



**Statement to the 75th Session of the General Assembly First Committee on
Disarmament and International Security**

International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)

13 October 2020

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Thank you, Chairperson,

The Mine Ban Treaty is one of the most successful disarmament treaties ever. With 80 per cent of the world's countries on board and many others in de facto compliance, it has nearly eliminated the production and use of antipersonnel landmines by states, while promoting sustained clearance and recognition of the needs of victims. Over 30 states are now free of landmine contamination; more than 55 million stockpiled antipersonnel landmines have been destroyed; and progress — though still not sufficient—is made to ensure accessible and adequate assistance for victims.

However antipersonnel landmines, including of improvised nature, still maim, kill and cause devastation. Myanmar remains the only government that continues to use this weapon. Landmines are also being used by non-government armed forces in a handful of countries. All use of antipersonnel mines, including of improvised nature, is banned and should be strongly condemned and discouraged. To the few states who are still not on board the treaty, we say: please reconsider your position this year and join.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also affected the work under the Treaty, and posed additional challenges to implementation, namely: delays in land survey and clearance; disruption in victim assistance; late submission of annual transparency reports; changes to work plans; and extension requests to meet key Treaty obligations, such as land clearance. While we fully understand the complexity of the situation, we need to ensure that the vital work under the Treaty is not neglected and goes safely forward despite the challenging circumstances.

Here at the First Committee, we call on states to:

- Condemn any use of antipersonnel mines and reiterate that any use of landmines by any actor, under any circumstances is unacceptable;
- Report on the progress towards joining the Treaty;
- Promote the Treaty by engaging bilaterally in discussions on the universalisation and implementation of the MBT; and
- Vote in favour of the resolution on the MBT and encourage others, such as regional group members, to do as well.

We thank Sudan for their leadership this year, as President of the Mine Ban Treaty. We look forward to a productive hybrid Meeting of States Parties next month in



Geneva, and on making progress in implementing the Oslo Action Plan adopted at the 4th Review Conference last year and towards finishing the job by 2025.

Lastly, we look forward to seeing, that despite the current exceptional circumstances and limitations there is space provided for equal, active and meaningful participation by all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, at the Meeting of States Parties and in the overall work of the Treaty.

I thank you, Chairperson