

Berlin, December 2023

Dear All,

A remarkable year this time, really. Rather obviously, the world is coming more and more apart at the seams, unnecessary to go too much into details here except asking what might or could be necessary or at least helpful to mitigate the “mess” left behind after all. Year by year, I tried my very best to keep the commitment of the “sleeping” WG 5 in mind, so there is no need to repeat this all over again. Instead, I wish to make you aware of the Ottawa Convention to ban landmines.

*(<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/ottawa>,
<http://www.icbl.org/en-gb/the-treaty/treaty-status.aspx>)*

Remarkably, permanent members of the United Nations Security Council such as the USA and the Russian Federation are non-signatory countries. Now, Russia is littering large areas with all sorts of such mines in the Ukraine. And how about the clustered munitions? All the unexploded ordnance (UXO) and explosive remnants of war (ERW) remaining in the battle fields will be persistent threats even once the hostilities will be ceased. No matter who finally was the culprit, all the scattered explosive objects are just there. And we have to get rid of them to live an orderly life. That's it.

Who does not wish peace for all of us right now. However, once this will be reached, clearing up the battlegrounds will be essential to provide the base of an orderly civilian life. However, this exactly will be the moment activities of groups such as the WG 5 may be urgently requested. Huge areas are literally infested with all kind of mines, UXOs and so on. Any better argument to to keep the WG 5 in mind ?

(<http://www.efndt.org/Organisation/Working-Groups/Working-Group-5-Public-Security>)

Again, as in all the years before, I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year 2024, stay with hope and remain confident.

Best regards
Kurt Osterloh

