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Landmine Monitor Report 2001: Toward a Mine-Free World

MAJOR FINDINGS

On 12 September 2001, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) will release the third annual report of its Landmine Monitor initiative, the 1,175-page *Landmine Monitor Report 2001: Toward a Mine-Free World*. This is the most comprehensive report ever on the global landmine situation, containing information on every country in the world with respect to mine use, production, trade, stockpiling, humanitarian demining and mine survivor assistance.

Landmine Monitor is an unprecedented initiative by the ICBL to monitor implementation of and compliance with the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, and more generally to assess the efforts of the international community to resolve the landmines problem. *Landmine Monitor Report 2001* focuses on a reporting period from May 2000 to mid-2001.

It is evident from the wealth of information in *Landmine Monitor Report 2001* that the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty and the ban movement more generally are having a *major* impact globally. **This progress is shown by:**

- **An ever-growing number of governments joining the Mine Ban Treaty.** A total of 118 countries have ratified and another 22 have signed, constituting nearly three-quarters of the world's nations; since the last Landmine Monitor report, 17 countries have ratified or acceded (a process combining signature and ratification).
- **Reduced use** of the weapon in recent years. This is the result of stigmatization of the weapon in some cases, but also simply reflects reduced levels of conflict. Compared to the previous Landmine Monitor reporting period, the less intense fighting in Chechnya, and the end to conflicts in Ethiopia-Eritrea, Kosovo, and Democratic Republic of Congo, have meant decreased mine use globally.
- **Fewer new mine victims.** Landmine Monitor estimates that there were some 15,000 to 20,000 new casualties from landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) in 2000, an encouraging decrease from the long-standing and commonly cited figure of 26,000 new victims per year. Important reductions in the number of new casualties were recorded in some heavily mined areas in 2000, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Croatia, and Kosovo.

- A **dramatic drop in production**. The number of producers has dropped from 55 to 14 in recent years; in this year's report, Landmine Monitor removed Turkey and Yugoslavia, both non-signatories to the Mine Ban Treaty, from the list of producers.
- An almost **complete halt in trade**. Not a single significant shipment of antipersonnel mines (including by Mine Ban Treaty non-signatories) was identified in this reporting period, or indeed since 1998 when Landmine Monitor was launched.
- **Increased destruction of stockpiled antipersonnel mines**. More than 27 million antipersonnel mines have been destroyed by over 50 nations, including some 5 million in this reporting period; a total of 29 Mine Ban Treaty States Parties have completed destruction of their antipersonnel mine stockpiles, including eight in this reporting period.
- **Increased funding** for humanitarian mine action. Major donor nations provided more than \$221 million in 2000 alone, an increase of about \$19 million over 1999, and more than \$1 billion since 1993.
- **More land demined**. In 2000, eight of the largest humanitarian mine/UXO clearance programs cleared a combined total of more than 185 million square meters of land, including in Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Croatia, Kosovo, Laos, and Mozambique.

Other major findings of the *Landmine Monitor Report 2001* include:

- Landmine Monitor research identifies **90 countries that are affected** to some degree by landmines and/or unexploded ordnance. Bulgaria has completed mine clearance and is now considered mine-free. New mine laying in FYR Macedonia and Uzbekistan has added them to the list of mine-affected nations. A new survey in El Salvador, which previously declared itself mine-free, has identified 53 mine and UXO affected sites.
- Landmine Monitor research indicates that there were **new mine/UXO victims in 73 countries** in 2000 and 2001 (through May). A majority (45) of these countries were at peace, not war. The greatest number of new victims in this time period appear to be found in Afghanistan, India, Angola, Cambodia, Northern Iraq, and, likely, Burma.

Significant numbers of new victims are also found in Chechnya, Iran, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka and, likely, Vietnam.

- Organized **humanitarian mine action programs are taking place in 34 countries**. Mine clearance of some sort occurred in another 42 countries.
- The **first, groundbreaking national Landmine Impact Survey was completed** in Yemen in July 2000; additional national Landmine Impact Surveys have been completed in Thailand, Chad and Mozambique. In total, 30 countries as well as Abkhazia and Kosovo have undergone some type of landmine survey or assessment since 1997.
- As of mid-2001, it would not appear that antipersonnel mines are being used on a massive scale in any conflict. **The most regular use is likely occurring in Russia (Chechnya), Sri Lanka, and Burma**. In all three instances, both government and rebel forces are using antipersonnel mines. Reports of Uzbekistan continuing to mine its borders were still being received in June 2001. The kind of widespread use of antipersonnel mines that was witnessed in FR Yugoslavia/Kosovo in 1999 and in Russia/Chechnya at the height of that conflict in 1999 and early 2000 was not evident in this reporting period in any location. It would appear, however, that use of antipersonnel mines increased in a number of countries, notably in Sri Lanka by government and rebel forces, in Colombia by guerrillas, and in Namibia by Angolan rebels (UNITA) and Angolan government troops.
- In this Landmine Monitor reporting period (since May 2000), it appears likely that there was **new use of antipersonnel mines in 23 conflicts by as many as 15 governments and at least 30 rebel groups/non-state actors**.
- Most of the use of antipersonnel mines in this reporting period was continued use in ongoing conflicts. However, **changes regarding use from last year include: new use of mines in FYR Macedonia; Russian forces laying mines inside Tajikistan, a Mine Ban Treaty State Party, on the Tajik-Afghan border; Uzbekistan laying mines on its borders with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan; and Kyrgyzstan reportedly laying mines on its border with Tajikistan**. Landmine Monitor now also believes it is likely that Nepalese forces, especially the police, are using mines against Maoist rebels, who regularly use homemade mines;

- **Six governments acknowledge use of antipersonnel mines** in this time period. One, **Angola**, is a **signatory to the Mine Ban Treaty**. The other five are non-signatories: **Eritrea, Myanmar/Burma, Russia, Sri Lanka, and Uzbekistan**. Eritrea states that it has not used mines since the end of its border conflict with Ethiopia in June 2000. Use is ongoing for the other governments.
- Most disturbingly, Landmine Monitor has received reports that indicate a **strong possibility of use of antipersonnel mines by Uganda, a Mine Ban Treaty State Party**, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in June 2000. Uganda became a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty in August 1999. Landmine Monitor believes that these serious and credible allegations merit the urgent attention of States Parties, who should consult with the Ugandan government and other relevant actors in order to seek clarification, establish the facts, and resolve these questions regarding compliance with the Mine Ban Treaty. The Ugandan government has denied that it used antipersonnel mines in the DRC.
- Landmine Monitor believes that it is likely that two Mine Ban Treaty **signatories, Ethiopia and Sudan**, used antipersonnel mines. There are serious, but unconfirmed, allegations about use by **Rwanda** in the DRC in June 2000 when it was a treaty signatory (it is now a State Party) and **Burundi**, another treaty signatory. All four of these governments deny use.
- Landmine Monitor also believes that it is likely the following **non-signatories** used antipersonnel mines: **DR Congo, Israel, Nepal, and Kyrgyzstan**. Officials from DR Congo and Nepal have denied use. Israel acknowledged use of antipersonnel mines in South Lebanon prior to its withdrawal in May 2000, and appears to have continued to use mines in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, allegedly in one instance without proper fencing and marking as required by CCW Amended Protocol II.
- In addition to the instances of use noted above, there was ongoing use of mines in **Afghanistan** by the Northern Alliance opposition forces, in **Kashmir** by militant groups, in the **Philippines** by three rebel groups, in **Senegal** by rebel forces, in **Uganda** by rebel forces, in **Somalia** by various factions, in **Georgia/Abkhazia** by non-state actors, and in **Yugoslavia** by non-state actors.
- Landmine Monitor estimates that there are **some 230-245 million antipersonnel mines in the arsenals of about 100 nations**, with the biggest estimated to be China (110 million), Russia (60-70 million), United States (11.2 million), Ukraine (6.4 million), Pakistan (6 million), India (4-5 million), and Belarus (4.5 million).

- **Twenty-nine Mine Ban Treaty nations have completely destroyed their antipersonnel mine stockpiles**, and another 19 are in the process. Seventeen treaty States Parties have yet to begin destruction, which must be completed within four years of entry into force for each nation. The deadline for many nations is in 2003.

A total of 122 Landmine Monitor researchers in 95 countries systematically collected and analyzed information from a wide variety of sources for this comprehensive report. The book also includes appendices with reports from major actors in the mine ban movement, such as UN agencies, regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Survey Action Center, and the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining.

The ICBL received the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to eradicate antipersonnel mines. The Landmine Monitor initiative is coordinated by a “Core Group” of five ICBL organizations. Human Rights Watch is the lead organization and others include Handicap International (Belgium), Kenya Coalition Against Mines, Mines Action Canada, and Norwegian People’s Aid.

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