

Handicap International condemns the recent use of antipersonnel mines in Myanmar

September 29th, 2017. Handicap International strongly condemns the use of antipersonnel mines by the Myanmar armed forces in recent weeks on the border with Bangladesh. These weapons kill and maim victims who are almost exclusively civilians. The Ottawa Treaty bans these barbaric weapons.

- The organization calls on the Myanmar government to immediately cease the use of these barbaric weapons. We also call on the international community to vigorously condemn these recent uses and to put pressure on the Burmese authorities to give up the use of this weapon.
- A number of concordant testimonies collected by the Landmine Monitor, Amnesty International, and Reuters report on the recent laying of antipersonnel mines by Myanmar's armed forces at various locations on the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar.
- *"The recent use of antipersonnel mines by the Myanmar army is taking place in a context of crisis with devastating consequences for civilians,"* said Jérôme Bobin, Executive Director for Handicap International Canada. *"These weapons kill and maim, causing injuries among the most difficult to care for, and have lasting consequences, with the social consequences for the victim. All use of mines must cease and everything must be implemented to provide assistance to victims."*
- Sixty-three countries and territories around the world are still contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war. These weapons can kill and cause injuries and permanent disabilities for decades following a conflict. Globally, more than three-quarters of landmine victims are civilians and one-third are children.
- According to International Campaign to Ban Landmines, an organization co-founded by Handicap International, which works to eradicate landmines around the world, Myanmar is one of the few states with North Korea and Syria still using antipersonnel mines. In 2015, 159 people were victims of these weapons, and more than 250 in 2014. Also in 2015, at least 6,461 people were killed or injured by mines and explosive remnants of war, according to the 2016 Landmine Monitor report.
- The acquisition, production, stockpiling, and use of anti-personnel mines is prohibited by the Ottawa Treaty which was adopted 20 years ago on the initiative of the ICBL. 163 States Parties, more than 80 percent of the world's countries, represent the Ottawa Treaty. Myanmar has yet to adopt the Treaty.

ABOUT HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL

Handicap International is an independent international aid organization. It has been working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster for 35 years. Working alongside persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, our action and testimony are focused on responding to their essential needs, improving their living conditions, and promoting respect for their dignity and basic rights. Handicap International has set up development programs in more than 60 countries and intervenes in numerous emergency situations. Offices in Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States work constantly to mobilize

resources, jointly manage projects and to increase the impact of the organization's principles and actions. Handicap International is one of six founding organizations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), the co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997; and the winner of the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize in 2011. Handicap International takes action and campaigns in places where "living in dignity" is no easy task.

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