


Banning the use, production, export and stockpiling of AP mines

 The speed with which the Ottawa Convention has gained support has been remarkable. From the time it was signed by 122 nations in December 1997, it took only nine months to reach the required 40 ratifications to start the countdown to treaty entry-into-force. It subsequently passed into international law on March 1, 1999, making it the most rapidly ratified multilateral disarmament treaty in history. By the end of March 1999, the Ottawa Convention had been signed or acceded to by 135 countries and ratified by 71, including some of the world's most heavily mined states. More than two-thirds of the world's nations have now made the decision to ban this weapon.

The impact of the Convention extends beyond its signatory list. A powerful, moral norm against the use of landmines has been established and is now an influence on the behaviour of all countries, even non-signatories.

The once-flourishing legal trade in mines has all but vanished – almost all traditional exporters have ceased these activities. Since

World War II, more than 50 countries have produced AP mines. Today, fewer than one-third of these countries continue to produce mines and only a handful of states have yet to announce a halt to the export of mines they produce.

Efforts in stockpile destruction have also been significant. A number of states, including Canada, Germany, Ireland, Norway and

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy at the signing of the Convention.

