



## 1st Disc: Landmines

### I. Background of Topic

Landmines were first developed by the Chinese then subsequently by the western world but were effectively used in mass until World War I. In the first Great War they were used in mass by both sides and were proven a cheap way to defend your land and to kill enemy infantry. During the late 20th century landmines were employed as an effective terrorist weapon in many of the African conflicts. There are many other places throughout the world most of which are impoverished war-torn nations where landmines are left over or are still being used in the conflict. Landmines provide a serious danger to the citizens wherever they are used, because they are designed to be hidden and kill unsuspecting infantry. People that are directly involved include any country that has landmines left over from previous conflict or still buys or manufactures the landmines. (Most countries in Africa/impoverished and war-torn) The reason that this problem needs to be solved is that landmines are used more often now as terrorist weapons that are being used against civilians, and even if they aren't directed at citizens they still affect them in post-war time.

### II. UN Involvement

A civilian group known as the international campaign to ban landmines (ICBL) worked to end the use of landmines and was successful. The evidence of their work is in the Ottawa treaty. As of now there are only 39 countries that have not yet signed the treaty.

### III. Possible Solutions

Solving the problem of landmines is not an easy one. There are many aspects of the problem. The first is getting all countries to sign the Ottawa Treaty. Many prominent countries on the other hand including members of the Security Council are opposed to the treaty. The next is for removing the mines that have already been planted. There is thought to be 100 million landmines scattered across the earth right now. Many of these minefields are not marked and there is no more conflict in many of these areas. Everybody agrees on removing mines from areas where the problem has already been resolved.

### IV. Bloc Positions

**Asia Bloc** - China and the Koreas are opposed to the treaty, and China controls most of the political might in Asia right now. Most of the other countries are for the treaty.

**South America Bloc** - These countries are for the signing of the treaty.

**European Bloc** - These countries are advocates of the Ottawa treaty except for Russia.



**Middle Eastern Bloc** - Israel is vehemently opposed to the treaty. They are only interested in the protection of their country while the Arab nations could go either way.

### **V. Guiding Questions**

1. What are some ways to identify minefields?
2. Pros and cons of signing the Ottawa Treaty?
3. Why do some countries not sign the treaty?
4. What is the United Nations going to use to remove the mines?