

landmine action week



Contact the Press

Alert your local media to the ongoing problem of anti-personnel landmines and the obligations of the Ottawa Treaty and get further support for the issue during Landmine Action Week.

It is really important to raise local and regional awareness about anti-personnel landmines and the devastating impact they have on lives and livelihoods in developing countries around the world, as well as making the public aware of the importance of the Ottawa Treaty banning these devastating weapons. One of the best ways to do this is to try to get coverage of the issue in your local media - during Landmine Action Week is the perfect time to do this.

First you will need media contacts. This information is available from media guidebooks such as *The Guardian's* 'Media Guide', which should be in your local library.

When you approach local media always use any existing contacts you have as a starting point, or contact the news desk - this will save time and hassle. Send them a press release (see overleaf for example) and make sure you follow it up with phone calls. Without phone calls, nothing will happen. You will need to give them a good reason to look at your story, so make sure it has a local angle - local media exist to cover what people are doing in their locality and why.

The reason why your group is supporting Landmine Action Week may be the most interesting angle for readers/listeners. One of your members may have visited or have links with a mine-affected country. Relating personal experience is one of the most powerful and accessible ways of getting information across, and one of the most likely ways to capture journalists' attention.

Key messages to get across

- **Anti-personnel landmines continue to threaten lives and livelihoods** in developing countries around the world, killing innocent civilians and preventing the productive use of land and infrastructure.
- **More countries must join the Ottawa Treaty**, effectively banning the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines.
- **More and better directed funding is needed** if mines are to be cleared from affected countries within ten years of joining the Ottawa Treaty.

You can use the sample press release below, adding in your own specific details and experience. If you would like more advice please contact us at the Landmine Action office. Good luck!

Sample press release

Embargoed until [insert date] (OR) For Immediate Release

[Name group] DEMAND RENEWED COMMITMENT TO THE BAN ON ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES AND INCREASED FUNDING FOR MINE CLEARANCE WORLDWIDE.

[Name of spokesperson from your group] said: "We are taking part in Landmine Action Week to add our voices to the call for increased action to be taken to support the ban on anti-personnel landmines." *[Or equivalent]*

Millions of anti-personnel landmines are still killing innocent civilians around the world. Long after armed conflicts have ceased these indiscriminate weapons continue to threaten lives and livelihoods in developing countries.

[If applicable briefly describe here any personal experience - if a member of your group or somebody in the local community has a connection with a landmine-affected country for example].

The Ottawa Treaty, effectively banning the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines, has made strides over the last five years towards achieving a mine-free future, but much remains to be done. More countries must join the treaty. Member countries must respect their legal obligations and give increased financial assistance to mine-affected countries in order to clear mines within their ten-year deadlines.

"We want to do what we can to help raise awareness of this issue and are delighted that so many people in *[location]* feel so strongly," continued *[your spokesperson]*.

If you would like to join *[your group's]* efforts in raising awareness about the impact of anti-personnel landmines and the importance of the Ottawa Treaty please contact *[local contact details]*.

If you would like more information about the problem of anti-personnel landmines please contact:

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