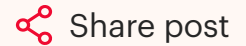
 Our Impact

International Campaign to Ban Landmines Condemns Reported U.S. Policy Shift on Antipersonnel Landmines

NEWS

DECEMBER 22, 2025





Share post

Media statement

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) joins the [US Campaign to Ban Landmines \(USCBL\)](#) in expressing its alarm and deep concern about recent media reports that U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth has signed a Pentagon policy [memo](#) authorizing the use of antipersonnel landmines by U.S. forces without geographic limitation, a reversal of the Biden administration's [policy](#) and longstanding US practice.

While the United States is not part of the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, a comprehensive ban on antipersonnel mines with over 165 States Parties, it has long supported the norm against these inherently indiscriminate and inhumane weapons and has not used them in combat [since 1991](#). The memo notes that the mines would act as a “force multiplier,” but multiple [military assessments](#) have shown that mines no longer have a strong military utility as mined areas are quickly and easily breached. Any utility they may have is vastly outweighed by the harm they inflict on civilians. Indeed, the [Landmine Monitor 2025](#) report showed 90% of recorded casualties in 2024 were civilians, and nearly half of those were children. The report also recorded the highest number of civilian casualties caused by landmines and explosive remnants of war since 2020.

If these media reports are confirmed, the United States would place itself among a small group of states, including Russia and Myanmar, that continue to use antipersonnel landmines in contemporary conflicts, according to *Landmine Monitor 2025*.

“This unprecedented step risks weakening the global stigma that has, for more than two decades, effectively curtailed the use and transfer of antipersonnel landmines and saved countless civilian lives. By embracing these heinous weapons, the United States would be joining the ranks of countries like Russia and Myanmar, known for their blatant disregard for civilian safety in armed conflict” said Tamar Gabelnick, ICBL Director.

This policy shift also stands in stark contrast to the United States' long-standing role as the world's largest donor to mine action, having contributed more than US\$1.2 billion between 2020 and 2024 to clearance, risk education, and victim assistance programmes worldwide. The new policy will also reportedly end its life-saving U.S. Humanitarian Mine Action Program, replacing it with funds focused on unexploded ordnance and munitions destruction.

The ICBL urges the United States to urgently reverse course, reaffirm policies prohibiting the use, transfer, and production of antipersonnel landmines, and recommit to its humanitarian leadership in mine action programmes and decades of progress toward a mine-free world.

END

Background

- **The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)** is a global civil society coalition of hundreds of organizations working for a world without landmines. In 1997, the ICBL was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize together with its founding coordinator Jody Williams. The campaign includes national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) across many disciplines including demining, human rights, development, refugee issues, and medical and humanitarian relief.
- **The United States Campaign to Ban Landmines-U.S. Cluster Munition Coalition (USCBL-CMC)** is a coalition of non-governmental organizations working to ensure that the U.S. comprehensively prohibits antipersonnel mines and cluster munitions and joins the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions. It is the national affiliate of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC), founded in New York in 1992 and recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate together with former ICBL coordinator Ms. Jody Williams of Vermont. The USCBL-CMC also calls for sustained U.S. government financial support for UXO clearance and victim assistance.

For more information, please contact:

- Charles Bechara, International Campaign to Ban Landmines & Cluster Munitions, Media and Communications Manager, charles@icblcmc.org
- John Ramming Chappell, Co-chair U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines - Cluster Munitions Coalition, jchappell@civiliansinconflict.org
- Ursula Knudsen-Latta, Co-chair U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines - Cluster Munitions Coalition, uknudsen-latta@fcnl.org

Let's stay in touch

Subscribe to updates about ICBL-CMC's impact around the world

Submit

By entering your email address and clicking "Submit", you agree to receive updates from the ICBL-CMC about our impact. To learn more about how we use and protect your personal data, please view our privacy policy.



International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC)

Avenue de France 23 · 1202 Geneva · Switzerland

Email: info@icblcmc.org · General Inquiries: +41 22 920 03 25

[Privacy](#) [Cookie Policy](#)

