

The U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines - U.S. Cluster Munition Coalition Welcomes New U.S. Landmine Policy and Calls for Accession to Treaty

WASHINGTON (June 21, 2022) - The U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines - U.S. Cluster Munition Coalition (USCBL-USCMC) welcomes President Biden's new anti-personnel landmine policy, as an important first step toward the ultimate goal of the United States joining the Mine Ban Treaty and banning the use, production, and transfer of anti-personnel landmines worldwide.

Landmines are indiscriminate weapons that devastate civilian communities during conflict and for decades after the conflict has ended. The USCBL-USCMC welcomes today's announcement from the White House, reversing the 2020 anti-personnel landmine policy, which had allowed for the weapons use globally. Through this new policy, the United States is once again moving toward the global consensus against the use of anti-personnel landmines. Today, 164 countries are party to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, also known as the Ottawa Convention, representing over 80 percent of the world's states and all U.S. NATO allies.

This policy is an important first step toward the USCBL-USCMC's and the Biden Administration's goal of the United States "ultimately acceding to the Ottawa Convention."

While this new anti-personnel landmine policy is an important step, the USCBL-USCMC reiterates our call for President Biden to ban the use of anti-personnel landmines without geographic exceptions, including the Korean Peninsula. The mines on the Korean peninsula continue to cause ongoing harm and serve as a barrier to peace. Additionally, the mines on the Korean peninsula are no longer under U.S. responsibility, having been turned over to the South Korean armed forces, meaning these mines should not and do not prevent the U.S. from joining the Mine Ban Treaty.

As this new policy is implemented, the USCBL-USCMC urges the Biden Administration to lay out an accelerated timeline for the destruction of any stockpiled anti-personnel landmines and provide concrete plans and mechanisms for public reporting on progress. We additionally call on the United States to continue its role as the world's leading funder of humanitarian mine action.

The USCBL-USCMC has appreciated the Biden Administration's consultations with civil society and victims' advocates over the past year, and looks forward to continued regular engagement on the issues as the U.S. builds on this progress to undertake the necessary steps to accede to the treaty.

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