



Finland Withdraws from Global Treaty Banning Landmines

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Finland, which shares the longest border within NATO with Russia, will withdraw from the Ottawa Convention banning anti-personnel mines, according to President Alexander Stubb. The decision comes shortly after Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Poland announced they are considering exiting the treaty, which would allow them to stockpile and use mines to protect their respective borders with Russia. "Finland will prepare to withdraw from the Ottawa Convention - the decision is based on a thorough assessment by the relevant ministries and the Defense Forces," Stubb stated in a note published on X, formerly known as Twitter. Finland shares a 1,340-kilometer border with Russia, the longest among the alliance's member countries. The convention, formalized nearly three decades ago, has 133 signatories and 165 parties, according to the latest available data from the United Nations. However, countries like Russia, Belarus, the United States, and China have never ratified it. Moscow has made extensive use of anti-personnel mines in Ukraine, with the United Nations reporting that Ukraine became the most mined country in the world last year, with "hundreds of thousands of explosive

remnants of war.” The war in Ukraine has highlighted the double-edged nature of mines in military operations. Despite the long-term dangers unexploded ordnance poses to civilians, these weapons have allowed Ukrainian troops to effectively defend themselves and protect their territory from Russian aggression. It seems that these defensive advantages are precisely what European countries are seeking, according to Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo. “Withdrawing from the Ottawa Convention will give us the ability to prepare for changes in the security environment more flexibly,” he stated during a press conference on April 1st. Finland has also committed to increasing its defense spending to 3% of its gross domestic product by 2029, according to Stubb.

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