



Forum: General Assembly 1

Issue: Implementation of a further enhanced Mine Ban Treaty

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Introduction

The concern about the effects of certain conventional weapons, particularly landmines, has been a subject of discussion for a while now. If that concern would not have been there in first place, the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) would not have taken place at all. Nor would some of the earlier studies on the issue by UN bodies have been written. What is new is the growing interest in the problems caused by landmines, particularly in post-conflict areas. Several factors have contributed to the increased recognition that even though the CCW is in place, it has not addressed the ever-worsening situation on the ground. Mines are especially vile as weapons as they are designed to maim the victim instead of killing them, ultimately causing the worst possible economic outcome, let alone human suffering.

Landmines have been used on a massive scale since their development. Also, unregistered mines, weather and time add to the continuing scourge of old conflicts still being present in many people's lives. Eighty countries throughout the world are still troubled by landmines, and the governments have not been able to inform the people when the grounds are infected with landmines. Consequently, the situation in which people live in these countries is horrible and unpredictable.

Banning the use of anti-personnel landmines had already gone a long way during the past decade, however. But despite this progress, concerns remain. Some countries, often neighbouring ones, still refuse to give up mines as a relatively cheap yet very harmful form of self-defence. Cheap and easy to make, landmine production costs are around \$1, yet once delivered it can cost more than \$1,000 to find and destroy a landmine. Despite many national commitments, the usage of homemade landmines such as improvised explosive devices by armed non-state actors or rebel groups still remains a threat in conflict areas. The biggest concern is, however, the fact that the number of mine victims keeps growing each year.

Landmines have been used so extensively because they are readily available, cheap and easy to use. While landmines are not hard to deploy, their removal is very slow, dangerous and most of all, expensive. Mine-detection technology has tried its best but it was not able to keep up with the rapid developments in landmines. Consequently it has become a more deadly and more difficult task to trace them.

Definition of Key Terms

Landmine

A landmine is an explosive device that explodes when pressure is applied to it, usually through stepping on or driving over it. Landmines can be antipersonnel or antitank, but this research



report focuses on antipersonnel landmines because they are more dangerous in the long term, after the conflict is over.

Explosive Remnant

Also known as ERW is a term used in the humanitarian aid and sustainable development domains to describe the explosive threats remaining in a post-conflict society.

Anti-personnel landmines

Anti-personnel landmines are small, inexpensive, and indiscriminate weapons that are intended to kill people. Detonating upon contact, they may injure an enemy combatant or a young child. As they are not designed to kill, the injuries and suffering that they inflict are extremely prolonged and unjust.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IED)

Also known as roadside bombs, these devices are homemade bombs constructed from conventional military weapons and a special detonating mechanism. Such devices designed for use other than conventional military use.

General Overview

The Mine Ban Treaty prohibits the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel mines. It is the most comprehensive international instrument for eradicating landmines and deals with everything from mine use, production and trade, to victim assistance, mine clearance and stockpile destruction.

There are 164 States Parties to the treaty and the treaty is still open for ratification by one signatory and for accession by those that did not sign before March 1999. States not party to the Mine Ban Treaty include: China, Egypt, India, Israel, Pakistan, Russia and the United States.

States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty are obligated to:

- destroy their stockpile of antipersonnel mines within four years of entry into force (Article 4);
- identify and clear mined areas under their jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 10 years after becoming a State Party (Article 5);
- provide assistance to mine victims and support for mine risk education (Article 6); and
- submit annual reports on Mine Ban Treaty implementation activities (Article 7).



Timeline of Events

1955-1975	Vietnam war leaves millions of mines all over Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia
1983	The U.N. Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is created
1991	Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA), Washington, and Medico International (MI), Frankfurt, agree to jointly launch a campaign of advocacy to bring together NGOs in a coordinated effort to ban landmines, and Jody Williams is hired as the leader of the campaign
1992	Six NGOs meet at the Human Rights Watch's New York offices to both sponsor an international conference on banning landmines in London in 1993 and to extend the existing campaign, which becomes the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines (ICBL)
1997	The Mine Ban Treaty is signed by 122 States in Ottawa, Canada.
1998	The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) creates the Landmine Monitor (known more formally as of 2010 as the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor.)

Previous attempts to solve the issue

Previous attempts that have been made at implementing, assisting, and furthering the work of the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines (ICBL), have been successful, as eighty percent of the world's states (136 States) have joined the Mine Ban Treaty and are in compliance with its requirements and commitments.

The Landmine Monitor has been an influential device in reporting on the implementation of, and compliance with, the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention of Cluster Munitions by member Parties. Without its consistent and accurate annual country reports, statistical data, and global maps, the ICBL's progress would be much more limited and the issue would be much less publicized.

However, treaty obligations still remain to be solved. As a result the ICBL's success is evident in that within five years of being founded, they had successfully campaigned for a global ban on the use, manufacture, stockpile and transfer of anti-personnel land mines and are still dedicated to working towards and achieving this goal.

The earliest records of prime landmines were recorded in 1840. They were used by the American government against the Native Americans. Since then, landmines have evolved and taken on many different forms but all of them had the same purpose, to main and/or kill.



Today, there are variations of landmines and the most common ones are the anti-personnel landmines. These are mines that are specifically targeted at enemies or civilians in order to keep them out of a certain area of interest. There are also antitank landmines that are specifically designed with a bigger charge to stop tanks which are virtually indestructible. An estimated 110 million anti-personnel landmines in total are buried around the globe dating back to World War II and some of the more recent conflicts in warring African States and the Myanmar military regime.

Possible solutions

First, States Parties must exercise due diligence in the implementation of the Convention's core obligations. Many States Parties have finished clearing their minefields or are very close to doing so. Yet every new mine victim, every field that cannot be ploughed, every road or path that cannot be followed is a forceful reminder of the urgency of completing mine clearance. It also underlines the vital need to protect civilians through enhanced mine risk education. We are unfortunately seeing a pattern of delay in meeting clearance deadlines, with a large number of extension requests over the years. Moreover, the completion of stockpile destruction by some States Parties is long overdue. We urge States Parties at this Review Conference to agree on measures and mechanisms to address outstanding implementation issues, in particular delayed clearance and stockpile destruction.

Second, a mine free world is not a victim free world. The lifelong needs of mine victims, survivors and their families must be acknowledged. The ICRC's Physical Rehabilitation Programme, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, has supported nearly 2 million people with disabilities, including mine survivors, in more than 50 countries around the world. Far too often, they have struggled to access services and to be fully included in their societies. States Parties, in particular those with significant numbers of mine survivors, must redouble their efforts to eliminate such obstacles and to secure full, equal and effective participation in society for all mine survivors and others with disabilities.

Third, the goal of eradicating anti-personnel mines can only be met with high-level political will, supported by sufficient human, technical and financial resources. States must continue to ensure that sustained, possibly increased, support is available to achieve substantive progress in mine clearance and to fulfil promises to mine victims, survivors and their families. In addition to traditional humanitarian assistance, innovative ways of mobilizing resources may need to be explored in order to tackle long-term challenges. For example, in 2017, the ICRC launched the first Humanitarian Impact Bond, raising 25 million USD from private investors for the construction of 3 physical rehabilitation centres in Mali, Nigeria and DRC. This allowed us to



raise funds for these activities outside of our traditional framework, so that we can serve more people.

Useful documents

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottawa_Treaty

http://www.icbl.org/media/342067/icb009_chronology_a5_v4-pages.pdf

<http://www.icbl.org/en-gb/the-treaty/treaty-status.aspx>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaYp4vXMUWM>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/trump-landmines-obama-south-korea-military-regulations-a9312351.html>