

# Pacific Statement on Mine Action

I deliver this statement on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum Group based in New York that are states party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Solomon Islands.

Anti-personnel mines continue to cause long-term human suffering and pose a grave threat to countries during and after conflict. They kill and maim civilians, often children, and impact land use and reconstruction long after the end of hostilities.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was born out of a collective determination to address the humanitarian impact and unacceptable harm to civilians caused by use of these weapons. The Convention has delivered remarkable achievements, including the destruction of over 55 million stockpiled landmines, large-scale clearance operations, a platform for survivor engagement and assistance, and a significant decline in States producing landmines.

Our region, the Pacific, has long supported the Convention.

The Pacific understands the critical value of mine action work. Many of our nations remain contaminated by explosive remnants from battles fought during WWII and their presence constitutes a terrifying legacy of the past conflict. This is not only because of the harm they cause to life and limb, but also because of their presence across lands, paths, forests, the ocean, and infrastructure. Moreover, they cause harm to ecosystems, including loss of biodiversity, soil degradation and water contamination, with a negative impact on the realization of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. We call on the international community to work with the Pacific in the removal and clearance of ERW, as well as on the continued development and support for victim rehabilitation programs. We emphasize the importance of ensuring survivors' full social and economic inclusion and involving them directly in decision-making processes.

The Pacific region's commitment to the Convention can be seen in its near universalisation, with the Republic of the Marshall Islands becoming the 165th, and Tonga the 166th states to join the Convention this year. The Federated States of Micronesia are also moving in a positive direction towards accession. We will continue to work together towards universalisation in our region.

Aligning with our region's 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, on 12 September 2025 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders declared the Pacific as an Ocean of Peace and reaffirmed our collective commitment to address hazards posed by UXOs and other remnants of war, recognising the multidimensional threat they pose to sovereignty, human security, environment and economic development in the Pacific.

Recent geopolitical developments underscore the need to redouble our efforts to uphold the objectives of the Convention to protect lives and put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines.

We reaffirm our countries' commitment to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and to work with the international community on implementation of the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan. We

hope the positive direction in which our region is moving can serve as an impetus and inspiration for other regions, and for the world.