

Statement on Landmines

*Delivered by Mr. Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan on behalf of International Campaign to Ban Landmines
80th Session of the First Committee on Disarmament and International Security - civil society
segment
New York City, October 2025*

Thank you, Chairperson,

I am speaking on behalf of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, a global civil society coalition working for a world free of antipersonnel landmines and the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Laureate.

The Mine Ban Treaty remains a shining example of humanitarian disarmament — a groundbreaking instrument that, for the first time, banned a conventional weapon and set a precedent for future disarmament instruments.

Today, 166 States Parties — representing 80% of the world's nations — are on board. We warmly welcome the Marshall Islands and Tonga this year. Over its 25-year history, the treaty has stigmatized antipersonnel mines globally, created a strong framework for their total eradication, and upheld the rights and dignity of landmine victims and survivors. According to the *Landmine Monitor*, some 30 States Parties have become mine-free to date, tens of millions of stockpiled mines have been destroyed, and risk education and assistance to victims are provided at levels unimaginable before the treaty.

Yet, these hard-won gains are now under grave threat. Since its invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Russia has used antipersonnel mines on a massive scale not seen in decades. Last year the United States transferred antipersonnel mines to State Party Ukraine for the first time since 1997. Meanwhile, government forces in Myanmar have dramatically expanded their mine use, resulting in widespread casualties and displacement. We are also deeply concerned by new use reported in Iran and North Korea. The ICBL is saddened by reports of new mine use along the Cambodia–Thailand border and urges both governments to clarify the situation and swiftly clear any remaining contamination. Non-state armed groups also continue to use improvised mines in a few countries, including Myanmar and Gaza.

All use of antipersonnel mines by anyone, under any circumstances, is unacceptable and must be condemned and halted immediately.

This year, the treaty has been shaken further by the recent notifications of withdrawal by five European countries — Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland — citing security concerns. The ICBL condemns these short-sighted, shameful decisions and urges these states to reverse course, and not to engage in production or use of these appalling, primitive weapons.

Even more alarming, however, is Ukraine's unilateral decision — communicated to the UN Secretary-General on 18 July 2025 — to “suspend” its obligations under the Mine Ban Convention. This action is not permitted under the treaty, nor under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which Ukraine cited. If left unchallenged, this could set a very dangerous precedent allowing states to “pause” humanitarian obligations in wartime — precisely when they are needed most.

The ICBL calls on Ukraine to immediately retract this unlawful suspension and return to full compliance. We urge all States Parties to take a clear and united stance at the upcoming 22nd Meeting of States Parties — to affirm that suspension is impermissible and incompatible with the spirit and letter of the treaty. Silence or inaction would risk legitimizing a precedent that could unravel decades of humanitarian progress and provide leeway for halting states obligations under other disarmament and IHL treaties.

The treaty's implementation also requires renewed attention. Clearance of contaminated land and provision of victim assistance have been insufficient, recently hindered by massive funding cuts and freezes. Donor and affected states must find the ways and resources to redouble efforts and sustain the momentum.

In parallel, we urge all the 31 remaining states to join the convention and the global fight against landmines.

Finally, while here at the First Committee, we call on all states to condemn any new use of antipersonnel mines by anyone under any circumstances and to vote in favour of the forthcoming UN General Assembly resolution on the Mine Ban Treaty.

The future of the treaty — and its humanitarian legacy — depends on the resolve of its members today. Let us act decisively to protect it and to uphold our shared vision of a world free of antipersonnel mines.

Thank you.