Owerri, NIGERIA; 17 March 2010 (Vanguard/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) - Imo State Government has lamented that although the Nigeria/Biafra war ended 40 years ago, here are still vestiges of the war as exemplified by the landmines, unexploded ordinances and explosive remnants in several places in the South East and South-South.

Governor Ikedi Ohakim, raised the concern in a message delivered on his behalf by the Deputy Governor, Dr. Ada Okwuonu, during the detonation of the recovered landmines and explosives at the 34 Field Artillery Brigade, Obinze. "There is no doubt that these explosives constitute serious danger to the people of this state. It is instructive to note that the war which was fought in the entire Eastern Nigeria ended in Imo State, thereby leaving many dangerous unexploded ordinances," Ohakim said.

Saying that the ceremony "is very apt," the Governor added that the removal of these ordinances from the ground gives the citizenry more room for industrial and agricultural development, as well as the Clean and Green Initiative of the state government. "I, however, plead with the Federal Ministry of Defence, that there are a few more places to be cleared and some war equipment left behind should be cleared and sent to the War Museum," Ohakim pleaded.

Speaking also, the Minister of Defence, Major General Godwin Abbey (rtd), said that the destruction of the unexploded ordinances was in fulfillment of the Federal Government's resolve to save lives and make the environment conducive for human activities. Earlier in his welcome address, the Chief Consultant of the Humanitarian De-Mining, Dr. Bala Yakubu, said "if Nigeria could manufacture those weapons in the late sixties, then we would have been competing favourably with some of the countries we buy our defence needs from." He disclosed that his establishment had cleared 327 landmines and over 6,000 unexploded ordinances across the state where the civil war was fought since July 2009. "We have enumerated over 735 war victims across the stakeholder states and have 100 landmines victims. Of this number, Imo State has 11 war victims, four of them are landmine victims," Yakubu said.

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