Background
The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (or Mine Ban Treaty) is a shining example of humanitarian disarmament, having a real, lasting impact on the ground every day in dozens of states. It provides the best framework for the full elimination of these indiscriminate weapons, while also ensuring that their legacy is addressed through the clearance of contaminated land and comprehensive assistance to survivors.

Current context
More than 80% of the world’s states are parties to the Mine Ban Treaty. The stigma on the weapon holds so strong that most of those remaining outside the Treaty abide by the norm against use, production, and transfer. Many hundreds of square kilometers of land have been cleared of landmines, 28 formerly affected countries are now mine-free, and more than 48 million stockpiled landmines have been destroyed in 88 countries. The number of new casualties caused by landmines and explosive remnants of war has dropped dramatically to fewer than 3,500 cases recorded last year.

Despite this remarkable progress, some 60 states and areas are still contaminated with
antipersonnel mines. Every day civilians are killed or maimed by these weapons. Survivors in dozens of countries still need to see their rights fully respected and their needs met. Thirty-five countries still have to join the Treaty.

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) is concerned that a small number of governments outside the Treaty are still using antipersonnel landmines, including Myanmar and Syria in recent years, and that serious allegations or instances of use by states parties to the Treaty (South Sudan, Sudan, Turkey, Yemen) are still unresolved.

The ICBL is also concerned that Ethiopia is currently in violation of the Treaty for missing its clearance deadline without sharing information in a proactive manner about measures taken to remedy this situation.

The Third Review Conference of the Treaty (2014) adopted the Maputo+15 Declaration. It commits states to complete the implementation of their respective time-bound obligations “with the urgency that the completion work requires” and “to the fullest extent possible by 2025”. The Maputo Action Plan provides detailed guidance.

Four new thematic committees led by states parties were created, covering Cooperative Compliance, Clearance, Victim Assistance, as well as Cooperation and Assistance. States have embraced their roles on the committees with enthusiasm and dedication, fostering the spirit of cooperation and transparency that prevails among the Mine Ban Treaty community.

Recommendations for governments

During First Committee:

• All states should vote in favour of the resolution on the Mine Ban Treaty, which provides an important opportunity for states to reaffirm their support for the ban on antipersonnel landmines. Each year, a large number of states not party vote in favour of the resolution, thus demonstrating their support for the Treaty’s humanitarian aims.

• States should condemn any use of antipersonnel mines and call for public investigation of allegations or instances of use by states parties.

• Delegations should express support for the “completion” goals of the Third Review Conference and name their own completion targets if they have not yet done so.

• States not party should report on progress made towards accession and communicate their support for the humanitarian objectives of the Treaty, as many of them do each year.

Beyond First Committee:

• All states must halt any use of antipersonnel landmines, anywhere, under any circumstances.

• The 35 states outside the Mine Ban Treaty should join without delay.

• States parties must comply with all Treaty obligations, especially clearing their land of mines and ensuring victims receive support on an equal basis to others with similar needs. States should report annually in accordance with Article 7, to reverse the current lowest-ever reporting rate.

• All states should provide the necessary resources to achieve the Treaty’s goals efficiently.