



PRESS RELEASE

## **Alleged new use of anti-personnel mines by Myanmar, would be a terrible assault on the international norm banning the use of this weapon**

*Geneva, 22 July 2022* – “The global norm created against the production and use of anti-personnel mines is at danger. The international community needs to raise in unison to condemn any such activity, by any actor anywhere”, said the President of the treaty that bans the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of anti-personnel mines.

H.E. Alvaro Enrique AYALA, Ambassador of Colombia to the UN in Geneva, and President of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (also known as the Ottawa Convention or Mine Ban Treaty), made the comments after a [report published by Amnesty International on 20 July](#), indicating that the Government of Myanmar has actively engaged in an activity condemned by over 80% of the countries on earth.

“As a Colombian, I know too well the terrible implications of the use of anti-personnel mines. They have a devastating long-term impact on communities, impede the safe return of displaced persons, and generate injuries and suffering that last a lifetime. For this reason, even as armed non-state actors littered our countryside with these weapons, Colombia never responded by employing anti-personnel mines. I urge Myanmar to follow that path and refrain from using them. There is no such thing as ‘proper or discriminate use’ of a weapon that is so insidious, that can not discern between a military target or a child walking home from school”, added the Ambassador citing communication with Myanmar as one of his priorities.

While Myanmar remains outside the treaty, it had progressively made significant gains in mine action and shown greater affinity for the means and ends of the Convention. Just this past June, Myanmar had participated as Observer of a meeting of the Convention in Geneva. In 2018, Myanmar also welcomed the Special Envoy of the Convention to meet with military leaders.

The norm created by the Convention has been so strong that only a couple of countries have made use of this weapon in more than two decades; unfortunately, this year alone the Convention has received reports of two countries using anti-personnel mines (Russia ([see press release](#)), and now Myanmar), neither one party to the treaty. In contrast, in June during a meeting of the Convention in Geneva, the [United States announced that it had re-instated moratoria against this weapon](#).

**Editorial note: The Convention** was adopted in Oslo and signed in Ottawa 25 years ago, and entered into force in 1999. It is the prime humanitarian and disarmament treaty aimed at ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines by prohibiting their use, stockpiling, production, and transfer, ensuring their destruction, and assisting the victims. Collectively, the States Parties have destroyed over 54 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines. The implementation of the Convention has contributed to peace and development by clearing vast tracts of land in more than 50 countries, which safe again are used for normal activity.