

Participation-April 2016



April 4—International Day of Landmine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

On 8 December 2005, the General Assembly declared that 4 April of each year shall be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

It called for continued efforts by States, with the assistance of the United Nations and relevant organizations, to foster the establishment and development of national mine-action capacities in countries where

mines and explosive remnants of war constitute a serious threat to the safety, health and lives of the civilian population, or an impediment to social and economic development at the national and local levels.

2016 Theme: Mine action is humanitarian action because mine action saves lives. Mine action ensures that landmines and explosive hazards in war-torn areas are found and destroyed, making possible the delivery of humanitarian assistance -- so that people and supplies reach those most in need. UNMAS coordinates teams to clear roads and runways of explosives, to block off weapons contaminated areas, and to train local people to demine and dispose of explosives. Our work is a crucial first step in the vital humanitarian effort that follows.

Let us pray for all those injured by landmines and by all forms of violent conflict around the world. We pray for peace built on a foundation of justice. We pray for healing of the physical, mental and spiritual wounds of war and violence.



April 7—World Health Day

World Health Day marks the anniversary of the World Health Organization which was founded in 1948. The World Health Organization (WHO) is the leading global health authority within the United Nations System. The work of WHO is varied and can mostly be summarized through their 6 point agenda:

- **Promote Development** - poverty is linked to poor health; by promoting development poverty falls and the overall health of a given population improves.
- **Fosters Health Security** - WHO takes steps to increase health security by reducing health risks from outbreaks of new, existing & mutating diseases.
- **Strengthens Health Systems** - in poorer countries many health systems are inadequate. WHO strengthens these systems through various means which may include the provision of funding, access to drugs and relevant technology, data collection systems and trained staff.
- **Harnesses information, research and evidence** - WHO uses evidence as a sound basis for setting health priorities, strategies and measuring results. In consultation with leading health experts, WHO provides authoritative health information.
- **Enhances Partnerships** - WHO works closely with many health organizations around the world. WHO aims to improve or enhance the work of these organizations by encouraging them to use their evidence based practices and follow their technical guidelines when implementing their health programs.
- **Improves Performance** - WHO also strives to improve the performance of its own organization. In order to improve the performance or effectiveness of an organization there needs to be clear results which can be measured and compared. WHO improves performance by implementing results based management, which provide clear results and goals which can be measured on a regional, country or international level.

WHO use the anniversary of their founding day not only as an opportunity to celebrate the organization and its work but also as an opportunity to highlight a current global health priority.

The 2016 theme is **Beat Diabetes**. The WHO will focus on ways to increase awareness about the rise in diabetes, and its staggering burden and consequences, in particular in low and middle income countries, and to trigger a set of specific, effective, affordable actions to tackle diabetes. These will include steps to prevent, diagnose and care for people with the disease worldwide.

Let us pray for the 350 million people worldwide who suffer from diabetes. We pray that all people will work toward a world where everyone has healthy nutrition options needed to prevent diabetes, and for care that is needed to cope with the disease.



"I am the future too."

April 12—International Day for Street Children

The International Day for Street Children was launched in 2011 by the Consortium for Street Children (CSC) in 2011 and is a platform for the millions of street children around the world – and their champions – to speak out so that their rights cannot be ignored. There are street-connected children all over the world. Although we don't know the exact numbers, the statistics below are based on in-country head counts and national data. Knowing how many children live, work and spend time on the streets is vital for governments to develop policies and programs that meet all street children's needs. CSC is the leading international network dedicated to realizing the rights of street children

worldwide and is present in 130 countries. CSC focuses on four key strategic areas: Advocacy, Research, Shared Learning and Capacity Building. This year's theme is ***Identity***.

Let us pray for the untold numbers of street children who struggle to survive without home, family, safety, adequate nutrition, or access to education. We pray also for all those who care for children, especially the children of the streets. We pray that each of us will do what we can to make a difference in such a child's life.



April 22—Earth Day

Theme: Trees for the Earth

2016 marks the 46th year of a movement that continues to inspire, challenge ideas, ignite passion, and motivate people to action. Earth Day is more than just a single day — April 22, 2016. Over the next five years, as Earth Day moves closer to its 50th anniversary, the movement is calling on all of us to help achieve an ambitious goal — planting 7.8 billion trees. Trees will be the first of five major goals being undertaken in honor of this five-year countdown. On their own and together, these initiatives will make a significant and measurable impact on the Earth and will serve as the foundation of a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable planet for all.

Let us pray for our Mother Earth and for the trees that convert carbon dioxide to oxygen for us to breath, that bring beauty to our planet and that provide fruit, and nuts, and shelter for so many of earth's creatures. May we plant, care for and treasure God's gift of trees.