



Dear delegates,

We urge you to read these statements from Youth Mine Action Fellows in mine impacted states who cannot be in the room today. As a delegation of over 150 youth from 51 different countries, we represent as survivors, deminers, educators, assistance providers, and advocates. The future of mine action is our future. We stand in firm support of universalizing the Mine Ban Treaty and address the below calls-to-action to all states here today.

In support and hope,

Giovanna, Brazil; Dawood, Pakistan; Hiba, Pakistan; Katherine, Colombia; Kodjovi, Togo; Maria, Brazil; Júlia, Brazil; Nokuthula Dube, South Africa; Carolina, Colombia; Cheikh Sadibou DIEDHIOU, Senegal; Kendall, USA; Murphy, USA; Paul Nsiro, Uganda; Muhannad, Syria; Sreynang, Cambodia; Ratana, Cambodia; Batool, Syria; Juan, Colombia; Plamedi, CCBL, RDC; Samarn, Cambodia; David, Nigeria; Briza, Argentina; Nimaya, Sri Lanka; Zainab, Nigeria; Lucas, France; Yohan, Belgium; Esmirk, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Dan Gasigwa, Democratic Republic of Congo; Kauna, Nigeria



Decades after the war and genocide, Cambodia continues to carry the weight of its past. Landmines and unexploded ordnance still endanger lives — especially in rural areas — injuring or killing innocent civilians.

Survivors, including veterans and landmine victims, often live with disabilities and face discrimination, poverty, and social exclusion. Too often, they are overlooked and forgotten.

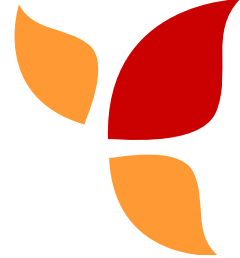
But the scars of war go beyond physical harm. True peace is not only about removing weapons — it is about restoring dignity, ensuring justice, and creating opportunities for those most affected. Victim assistance must include not just rehabilitation, but also social and economic inclusion, respect, and empowerment.

Therefore, I urge the delegation to firmly stand for the Mine Ban Treaty as well as take meaningful action: to expand support for landmine clearance and victim assistance, especially in underserved rural areas; to prioritize inclusive development for persons with disabilities; and to continue to provide educational initiatives that ensure future generations understand their history and uphold peace, justice, and human dignity.

Let us not forget those who have suffered. Together, we can build a Cambodia that is safer, kinder, and fairer — where every voice is heard, and no one is left behind.

Sreynang and Ratana, Mine Action Fellows from Cambodia





As youth from Pakistan working directly with landmine survivors, we urge all states not party, including our own, to take meaningful steps toward joining the Mine Ban Treaty and to support efforts that strengthen global disarmament.

The threat posed by landmines does not end when conflict ceases. We witness the enduring impact firsthand: lives lost or permanently altered, communities denied safety and opportunity, and victims facing long-term physical, psychological, and socioeconomic challenges.

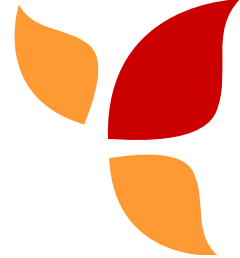
Pakistan has the opportunity to stand on the right side of history. By joining the Treaty, it can lead by example in Asia and affirm its commitment to peace, dignity, and the protection of civilians. Leadership is not measured by weapons retained, but by lives protected.

All states remaining outside the Treaty have a shared responsibility to address the continuing harm caused by landmines. This includes accelerating clearance, ensuring victim assistance, and contributing to international efforts to end the use of these indiscriminate weapons.

There is an urgent need for stronger national action focused on protecting lives and preventing future harm. This is not only a humanitarian responsibility, but a necessary step toward a safer and more hopeful future for all.

Dawood and Hiba, Mine Action Fellows from Pakistan





We understand that states considering withdrawal may have legitimate national security concerns. But we ask — if the Convention truly threatens your security, which part of it fails to address your fear?

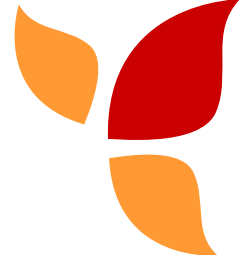
This isn't a challenge, it's an invitation to identify the gaps and explore solutions within the framework of cooperation. We propose the establishment of a survivor-informed dialogue, bringing mine survivors, humanitarian actors, and security experts to the same table. Before any decision to withdraw is finalized, let the lived experiences of those most impacted guide the discussion. Withdrawal should never be decided without those voices.

While some argue landmines are necessary for defense, evidence shows they create insecurity long after conflicts end, endangering civilians, fueling displacement, and costing governments far more in clearance than any battlefield gain. The Convention is not a constraint, it's a tool for long-term stability and trust-building.

The Convention remains a vital instrument — not just a moral commitment, but a practical pathway to safer communities. States, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, are showing that this is not about preserving the past, it's about protecting the future. Withdrawal sends a message of regression. Standing by the Treaty signals leadership and vision.

David, Mine Action Fellow from Nigeria





As young people from Syria who have worked for years in mine action and risk education, we have seen how explosive remnants of war continue to destroy lives long after the fighting ends.

Entire communities remain trapped—unable to safely return, farm, or rebuild—because of contamination. Children are injured or killed simply by playing outside. Survivors often face lifelong challenges with little to no support. This is the daily reality we live with.

We urge your delegation to take a firm stand in support of humanitarian disarmament and the Mine Ban Treaty. This is not the time for silence or retreat. We need more action—more support for clearance, for victim assistance, and for long-term solutions that put people first.

Syria should not be left behind in global conversations on mine action. There is an opportunity for states to lead with compassion and responsibility, and for Syria's future to be one of safety—not continued suffering.

Muhannad and Batol, Mine Action Fellows from Syria





The 1997 Mine Ban Treaty has significantly reduced casualties and alleviated suffering caused by these weapons. However, the actions of two states that have not prohibited these weapons—Russia and the United States**—are blatantly disregarding these norms and endangering civilians. And so, if we let the long-standing protection for civilians in war unravel, we are moving towards war without rules. Since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, its forces have deployed antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions across Ukrainian territory, resulting in thousands of civilian casualties, rendering agricultural land unusable, and displacing communities. These incidents, are a stark reminder of the dangers still lurking in our communities.

The conflict’s spillover effects now imperil regional security across Europe, particularly in nations bordering Russia and Belarus. This escalation risks eroding confidence in the relevance of international humanitarian law—the laws of war.

The catastrophic humanitarian consequences of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions far outweigh any perceived military utility. Proponents of these weapons often argue that they can be expeditiously cleared and destroyed once hostilities cease. However, the reality is that remediation remains a protracted, financially burdensome, and perilous endeavor, often leaving communities vulnerable to harm for decades.

Since January, funding cuts to U.S. foreign aid under the Trump administration have significantly curtailed or severely disrupted critical efforts to survey and clear contaminated areas, provide risk education, and deliver assistance to victims of explosive remnants of war.

Amid these contemporary geopolitical tensions and increasing challenges to norms of international humanitarian law, ICBL has still made more than 18 interventions so far on Victim assistance, clearance, extension request and risk education. And so Collective adherence to these frameworks is essential to safeguarding civilian lives, advancing post-conflict recovery, and upholding fundamental human rights. If this is not adhered to, then it risks weakening civilian protection and undermining decades of a normative framework that saved countless lives.

Thank you.

Blessing, Mine Action Fellow from Nigeria

