

OTTAWA TREATY Universalisation in South Asia

India fact sheet

India's landmine policy and the Ottawa Treaty

India has not joined the Ottawa Treaty and it continues to the use, produce, transfer and stockpile anti-personal mines now!

Production, stockpiling and transfer of anti-personnel mines

- India is one of the world's fifteen remaining producers of anti-personnel mines with all production in the hands of government agencies.
- The most troubling type of anti-personnel mine produced in India is the low metal content M14 blast mine which is very difficult to detect by conventional mine clearance equipment. This makes clearance operations extremely slow and dangerous.
- It has been estimated that India holds between four to five million APMs in its national stockpile - the sixth largest stockpile in the world. The Indian Government has neither confirmed nor denied this estimate.
- Although India maintains that it has never exported or imported APMs, Indian made APMs have been declared by Bangladesh, Mauritius and Tanzania in Ottawa States Parties transparency reports.

Recent use of anti-personnel mines

- Following the attack on the Indian Parliament on 13 December 2001 there was a rapid escalation of tension between India and Pakistan with full scale preparations for war including the deployment of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines along the border.
- As many as two million mines were laid between December 2001 and June 2002 by the Government, along the 1,800 mile North Western India-Pakistan border, specifically in Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, and Rajasthan. This was reported to be the biggest mine laying operation in the world in years.
- India has also not indicated whether or not it has used low metal contact mines which are difficult to detect in clearance operations

The extent of the landmine problem and casualties

- Since October 2002, the Indian Army started large scale mine clearance operations along the Pakistani boarder and India reported that 90% of the mines had been recovered as of September 2003.
- However, in 2002 there was information on at least 523 new casualties (310 people killed and 213 injured) from landmines, improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance.
- In 2003 further information was collected on at least 270 new casualties (101 people killed and 169 injured) from landmines, improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance.
- There is no comprehensive data collection mechanism India and it is believed that many civilian casualties are not reported due to the remoteness of some of the mine affected areas. As a result the numbers reported may be the tip of the iceberg.

CALL FOR ACTION

If you are concerned about India not being a member of the Ottawa Treaty, why not send a letter to the Indian Ambassador to the UK stating your concern?