



FORUM: First Committee (DISEC)

QUESTION OF: Establishing further regulations on the usage of landmines

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POSITION: Main Chair, Vice Chair

Introduction:

The first modern version of a mine was developed and deployed by the Germans during World War One. The main goal was to stop or hinder large numbers of enemy tanks from approaching fast and simultaneously while being able to freely attack the infantry needed to disarm the mines. While they didn't prove successful during World War One, that changed during World War Two. During peacetime, the Germans had further developed their technology and also started using Anti- Personnel (AP) mines, in order to stop the enemy efforts to disarm the mines.

After World War Two mines became a common weapon when looking for a cheap way of defending territory, the cost of a single mine is between \$3 and \$30 and there are an estimated 110 million land mines currently in the ground. On the contrary, the average cost of removal is \$300 and \$1000. Most currently deployed mines include a self-disarming function, but these have shown to be unreliable and often fail to render the mines harmless.

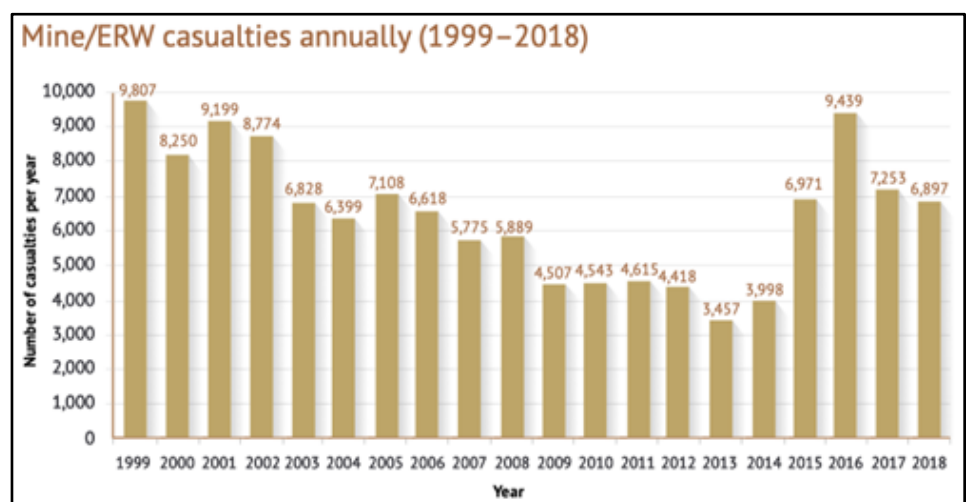
AP mines have been deployed in the millions all around the world, sadly the effect of mines is often felt by the civilian population of a country, as a majority of mine casualties are collateral damage, and nearly 40% are children, which are often maimed or marked for the rest of their life.

Background Information:

Mines are developed with the goal in mind to stay hidden, till they are activated and the cause the greatest harm possible. This entails a focus on concealment methods in development, which is implemented through means such as non-metal components, non-radiating components and camouflaged exterior. Furthermore, there has been a focus on means to stop the disarmament of such mines, through ways like anti-handling devices, which trigger the charge, if the mines are touched or lifted. All before mentioned, intentional design choices, increase the difficulty of clearing out and disarming minefields.

While the first mine designs had to be buried and placed by hand and individually, new technology also includes means of mass distribution of mines, with the major problem that there are no records of exact mine placement, which increases the risk of possibly undiscovered mines in non-combat areas. Through the earlier mentioned, low price of mines, they are often used by or in developing countries with limited monetary resources. The arising problem becomes apparent after the combat action has stopped or shifted away from a region contaminated by mine usage, as these countries, even if they wanted to, do not have the monetary or human resources needed to clear out the remaining mines and thus endangering their civilian population.

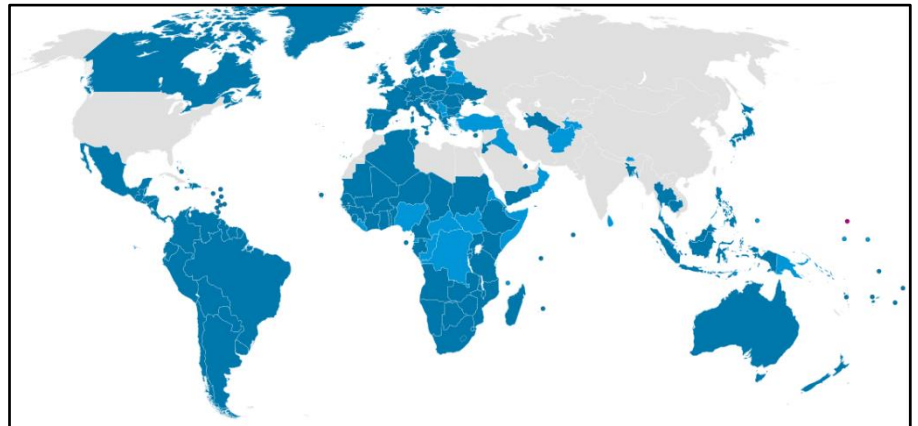
Over the last two decades, the average of land mine casualties per year has been roughly 6700. This number becomes increasingly worrying as 87% of these are civilian casualties of whom 42% are children. The three countries with the largest numbers of casualties were the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Ukraine.



http://the-monitor.org/media/3055689/Screenshot-2019-11-10-at-211526_500x259.jpg

In an attempt to regain control over the usage of AP mines, in 1997 the Ottawa Treaty has been implemented and is currently ratified by 164 states.

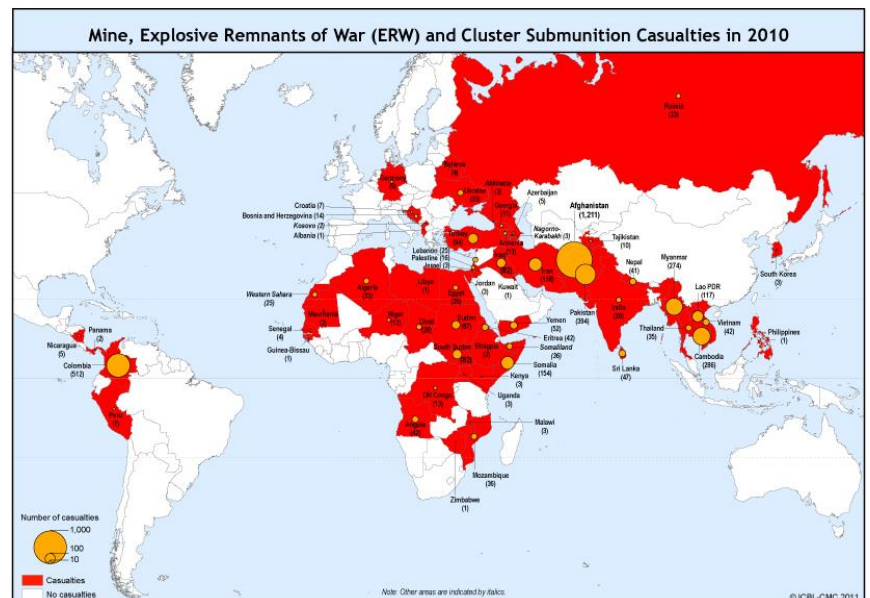
The treaty, formally known as “Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction”, aims for the stop of production and destruction of AP mines around the world. Sadly the



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottawa_Treaty#/media/File:Ottawa_Treaty_members.svg

33 states which have not signed the treaty include the US, the Russian Federation and the Peoples Republic of China. This shows that this treaty is not effective in its measures, as

land mines are continued to be produced with the Republic of India, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Korea being categorized as “likely to be actively producing” by the Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor while amongst others the Peoples Republic of China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam might be producing them.



<http://archives.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?url=cmm/2011/maps/casualties.html>

Current Situation and Key Problems:

The NGO “Minesweepers” estimates that there are around 110 million mines currently in the ground, and the same amount stockpiled and waiting to be deployed. It also estimates that, if the demining efforts are not increased, it would take approximately 1100 years to remove all currently deployed mines worldwide. The five nations most affected by land mines are the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Angola, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Iraq.

The current key problems can be categorized into two sections. The first one concerns the deployment and storage of AP mines. While the Ottawa treaty does exactly tackle these problems, it has become obvious, that through the missing ratification of important global players, the treaty has not proven successful in its goal of a complete stop to the deployment, production and stockpiling of AP mines. This is further showcased by e.g. the decision of the US administration to increase mine usage again in January of 2020.

The second key problem is the lack of removal efforts by the countries responsible for the contamination of certain areas with AP mines. Most of the Humanitarian efforts currently made go towards civilian education and victim assistance. Most NGO's agree, that the efforts to remove mines from civilian areas has to be dramatically increased to be able to provide safety to the civilian population of contaminated areas.



Definition of Key Terms:

Anti-personnel mine: AP mines are a type of land mine with the intention kill or maim a person passing over or around it.

Anti-tank / Anti-vehicle mine: AT or AV mines are used to incapacitate or destroy vehicles passing over it. AT or AV mines have the advantage of not getting triggered by persons.

Anti-handling device: Measures introduced to stop or hinder the disarmament of AP and AV mines.

Questions for Delegates:

Is your Country producing, stockpiling or deploying mines?

Are mines a possible threat towards the civilian population of your country?

What efforts have been made by your country to remove mines or fight the usage of mines?

Has your Country signed or ratified the Ottawa Treaty?

Sources:

<https://www.landminefree.org/2017/>

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<https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/mine-action/mine-action-activities/>

<https://www.unmas.org/en/5-pillars-of-mine-action>

For technicalities:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_mine#Anti-personnel_mines

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_mine#Anti-handling_devices

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demining#Humanitarian>