

## Statement on Landmines

*Delivered by Mr. Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan on behalf of International Campaign to Ban Landmines  
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Thank you, Chairperson,

The Mine Ban Treaty remains a shining example of humanitarian disarmament. A groundbreaking instrument that banned - for the first time ever - a conventional weapon, and since then has paved the way for many other humanitarian disarmament instruments.

Today 164 states parties, or 80% of the world's nations, are on board. Over its 25 year history, it has led to effective global stigmatization of antipersonnel mines and established a solid framework for complete eradication of landmines and upholding rights of victims and survivors.

According to the latest data from the Landmine Monitor, some 30 states parties have become mine-free to date, tens of millions of stockpiled antipersonnel mines have been destroyed, and risk education and assistance to victims are being provided at levels unimaginable without the treaty.

Despite these great achievements, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines is horrified by the extensive new use of antipersonnel mines and other explosive weapons since 2022, on a scale we have not seen in years, and the alarming increase in the number of people maimed and killed as a result.

In particular, we are appalled by Russia's extensive use of antipersonnel landmines and banned booby-traps since its invasion of Ukraine.

In addition, the government forces of Myanmar have not only continued using antipersonnel landmines as they have done over the past two decades, but have recently significantly expand this use leading to far more casualties and suffering. We are also highly alarmed by reports on new mine laying by North Korea.

Further, non-state armed groups have continued using antipersonnel mines in a handful of countries, (including among others in Myanmar and Gaza), mostly of an improvised nature.

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

Compliance with the treaty has been commendable, though there have been a handful of allegations of state use. Most recently, after reports of use of mines by Ukrainian forces in 2022, it initiated an investigation, and we look forward to its conclusion.

On implementation, the ICBL is concerned about the pace of clearance in many countries, with many states parties failing on their obligation to clear land "*as soon as possible*," exposing communities to risks for many long years. Progress on victim assistance is also proceeding far too

slowly in many states. States parties, including both donor and affected states, need to collectively reflect on how to make more timely progress on clearance and victim assistance so they can quickly deliver on the treaty's promise to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines.

We are also calling on the remaining 33 states outside the convention to take immediate steps to join the treaty and to join us this November in Cambodia at the milestone "Siem Reap Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World" - the treaty's 5<sup>th</sup> Review Conference. We want to applaud the remarkable leadership of the Cambodian Presidency this year on the inclusive conference preparation, its universalization efforts, as well as its dedication to ridding its own land of landmines.

In closing, here at the First Committee, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines calls on all states to:

- Condemn any use of antipersonnel mines, including of an improvised nature, and reiterate that any use of landmines by any actor, under any circumstances is unacceptable; and
- Vote in favour of the United Nations General Assembly resolution on the Mine Ban Treaty and encourage others to do so, such as regional group members;

The global effort to eradicate landmines and empower survivors has made good progress, but recent events show we have more work to do. We call on all States Parties to stay committed and proactive until the treaty is fully universalized and implemented, and its norms are respected by all.