

LANDMINES: A DEADLY LEGACY

One of the most promising recent developments in raising public concern about the horrors of war has been the emergence of an international campaign to ban the use, production, stockpiling, and sale, transfer or export of anti-personnel mines. Compiled by two of the organizations involved, The Arms Project of Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, *Landmines: A Deadly Legacy* is an invaluable source book for participants in the campaign and anyone involved in the issue.¹

The book begins by evoking the scale of the problem of landmines, described in the title of Chapter 1 as "a weapon of mass destruction in slow motion". At least eighty-five million and possibly over 100 million unexploded landmines are believed to lie scattered in at least 62 countries, with several hundred people killed or injured each month. Large areas of land are rendered inaccessible. The results are felt at all levels of society.

The book brings together a vast amount of information on the issue. There are short case studies on the landmines problem in seven of the worst affected countries; chapters on the medical and social consequences, on mine clearance, and on recent attempts to control landmines in various countries; and a detailed chapter on international law governing landmines, with an analysis of the weaknesses of Protocol II to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and information on the drafting history of the Protocol.

An especially original contribution is the chapter on global production and trade in anti-personnel mines. There is a list of landmines reportedly produced by government factories or private firms in 46 countries, with drawings of the more common models.

¹ *Landmines: A Deadly Legacy*, The Arms Project of Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, Human Rights Watch, New York, Washington, Los Angeles, London, 1993, 510 pp.

The book has many valuable appendices, including the text of the moratorium on sales and other international transfers of anti-personnel landmines adopted by the US Congress in 1992.

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