



## U.S. Land Mine Policy Change Endangers Children

(New York) February 6, 2020 – ChildFund International, Plan International, Save the Children, and the Terre des hommes Foundation are deeply troubled by the decision of the U. S. Administration to allow anti-personnel land mine use by the United States military around the world. The [announcement](#) reverses the long-standing United States policy banning anti-personnel land mine use outside of the Korean Peninsula.

As development and humanitarian organisations working to advance children’s rights in conflict and post-conflict settings, we recognise that this [policy](#) will cause untold harm to children, undermining their rights to protection and to life. Land mines are an inherently indiscriminate and brutal weapon. Children are often the victims, killed and maimed by land mines placed around the world, which often look like toys or other objects they may pick up. Children are also far more likely to die from land mine injuries than adults. If they are not killed, they may suffer lifelong injuries including the loss of their limbs, eyesight, and psychological trauma. Children often cannot access adequate, timely medical treatment to address their unique needs, and [injuries](#) often undermine their ability to stay in school. If their parents or caregivers are victims of a land mine, entire families can be emotionally and financially devastated.

The world agreed in 1997, with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Distribution (the Ottawa Convention/[Mine Ban Treaty](#) with 164 State parties), that land mines were an unacceptable weapon. While not a party to the Convention, the U.S. had been taking steps to come into alignment with the international consensus banning the use of land mines and had not used anti-personnel mines since 1991. Decades have been spent clearing land mines from previous conflicts and the U.S. has made significant investments as one of the largest funders of land mine removal. We must not reverse this hard-won progress. As the world knows, if this harmful policy is implemented, those most impacted will be vulnerable children and their families.