



Agnès Marcaillou, Director, UNMAS

United Nations Foundation

2017 Global Leadership Dinner

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Bonsoir,

I receive this award tonight with deep gratitude...and humility.
I thank you Kathy and the UN Foundation. Congratulations on your splendid advocacy work!

Daniel...Receiving this honor from you...a truly dedicated and staunch friend of UNMAS and the UN, means the world to me.

This prestigious award is not just a recognition of my own life and work at the United Nations.

It is, most importantly, an acknowledgement of the incredible work, done daily by my colleagues, for the millions of people for whom the UN is, so often, their only means of survival.

They work in horrendously dangerous conditions, defusing IEDs and unexploded bombs.

Like Betty, we awaken every day believing we can make the world a little less dangerous... a world free of the threat of landmines and explosive hazards.

Tonight, I receive this award on their behalf.

UNMAS supports the entire UN system with a very small team at headquarters and some 12,000 women and men in the field.

We save lives with risk education, demining and victim assistance in countries, like Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Mali.

There are three things I would like to tell you tonight:

One: UNMAS is a formidable, specialized organization, which delivers concrete results.

It is a fast moving, dynamic eco-system, which constantly adapts to new devices and new risks.

In Mosul and Fallujah, for instance, most recently, engineers safely repaired water plants which now serve clean water to over 600,000 people.

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Defusing over 30 complex IEDs placed on “Fallujah’s new bridge” has allowed several thousands of vehicles to connect, each day, Baghdad and Al Anbar.

2nd thing: UNMAS’ effective business model is based on partnerships and trust.

It relies on the trust of donors to fund it and the trust of the countries which request its assistance. Our staff trust UNMAS procedures, literally with their lives, and Betty trusts us to help her.

Third thing: We love our jobs and have faith in our Organization, the UN.

The “blue flag” is my life story and my pride; it permeates every aspect of my ability to make so large a multi-national staff live and work together in over 20 war-torn countries. We must deliver in complex, and radically different political, legal, and social environments ... at the highest standards. Not easy!

Operating “out-of-the box”, fighting nay-sayers and innovating, have become 2nd nature in my 30 year UN career; and it works!

There’s one very last thing, I want to tell you tonight:

20 years ago, landmines were killing in mass and hampering the humanitarian, peacekeeping and development work of the UN.

That is why the General Assembly created a specialized UN Service: UNMAS. This was “visionary”!

And so were you, Mr. Turner, when, 20 years ago, your vision and bold personal engagement made it possible for UNMAS to exist and for Betty to be trained to save others.

The threat of mines and explosive hazards is not an incurable disease.

If we stay united and work together, so much more can and will be done.

I thank you.