INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO BAN LANDMINES
1997 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Laureate

Statement on Landmines

Delivered by Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan on behalf of International Campaign to Ban Landmines
81st Session of the First Committee on Disarmament and International Security - civil society segment
New York City, October 2026

Thank you, Chairperson.

The Mine Ban Treaty is a landmark of humanitarian disarmament - the first treaty to comprehensively prohibit a conventional weapon and place the protection of people above its claimed military utility.

Today, 162 States are party to the Treaty - more than 80% of the world's nations. We warmly welcome Lebanon as the newest member of the treaty. Its momentous decision to join a disarmament convention in the midst of active conflict shows how outdated the use of AP mines is and demonstrates Lebanon's ardent commitment to the protection of civilians in conflict

The Treaty has transformed millions of lives. States Parties have destroyed more than 55 million stockpiled antipersonnel mines, and 31 have fulfilled their clearance obligations and become mine-free. Risk education and victim assistance are now provided on a scale unimaginable before the Treaty.

Yet these hard-won gains are under grave threat.

Russia continues to use antipersonnel mines extensively in Ukraine. Myanmar's armed forces have expanded their use, deliberately targeting civilians, while new use has also been reported by Iran and North Korea. Evidence increasingly indicates use and production by State Party Ukraine, which had also received US-transferred antipersonnel mines. Allegations of use along the Cambodia–Thailand border must be promptly and transparently investigated.

Mines and explosive remnants of war continue to kill and injure thousands of people every year. Civilians remain the overwhelming majority of casualties, with children heavily affected. Meanwhile, insufficient and declining funding is undermining clearance, risk education and essential long-term assistance to victims and survivors.

The Treaty has also suffered an unprecedented assault from within. Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland have now withdrawn despite previous recognition that these horrific weapons have no place in modern warfare. The ICBL is particularly alarmed by Poland's plans to produce and use, and potentially export, millions of antipersonnel mines, and by Finland's anticipated resumption of production. We call on all five states not to produce, transfer or use weapons that will endanger civilians for generations.

Ukraine's attempted "suspension" last year is equally alarming. The Convention does not permit suspension of its operation or obligations - a fact affirmed by the Meeting of States Parties in December 2025. Ukraine must retract this unlawful step and fully comply with its Treaty obligations.

States Parties must remain vigilant and respond collectively and unequivocally. Silence in the face of these threats risks normalizing treaty abandonment in wartime - precisely when humanitarian law is needed most - and undermining other humanitarian disarmament treaties.

We call on all states to condemn any use of antipersonnel mines, by anyone and under any circumstances; to defend and universalize the Treaty; and to provide sustained funding for clearance, risk education and victim assistance.

Finally, we urge every state to vote in favour of this year's United Nations General Assembly resolution on the Mine Ban Treaty.

Thank you.