

What are landmines and why are they a problem?

Made of plastic, metal or other materials, landmines contain explosives and sometimes pieces of shrapnel. They can be activated by direct pressure from above, by a tripwire or even simply by the proximity of a person. The blast can kill, destroy limbs, or cause blindness, severe burns or deep wounds. Sometimes those who trigger mines can not get medical care in time and die from loss of blood. Those who survive often need amputations, long hospital stays and extensive rehabilitation. Landmines instill fear in communities and are a lethal barrier to development.

There are many different types of antipersonnel mines. Blast mines will almost always cause foot and leg injuries, and secondary infections usually resulting in amputation. Fragmentation mines shower their victims with hundreds of metal fragments, causing deep wounds. Bounding fragmentation mines spring up about one meter to explode at the level of people's vital organs, firing out lethal metal fragments.

Indiscriminate, they lie silently in the ground for years until a person or animal triggers them. Antipersonnel mines attack blindly: They do not distinguish between a soldier and a civilian, between an adult and a child.



Finish the job!

The promise of the Mine Ban Treaty will be fulfilled when the norm against use of antipersonnel mines is universal and when the treaty's States Parties have fulfilled their key obligations, including mine clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance.

The ICBL is challenging states and the international community to step up their efforts and reach these goals by 2025. With sufficient political determination, resources and hard work, this can be achieved. **It is time to finish the job!**



Take action!

Visit www.icbl.org for more details

- Learn more and stay informed. Subscribe to our newsletter, and join us on facebook.com/minefreeworld and twitter.com/minefreeworld
- Contact your national campaign. If there is no campaign in your country then consider starting your own! If you are from an NGO, consider becoming a member.
- Write to one of the countries that has not joined the treaty, and urge them to get on board! Write to the treaty member states and urge them to lobby the non-member states to join. Use our online writing tips and sample letters.
- Support the ICBL by making a donation online or by mail. Every bit counts!

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Our deepest gratitude and appreciation go to the donors that support our advocacy and research work: concerned governments, organizations and individuals. Visit our website for a list of the ICBL-CMC's institutional donors.



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Reaching for a mine-free world



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What is the ICBL?

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) is a global civil society coalition working to end the suffering caused by antipersonnel mines.

The campaign includes national and international non-governmental organizations as well as dedicated individuals from around 100 countries and across many disciplines including human rights, development, refugee issues and emergency aid.

Our diversity, expertise and flexibility have always been our biggest assets. Within just five years of its inception, the ICBL achieved its initial goal: a global ban on the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of antipersonnel mines through the adoption of the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty. This was the first time a grassroots campaign succeeded in banning a weapon that had been in widespread use. For this achievement, the ICBL was awarded the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize together with its founding coordinator, Jody Williams.

The ICBL brings the reality of mine-affected communities into the diplomatic arena. Campaigners around the world work in a spirit of cooperation with their governments and other partners to ensure countries join the Mine Ban Treaty and live up to the letter and spirit of the treaty.

In 2011, the ICBL merged with the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) to become the ICBL-CMC. The Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, its research arm renowned for its independent and impartial reporting, has become the de facto monitoring regime of the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.



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What was the Ottawa Process?

The 1996-1997 Ottawa Process was an unprecedented diplomatic process that led to the creation of the Mine Ban Treaty, through cohesive and strategic partnership between small and medium-sized governments, international organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN agencies and civil society.

After a series of meetings to build support for the ban, the Mine Ban Treaty was adopted in Oslo (Norway) in September 1997 and opened to signature in Ottawa (Canada) in December 1997. It became binding international law on 1 March 1999.

The negotiation of this global ban happened more quickly than any treaty of its kind, demonstrating the international community's commitment to end the suffering caused by landmines.



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What is the Mine Ban Treaty?

The Mine Ban Treaty is a legally binding international agreement that bans antipersonnel mines. When joining the treaty, countries commit to:

- Never use antipersonnel mines, nor to develop, produce, acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer them.
- Destroy mines in their stockpiles within four years.
- Clear all mined areas in their territory within 10 years.
- Conduct risk education and ensure that mine survivors, their families and communities receive comprehensive assistance (in mine-affected countries).
- Offer assistance to other states parties, for example in providing for survivors or contributing to mine clearance programs.
- Adopt legislation and/or other national measures to ensure that the terms of the treaty are upheld.



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Achievements and challenges

Since the Mine Ban Treaty became legally binding in 1999, much has been achieved:

- More than 80% of the world's countries are on board the treaty.
- The stigmatization of mines has grown so strong that the vast majority of states that remain outside of the treaty have stopped using and producing the weapon.
- Millions of mines have been destroyed through clearance and some 30 states have become mine-free again.
- More than US\$4 billion has been invested in mine clearance.
- Some 47 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed.
- The number of people killed or injured by mines and explosive remnants of war each year has fallen dramatically from around 20,000 at the end of the 1990s to below 4,000 today.

Despite the remarkable progress, serious challenges remain:

- Mines still threaten millions of people and impede development in over 60 countries.
- Though rare and limited, antipersonnel mines are still used by a tiny number of governments outside of the treaty and non-state armed groups in a handful of countries.
- Some 10 people are killed or maimed every day by landmines or explosive remnants of war worldwide.
- More efforts are needed to clear contaminated land, and to assist landmine survivors and affected communities.