

Statement from Action on Armed Violence
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Ladies and gentlemen,

In 2023, the Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) recorded – from English language reputable media sources – some 47,476 deaths and injuries from explosive weapons globally. This was the highest number since our records began in 2010 and perhaps it is of note it followed on from the Dublin political commitment of 2022. 73% of these casualties, or 34,791 individuals, were civilians, and 46% of these civilians were fatally wounded.

The use of these weapons in populated areas has particularly devastating effects, with 90% of those reported killed or injured in such settings being civilians.

Our analysis reveals an alarming trend: explosive weapon incidents surged by 70% last year, with civilian casualties up by 67% and civilian fatalities increasing by 130% compared to 2022.

96% of all civilian casualties from explosive violence occurred in populated areas.

The conflict in Gaza was a major contributor, with events there accounting for 61% of the global civilian fatalities recorded between October and December. Furthermore, conflicts in regions like Sudan, Ukraine, Syria, and Myanmar also saw severe levels of civilian harm.

Detailed statistics underscore the scope of the crisis: the average number of civilians killed per explosive incident rose from 1.6 in 2022 to 2.2 in 2023, a 38% increase. Women and children have been particularly affected, with reported casualties among women up by 192% and among children by 124% from the previous year.

The average number of civilians harmed per airstrike increased from 7.4 to 9.9, a 34% rise, while fatalities per aerial attack rose by 63%.

AOAV hopes these figures help focus our minds on today's issue.

Thank you.