



Press Release

March 1, 2013

**Mine Ban Treaty Celebrates Fourteenth Anniversary:  
Campaigners Ask for U.S. to Conclude Review & Announce Intention to Join Treaty**

WASHINGTON, D.C.: March 1 marks the fourteenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Mine Ban Treaty, and campaigners from around the world continue to call on the United States to announce the conclusion of its landmine policy review and plans to join the treaty.

The Obama administration initiated a review of U.S. landmine policy in late 2009 in response to the outcry of the global community. At the Mine Ban Treaty's December 2012 Meeting of States Parties, the United States observer delegation stated that the U.S. will be announcing the outcome of its three year review of its landmine policy "soon."

"We are excited that the review will come to an end in the coming months," said Zach Hudson, coordinator of the United States Campaign to Ban Landmines (USCBL). "The world anxiously waits to hear news of U.S. progress towards accession to the Mine Ban Treaty."

While the U.S. gives more money for minefield clearance than any other country—and has not used landmines since 1991 (in the first Gulf War), has not exported them since 1992 and has not produced landmines since 1997, it still retains millions of stockpiled antipersonnel mines for potential future use and is one of only 36 countries in the world that have not joined the Mine Ban Treaty.

"The administration needs to embrace the Mine Ban Treaty and announce concrete plans for a comprehensive ban on antipersonnel mines," said Hudson. "Steps should be taken now to begin destruction of landmine stockpiles and guarantee that the U.S. will never again use this weapon that has been condemned by the vast majority of the world's nations, including every other NATO member."

Over the past three years, Obama and his administration have received letters of support for U.S. accession to the Mine Ban Treaty from 68 Senators, nearly 100 leaders of prominent U.S. nongovernmental organizations, key NATO allies, U.S. military personnel, 16 Nobel Peace Prize recipients, landmines survivors and countless citizens from around the world.

By joining the treaty, the U.S. would help send a clear signal that all types of antipersonnel mines are unacceptable weapons. Joining would also encourage other remaining outlier states to accede and strengthen international security.

From March 1 to April 4—the U.N.'s International Day for Mine Awareness, the USCBL will be joining the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) in the global *Lend Your Leg* campaign. The *Lend Your Leg* concept—asking individuals to roll up their pant leg as a symbolic gesture to say "no more landmines" in order to urge decision makers to take

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action—was launched by the Colombian NGO Fundación Arcángeles in 2011 to call attention to the issue of landmines and their devastating effect on communities in Colombia and throughout the world.

Beginning today, *Lend Your Leg* campaigners from around the world are launching events to urge governments that remain outside the Mine Ban Treaty to join immediately and urging all governments to take steps towards achieving a mine-free world including: speeding clearance of contaminated land, providing more and better assistance to survivors, their families and communities, and destruction of all remaining stockpiles of antipersonnel mines.

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For additional information on the *Lend Your Leg* campaign please visit:

<http://www.lendyourleg.org>

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*The USCBL, currently coordinated by Handicap International, is a coalition of thousands of people and U.S. non-governmental organizations working to: (1) ensure no U.S. use, production, or transfer of antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions; (2) encourage the U.S. to join the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty and the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions; and (3) secure high levels of U.S. government support for clearance and assistance programs for victims of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.*

*The USCBL is the U.S. affiliate of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)—the co-laureate of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize—and is a member of the Cluster Munition Coalition, an international coalition working to protect civilians from the effects of cluster munitions by promoting universal adherence to and full implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.*