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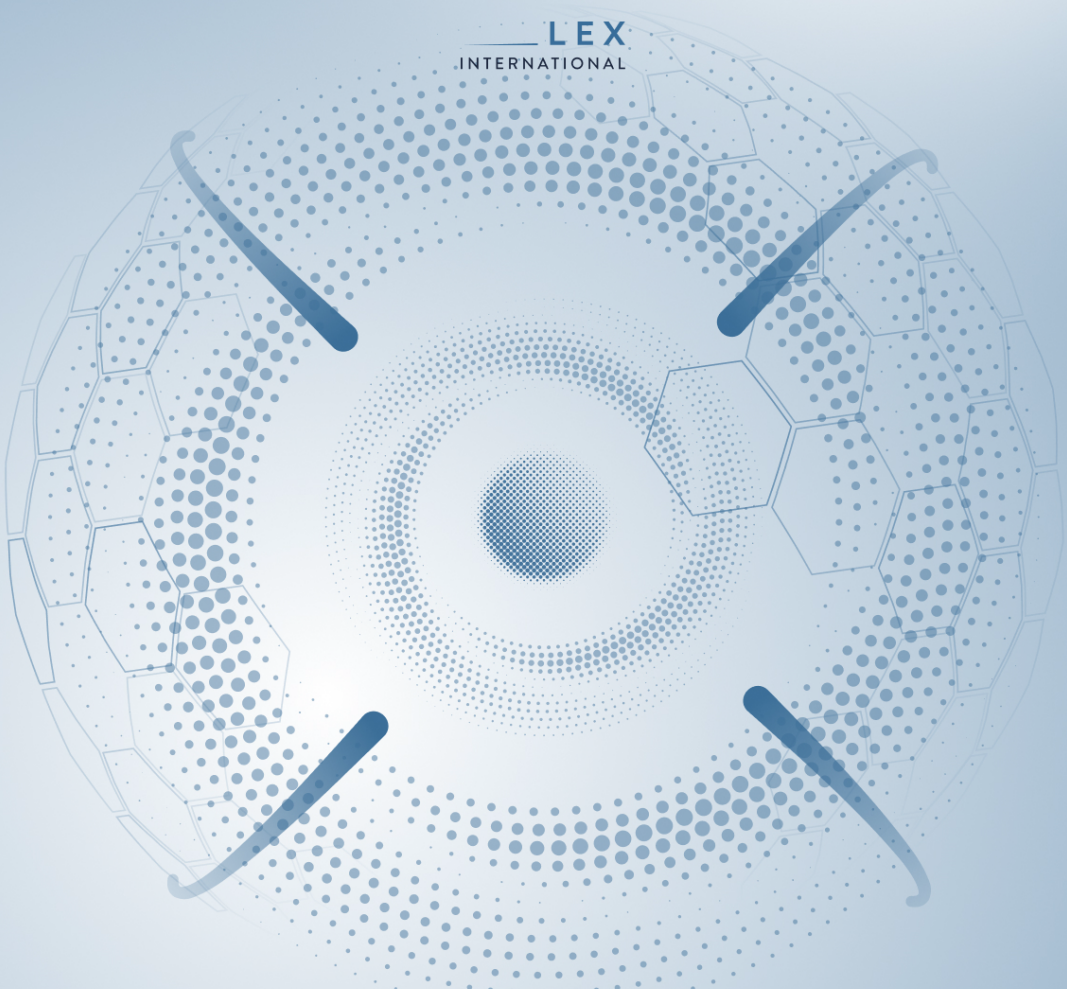

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions: Setting the record straight

Written by

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Lex International Fund is a philanthropic fund dedicated to strengthening international law. At Lex, we seek to help reverse the trend toward a worsening global security situation and breakdown of trust in frameworks and institutions by helping shift the narrative around international law and supporting new coalitions of actors. We work with civil society movements, international organizations, governments, media, businesses and scientists to shape global norms and create bold, innovative solutions to global challenges.

Lex International Fund is hosted by the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation.

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Foreword

I am old enough to remember a time when the use of anti-personnel mines was extensive. In most military services, soldiers were trained to use them. They were seen as natural — indeed indispensable — tools of war. In many parts of the world, their use reached epidemic proportions.

That changed fundamentally with the adoption of the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The widespread use of these weapons came to an end. In the years that followed, millions of mines were destroyed and vast areas of land were cleared. At the same time, a growing recognition emerged within military communities: anti-personnel mines were far from indispensable. Their utility was limited. In many cases they posed significant operational risks and liabilities.

The remarkable success of the AP Mine Ban Convention has had a paradoxical effect. In much of Europe and North America, knowledge of these weapons and their real-world impact has faded. This helps explain why some now speculate about their supposed military value — despite the absence of evidence to support such claims. It may also point to something more troubling: a willingness to discard the norms and rules that restrain state behaviour in times of war. This raises an uncomfortable question: who benefits from an increasingly lawless world?

A similar, though somewhat different, history applies to cluster munitions. Their use — most notably in Southeast Asia — left entire countries such as Laos contaminated with unexploded ordnance. Decades later, the humanitarian consequences persist. The Convention on Cluster Munitions halted a trajectory of increasing use. Yet, wherever these weapons have been employed, the pattern is clear: their effects on civilians are devastating, not least because of the high rate of unexploded submunitions.

The argument now advanced by those calling for withdrawal from these conventions is that the security environment has changed. But those of us involved in the negotiation of these treaties understood that circumstances would evolve. They always do. That is precisely why the prohibition was framed as applying “under any circumstances.” This was not an oversight; it was a deliberate

recognition that humanitarian limits must hold even — and especially — when conditions deteriorate.

If anything, technological developments since the adoption of these conventions have made anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions even less relevant. Modern military capabilities offer more precise and effective means of defence. These older weapons do not stop an enemy in any decisive way. At best, they are obsolete. At worst, they are counterproductive — endangering one's own forces and leaving behind a legacy that constrains operations for years to come.

We must never forget what these weapons actually do. They do not distinguish between soldiers and civilians. They do not recognise when a conflict has ended. They can, however, terrorise entire populations for decades. Ninety per cent of landmine victims are civilians, and half of them are children. These are not incidental effects. They are inherent to the design of the weapons themselves.

The processes that led to the prohibition of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions offer an important lesson. They were driven by credible evidence from the field — documented by humanitarian organisations, supported by military veterans, and taken forward through partnerships between states, civil society, the ICRC and certain UN actors. Affected countries played a central role. This model of cross-regional cooperation remains highly relevant today.

The conventions are not only prohibitions; they are frameworks for addressing the consequences of past use. They have enabled extensive international cooperation on clearance, stockpile destruction, and assistance to victims and survivors. They represent not only a legal achievement, but a practical one.

We are living through a period of significant international turbulence. Power is shifting. Institutions are under

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strain. Inequalities — within and between societies — are deepening. In such a context, it may be tempting to seek simple solutions.

But returning to weapons whose humanitarian costs are well docu-mented and whose military value remains unproven is not a solution. It is, rather, a form of self-inflicted harm.

It is also worth noting that the recent withdrawals are primarily a European phenomenon. From a global perspective, the conventions remain strong. The vast majority of states continue to uphold these norms and to benefit from them.

This report is therefore both timely and necessary. It reminds us why these conventions were established and what they have achieved. It also underscores a more fundamental point: if international norms are not actively supported and maintained, they will erode — often at the expense of the most vulnerable.

Experience shows that wars that fail to protect civilians ultimately undermines their own objectives. Security built on such a foundation is neither stable nor sustainable. The choice facing states today is not between security and restraint. It is between evidence-based policy and dangerous illusion.

— Steffen Kongstad, Former Norwegian Ambassador

Introduction

Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, politicians and commentators in several European countries have begun advocating a retreat from the treaties prohibiting anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions. While justifications vary, they largely rest on the assertion that the current security environment requires withdrawal in the name of national self-defence. In March 2025, for example, a paper published by the London-based think tank Policy Exchange described these weapons as "essential for British and allied deterrence and combat capacity, serving as key components of a broader force structure."[1]

The campaign to withdraw from the 1997 Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention and the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) have had an impact. Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine have withdrawn from, or sought to suspend, the AP Mine Ban Convention.[2] Lithuania — the only one of these States to have joined the Convention on Cluster Munitions — has withdrawn from that treaty as well.

Yet, the calls for withdrawal have disregarded the empirical record of harm and the military lessons drawn from the use of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions in past and ongoing wars. In some countries, a mantra of "defence by any means necessary" has become a conversation-stopper, silencing necessary

[1] See, "The Ottawa Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions: Can we still Afford Them?", Policy Exchange Research Note, March 2025.

[2] The formal title is "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction". Official notifications concerning withdrawals can be found on the UN Treaty Database: Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention - UNTC Convention on Cluster Munitions - UNTC. Ukraine announced its decision to suspend the operation of the Convention on 21 July 2025.

critique and eclipsing operational realities on the ground. When unmoored from empirical evidence and shielded from scrutiny, defence decisions are at constant risk of creating an illusion of safety.

History offers no shortage of examples where costly military investments have reassured politicians yet proved ill-suited to the realities of armed conflict, often to the detriment of vulnerable populations.

The purpose of this report is to place the facts about these weapons back at the centre of the debate — and in doing so, to encourage a more sober, more empirically grounded and therefore more viable approach to defence and security in Europe.

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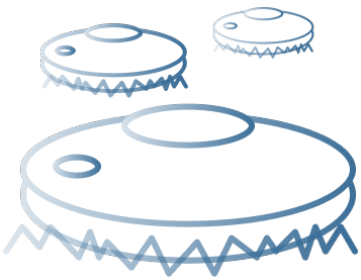
Unacceptable harm

Anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions were prohibited because of the unacceptable harm they inflict on civilians — including, and especially, children. Yet proponents of withdrawal from the AP Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions have broadly disregarded the extensive empirical record of death, injury and suffering that prompted the adoption of these treaties in the first place.



Anti-personnel mines are small explosive devices placed under, on or near the ground, designed to detonate by the presence, proximity or contact of a person. Unlike most weapons, anti-personnel mines are designed to lie in wait for their victim and detonate once the mine, or some element of it, is stepped on or disturbed.[3]

A source of confusion: Anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines

Anti-personnel mines are sometimes confused with anti-vehicle mines in the public debate. The latter are designed to detonate under the weight or action of vehicles such as tanks, armoured vehicles, or trucks. Only anti-personnel mines are prohibited by the AP Mine Ban Convention.[1] Anti-vehicle mines are not. Also excluded from the APMBC are weapons designed to be detonated on command by the user (for example, by wire or electronic signal) as these are not considered to be "victim activated" weapons.[1]

Sometimes called "the ghosts of war",[4] anti-personnel mines remain armed, often decades, unless cleared — a process that is often slow, costly and rarely

[3] Examples of similar "victim" activated weapons include anti-vehicle mines and booby traps. .
[4] International Committee of the Red Cross, "Anti-personnel Mines: Friend or Foe?", 1996.

completed quickly, provided that the international standards for mine clearance are followed.

While some mines are equipped with self-destruct mechanisms, empirical evidence from past conflicts shows these safeguards to be unreliable and often to complicate, rather than facilitate, clearance (see below). In countries like Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Myanmar, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen, anti-personnel mines have continued to kill and maim children and other civilians — even though the fighting in several of these countries ended long ago.

Cluster munitions contain or carry large numbers of smaller explosive submunitions. The number carried can vary from several dozen to more than 600 depending on the specific weapon.[5] Cluster munitions are typically delivered by aircraft artillery, mortar, rocket and other systems, which release the submunitions mid-air after which they arm and fall towards the ground. Explosive submunitions can be dispersed across wide areas — often covering tens of thousands of square meters in a single attack.

While the submunitions are designed to explode on impact or after a pre-set time delay, evidence demonstrates that substantial numbers fail to detonate as intended. Much like anti-personnel mines, unexploded submunitions — which often attract the attention of children due to their curious shape — may detonate when picked up, kicked or disturbed, causing death or severe injury.

In places such as Vietnam, Laos, Lebanon, Cambodia, Iraq and Ukraine, millions of unexploded submunitions remain a lethal legacy. In addition to killing and maiming men, women and children, these and other unexploded ordnance make large swaths of farmland and infrastructure unsafe, slowing economic recovery and development.

[5] For example, the CBU-58 used by the United States in past conflicts releases 650 BLU-63 antipersonnel submunitions which can cover from 6,000 to 20,000 square metres, depending on use and conditions.

The war in Ukraine illustrates — in real time — why anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions were banned by most countries. Extensive use of these weapons on Ukrainian territory since 2014 has made the country one of the "most heavily mined countries in the world".[6]

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Recent casualty data confirm the continuing human toll: Ukraine has recorded successive annual increases in cluster munition casualties and remains among the countries most affected by landmine incidents globally.[7]

The pattern from conflicts where anti-personnel mine and cluster munitions have been used in the past paints an even bleaker picture of the future: the true human cost of these weapons for Ukrainian civilians is almost certainly much higher than current figures suggest — and will continue to rise for years, even decades, after the fighting stops.

Unproven military utility

The decisions to withdraw from the AP Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions rest heavily on the claim that these weapons are militarily necessary in today's security environment. As the Defense Ministers of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland stated when declaring their intent to withdraw: "With this decision, we are sending a clear message: our countries are prepared and can use every necessary measure to defend our territory and freedom".[8]

[6] See United Nations Development Programme, "In Ukraine, tackling mine action from all sides to make land safe again".
[7] International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition, "Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor", 2025.
[8] Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Poland, "Joint statement of the Ministers of Defence of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland on withdrawal from the Ottawa Convention," March 2024.

To date, however, no publicly available military assessment has been presented to substantiate the claim that anti-personnel mines or cluster munitions constitute a necessary measure for national defence. Nor have the States announcing withdrawal placed in the public domain any evidence-based military assessment demonstrating that renewed reliance on these weapons is critical or that it would deliver concrete and otherwise unattainable defensive advantages. On the contrary, in response to the suggestion that Finland withdraw from the AP Mine Ban Convention, the Finnish Defence Forces stated that they do not see anti-personnel mines "as a critical and necessary capability", with its Commander, General Timo Kivinen, noting that since "our operating concepts have changed […] anti-personnel mines are not a topical issue for us."[9]

This should come as no surprise. The AP Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions were both based on empirical assessments showing that the military utility of these weapons was extremely limited — and even negative.

The military utility of **anti-personnel mines** was examined more than thirty years ago by senior military officials. Historically, anti-personnel mines have filled narrow tactical purposes, used as obstacles to channel or hinder the movement of troops, to protect defensive positions and important infrastructure from ambush, and to prevent the lifting or breaching of anti-vehicle mines. In some conflicts, anti-personnel mines have been used to illegally target or restrict the movement of civilian populations.

A study conducted by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 1997, endorsed by more than 55 military officers, assessed the use of the weapons in 26 armed conflicts. The study concluded that the material available on the use of anti-personnel mines did not "substantiate claims that these were indispensable weapons of high military value" and that the value of traditionally emplaced anti-personnel mines is questionable.[10] One British General noted that **"there is no case known where [anti-personnel] mines as such have influenced a campaign, a battle or even a skirmish in any decisive way".**[11]

[9] The Finnish Parliament's Committee on Defense, "Committee opinion PuVL 17/2022 vp — KAA 4/2022 vp"

[10] International Committee of the Red Cross, "Friend or Foe: A study on the military use and effectiveness of anti-personnel mines", 1997, pp 71-72.

[11] Ibid, p. 44 .

No publicly available operational data or independent military assessment released since 1997 has demonstrated that anti-personnel mines have provided decisive or otherwise indispensable battlefield effects. Analyses of the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia have not found evidence that anti-personnel mines have delivered a measurable military advantage to date.[12]

On the contrary, developments in weapon technology since the adoption of the AP Mine Ban Convention appear to have further reduced the operational relevance of anti-personnel mines. Drones, sensor-based systems and networks, modern precision-guided weapon systems, and command-detonated munitions can achieve comparable — and often superior — military effects while preserving manoeuvre and significantly reducing risks to civilians and one's own forces.[13]

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The military utility of **cluster munitions** has similarly been called into question. While it is often claimed that these weapons play a critical role in attacks, little empirical evidence has been provided to substantiate this assertion. One of the few available assessments questions rather than confirms such claims. The study, conducted by the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment in 2008, concluded that many of the cluster weapons in military stockpiles today have "a more modest effect than usually assumed and that while they have a satisfactory or adequate effect against most targets, no evidence has been found to claim that such weapons are far better than their alternatives to the extent that they are indispensable."[14]

[12] Erik Tollefsen and Pete Evans, "Do anti-personnel mines still have military utility in modern warfare?" - Humanitarian Law & Policy Blog, 26 November 2025.
[13] See E. Tollefsen and P. Evans, note 15.
[14] Norwegian Defence Research Institute (FFI), "Cluster Munitions – Military Utility and Alternatives", 2008.

While the indiscriminate civilian harm caused by cluster munitions is well documented, their military utility remains questionable. Given their documented failure rates, claims that cluster munitions have proven "extremely effective" in the Ukraine war should therefore be treated with extreme caution.

Far from demonstrating necessity, the available evidence suggests that, in some contexts, anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions may in fact impose greater military costs than benefits. U.S. Government reporting indicates that during the Vietnam War and the 1991 Persian Gulf War, American forces suffered casualties from their own landmines and unexploded submunitions.[15]

Anti-personnel mines also inflicted significant casualties on Australian forces during the Vietnam War. Between May 1967 and November 1971, 55 Australian soldiers were killed and approximately 250 wounded by the eleven-kilometre "barrier minefield" in Phuoc Tuy Province — a minefield laid and later lifted by Australian forces themselves. [16]

These cases illustrate an inescapable problem with the weapons themselves: once deployed, persistent weapons like anti-personnel mines and cluster submunitions can constrain manoeuvre, complicate post-conflict operations, and kill, injure and impose long-term risks on one's own personnel. In such circumstances, their net military value may be not merely limited, but negative.

No reliable self-destruct features

It is sometimes argued that technological safety features — such as self-destruct mechanisms — can ensure that anti-personnel mines and cluster submunitions do not remain a danger after active hostilities. In their notification of withdrawal from the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Lithuania stated, for example, that "significant advancements in the technology and precision of cluster munitions have reduced the risk of unexploded ordnance and civilian casualties".[17] In April 2025, moreover, Swedish Major General Karlis Neretnieks similarly argued that

[15] United States General Accounting Office, "Information on the U.S. Use of Land Mines in the Persian Gulf War (GAO-02-1003)", September 2002.
[16] Greg Lockhart, "The Minefield: An Australian Tragedy in America's Vietnam War", Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, June 2007.
[17] https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CN/2024/CN.347.2024-Eng.pdf

Sweden should withdraw from the AP Mine Ban Convention and procure "smart" anti-personnel mines.[18]

While most **anti-personnel mines** do not have such safety features, some have self-destruct mechanisms built into or attached to the mine itself — with time frames for this action ranging from several hours to several days.[19] These mechanisms may, under certain controlled testing conditions, give the impression that the number of mines remaining will be greatly reduced. But evidence from their use in actual combat situations demonstrates that they perform far less reliably in practice.

Indeed, the empirical record shows that the effectiveness of these mechanisms fall far short of expectations. While manufacturers often claim failure rates of between 2 and 5 per cent, mine clearance personnel operating in conflict-affected areas frequently report failure rates ranging from 10 to 30 per cent.[20] A 2002 report by the U.S. General Accounting Office on the use of U.S. landmines in the Persian Gulf War found a significantly higher-than-expected malfunction rate among the approximately 118,000 self-destruct landmines deployed.[21] The U.S. Department of Defense had asserted that the self-destruct mechanism would eliminate 99.99 per cent of the mines used. At that rate, only around 12 of the 118,000 mines used would have remained as potentially explosive hazards. However, a contractor tasked with post-conflict clearance reported that 1,977 U.S. self-destruct mines remained in just one of the seven Kuwaiti battlefield sectors.[22]

These figures illustrate the stark gap between the performance claims derived from testing environments and outcomes observed under actual battlefield conditions. There is, to date, no publicly available evidence indicating that these reliability concerns have been resolved or that battlefield performance

[18] https://www.dn.se/sverige/generalmajoren-sverige-maste-skaffa-smarta-truppminor/

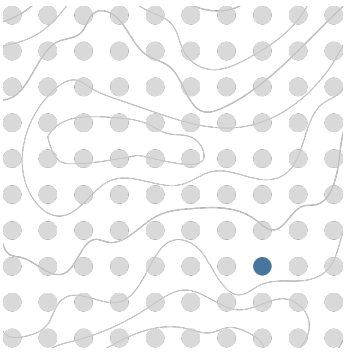
[19] A self-destruct mechanism mine is a built-in feature designed to automatically detonate the mine after a preset period. Self-neutralization mechanism causes a mine to automatically render itself incapable of functioning after a preset period, typically by disabling its detonating components. As a result, the mine is unable to detonate. Self-deactivation is another type of feature that causes the mine to become inoperative after a preset period, typically through the depilation of a battery.

[20] See Mark Hiznay, "Operational and Technical Aspects of Cluster Munitions," United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research Disarmament Forum," 2006.

[21] See United States General Accounting Office, pp 23-30.

[22] Ibid.

has materially improved since those assessments were conducted. In other words: **There is still no such thing as a "smart" anti-personnel mine.**



Like anti-personnel mines, the explosive submunitions found in most **cluster munitions** used and transferred today are not equipped with any safety features. Attempts to enhance their reliability by adding self-destruct mechanisms have proven significantly less effective in practice than manufacturers have asserted. One prominent and well-studied example is the M-85 submunition. A version of this munition was fitted with a self-destruct mechanism specifically to remedy the historically high failure rates seen in past conflicts. The manufacturer claimed that this feature would limit the failure rate to one per cent—meaning that no more than one in 100 bomblets would remain as an explosive remnant of war.

The facts on the ground, however, told a different story. A study by the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment concluded that the actual failure rate of the M-85 submunitions used by Israeli forces in Lebanon in 2006 ranged from 9.6 to 12.2 per cent — nearly ten times higher than the 1 per cent claimed by the manufacturer.[23] The study also cited evidence from their use by British forces in Iraq in 2003, indicating a similarly elevated failure rate well above the stated threshold.[24]

Such discrepancies are not limited to the M-85. The BLU-97 submunition used by the United States in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo was presented with a failure rate of 5 per cent or less due to its self-destruct feature. In practice, however, the dud rate proved substantially higher. Human Rights Watch, citing clearance

[23] Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, et al. "M 85: An analysis of Reliability", 2007. These were submunitions with a self-destruct feature. The figures were drawn from a detailed analysis of three specific sites. The study did not estimate the failure in other sites in Lebanon but stated with confidence that the failure rates were substantially higher than 1 per cent.
[24] https://youtu.be/v_jsyObTG8k?si=qqpLKVR3jirJ-weo, accessed 13 November 2025

experts, reported failure rates ranging from 15 to 22 per cent in Afghanistan and approximately 7 per cent in Kosovo.[25] The BLU-97 is also frequently identified as one of the most common types of unexploded ordnance found in affected areas of Iraq.

No right hands for indiscriminate weapons

It has been suggested that anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions are primarily problematic when used irresponsibly by non-State armed groups or inadequately trained military forces, or when stockpiles of the weapons are poorly maintained. However, the empirical record demonstrates that the harms associated with these weapons have arisen consistently across conflicts — including when they have been deployed by professional, well-trained State militaries.

As of 1 November 2025, 57 countries in the world were contaminated with anti-personnel mines. Unstructured and inadequately trained non-State armed groups have unquestionably contributed to anti-personnel mine contamination in a number of non-international armed conflicts. 26 In recent years, such groups have also been a significant driver of increased mine casualties, particularly through the use of improvised victim-activated explosive devices.[27]

However, the contaminated countries include States affected by international armed conflicts, such as Armenia/Azerbaijan, Eritrea/Ethiopia, India/Pakistan, Iran/Iraq and Russia/Ukraine. In these cases, the contamination resulted from the actions of regular armed forces presumably operating under established doctrines, regulations and training regimes — not from undisciplined or irregular actors.

The pattern is even clearer with respect to cluster munitions. Unlike anti-personnel mines, these have never been regarded as a “poor man’s weapon”, as

[25] Human Rights Watch, “Fatally Flawed”, p.25.
[26] This includes conflicts in Angola, Colombia, Cambodia, Thailand, Syria, Yemen, The Former Yugoslavia.
[27] In 2024, as in previous years, victim-activated improvised landmines continued to cause the most casualties. Landmine Monitor 2025, Major Findings.

their use typically requires more complex delivery systems, such as aircraft, artillery or rocket launchers. As a result, cluster munitions have historically been used primarily by State armed forces rather than by irregular groups. The extensive contamination of countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Laos, Lebanon is largely attributable to their use by professional and well-trained military forces — including those of the United States, Israel and the former Soviet Union/Russia.

These facts demonstrate that, with respect to anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions, the recurring harm stems from the inherent characteristics and design of the weapons themselves — not from the nature of the forces using them.

Conclusion: A matter of facts

The AP Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions were not designed for fair-weather conditions. Anchored in the realities of armed conflict, the treaties were built for the hard times — when war is at its most brutal. Facts and hard evidence about humanitarian impact and military utility drove the discussions when States, international organisations, civil society and other field-based actors came together to prohibit these weapons under international humanitarian law. The same evidence-based approach has, since then, driven efforts to give these legal norms concrete effect on the ground.

The treaties have been championed by some of those who knew the weapons best. Vietnam veterans played a central role in the campaign for the AP Mine Ban Convention, joined by veterans from other conflicts who later dedicated themselves to mine clearance work.[28] They had used the weapons, witnessed their impact on civilians and fellow soldiers, and dealt first-hand with the dangers left behind.

No publicly available evidence has emerged since the adoption of these treaties that calls into question their underlying rationale. The military utility of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions remains unproven, questionable — even negative. The technical characteristics of these weapons have not changed in any relevant way. Safety mechanisms continue to fall short in real-world conditions.

Because they contain clear legal rules and are firmly grounded in empirical evidence, the treaties have brought significant benefit to the States that have joined them — and to their citizens: more than 200 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines and cluster submunitions have been destroyed, and vast areas of previously contaminated land have been cleared or released as safe. Many States have strengthened their national capacities for clearance, risk education, and assistance to victims and survivors — often with the support of international partners.

[28] Especially the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAF). VVAF was one of the founding organizations launching the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. VVAF members provided powerful testimony about the long-term suffering caused by landmines and helped shift the issue from a military matter to one of humanitarian and moral imperatives. Veterans also supported advocacy and research.

The large majority of States that have joined these treaties will continue to benefit from the collective security and humanitarian gains they provide. But for those that have withdrawn — or are contemplating withdrawing — the empirical record tells a darker story: **A deteriorating security environment will not make weapons with limited military utility more useful.**[29] Reliance on these weapons in defence planning risks creating a false sense of security.

Worse still, should production and use resume, the evidence is clear: it is the children and other civilians of their own countries who will pay the highest price — for decades to come, and at a humanitarian cost that will outweigh any military advantage.

[29] It is important to recall that in developing, acquiring or adapting a new weapon or weapons system, a State is required to conduct a review to ensure that the weapon does not violate international law, including the general rules of international humanitarian law. This review applies to newly developed or acquired weapons as well as the ways in which such weapons are to be used.

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