Landmines

International Campaign to Ban Landmines

Background
The 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction (or Mine Ban Treaty) is one of the most universally adhered-to international instruments. Remarkable progress has been made towards eliminating these weapons and addressing their deadly legacy. Sustained financial and political support is needed to ensure the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) fully delivers on its promises. The Treaty covers all antipersonnel mines, including those that are of improvised nature.

Current context
Recent years have seen distinct positive States parties to the Mine Ban Treaty have adopted the target date of 2025 for the global elimination of antipersonnel mines. They will strive to universalise the Treaty, complete clearance of mine-contaminated land, destroy all stockpiles, and make assistance to victims sustainable as soon as possible, and by 2025 at the latest. Sixty states and areas have identified the threat of antipersonnel mine contamination.

Some 34 states may still have stockpiles of the weapon, including four states parties that have a legal obligation to destroy them. Survivors, their families, and communities must see their rights respected and their needs met. Through the 2014–2019 Maputo Action Plan, states parties to the Mine Ban Treaty have agreed on robust and realistic measures to end the suffering caused by landmines.

Thirty-three states are still outside the Mine Ban Treaty, but the vast majority abide de facto with its core provisions: they do not use, produce, or transfer antipersonnel mines. Each year, half of them vote in favour of the UN General Assembly First Committee resolution on the Mine Ban Treaty, thus showing their support for the aim of eliminating antipersonnel mines.

Non-state armed groups in at least eight countries still use antipersonnel mines. Most use improvised mines, also known as victim-activated improvised explosive devices (IEDs), rather than factory-made landmines. Such devices are covered by the Mine Ban Treaty when they are designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity, or contact of a person.

More than eighty per cent of people injured or killed by landmines worldwide were civilians, including a large percentage of children. There is a trend toward an increase in casualties from landmines of improvised nature. The Landmine Monitor has registered 120,000 casualties for the period 1999-2017.

The 4th Review Conference (4RevCon) will take place from 25–29 November 2019 in Oslo, under the Norwegian presidency. Currently, the Treaty leadership also includes the following
states: Norway (President), Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Iraq, Italy, Mozambique, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and Zambia.

**Recommendations**

*During First Committee, delegations should:*

- Report on measures taken in 2019 to implement the Maputo Action Plan or to otherwise put an end to the suffering caused by landmines;
- Pledge financial support for the implementation of Treaty obligations, including land clearance and assistance to survivors, their families, and communities;
- Reiterate that any use of landmines by any actor is unacceptable;
- Report on progress towards joining the Mine Ban Treaty;
- Engage bilaterally in discussions on the universalisation or implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty;
- Vote in favour of the resolution on the Mine Ban Treaty and encourage others, such as regional group members, to do so as well; and
- Call and commit for the strongest possible participation in the Fourth Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty.

*Beyond First Committee, states should:*

- Adopt laws, regulations, and policies that facilitate Treaty implementation;
- Contribute to discussions on how to ensure sufficient resources and their efficient use to reach the goal of a mine-free world by 2025;
- Participate in meetings of the Mine Ban Treaty and report on efforts made to eliminate antipersonnel mines; and
- As part of the Review Conference, states should raise alarm about the high number of casualties and condemn any use of landmines by any actor; discuss concrete actions to prevent future use of landmines; express urgency to finish the job; ensure meaningful involvement of survivors and victims in all aspects of the Convention; and note that mine action contributes to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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