous and whole areas of the city remain inaccessible due to heavy contamination. Since the 10th of July 2017, 127 accidents involving 186 casualties have been reported to HI in Nineveh province. This figure is likely to be far below the reality as the exact the number of casualties is uncertain.

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Civilians on the front line

The consequences for civilians are serious: death, severe injuries, and permanent impairments, including a high number of amputations of upper and lower limbs. Between the 10th of July 2017 and the 15th of March 2018, 1,225 people received rehabilitation

¹ UN Habitat and the United Nations Environment Program

² Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

³ United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

services from HI. 34% were injured in the conflict⁴, out of these, 86% by explosive weapons.

The massive presence of explosive remnants in the city prevents people from returning to normal life after years of trauma. As of the 15th of May 2018, 57% of displaced persons from the Nineveh district did not plan to return to their homes. Among them, 22% cite the presence of victim-activated IEDs and explosive remnants as a reason for non-return.

"It will take years to rebuild and clear Mosul"

HI is now calling on the international community to face up to its responsibilities. The disproportion of the attacks carried out and the size of the remaining threat posed by victim-activated IEDs and explosive remnants make Mosul one of the most contaminated cities in the world.

"The urgent need is to clear contaminated areas, raise awareness of the dangers of explosive remnants and ensure assistance to the casualties, survivors and indirect victims. On the ground, we are operational, but the challenge now is for States to support demining operations in the long term" underlines Thomas Hugonnier, responsible for HI's mine action operations.

"The international community must do everything in its power to remove the obstacles preventing the people of Mosul from returning to a normal life" he adds.

Humanity & Inclusion in Iraq

HI has been present in Iraq for 25 years and has been working alongside displaced people near to conflict zones since 2014. The NGO supports people injured and the most vulnerable, provides mine risk education sessions to communities, and demines the areas hardest hit by explosive remnants of war.

NOTE TO EDITORS

Interviews: Thomas Hugonnier, head of mine action operations at HI

About HI

HI is an independent charity working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster. We work tirelessly alongside disabled and vulnerable people to help meet their basic needs, improve their living conditions and promote respect for their dignity and fundamental rights.

Since its creation in 1982, HI has set up development programs in over 60 countries and intervenes in numerous emergency situations. The network of 8 national associations (Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States) works constantly to mobilize resources, co-manage projects and promote the principles and actions of the organization. HI is one of the six founding associations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), co-winner of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize and winner of the 2011 Conrad N. Hilton Prize.

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⁴ These injuries include bullet wounds, explosive weapons and other forms of violence (including torture), and injuries caused by events related to the crisis