

Reference: C.N.360.2025.TREATIES-XXVI.5 (Depositary Notification)

CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING,  
PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON  
THEIR DESTRUCTION

OSLO, 18 SEPTEMBER 1997

ESTONIA: NOTIFICATION OF WITHDRAWAL <sup>1</sup>

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, communicates the following:

The above action was effected on 27 June 2025. The notification of withdrawal states that “pursuant to paragraph 2 of Article 20, the Republic of Estonia notifies that it is withdrawing from the Convention due to the deteriorated security situation”. The notification was accompanied by a note stating the following:

(Original: English)

“No. 15.2-2/3910

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction of 1997 (hereinafter the Ottawa Convention), has the honour to convey the following.

The Ministry would like to inform that Estonia has decided to withdraw from the Ottawa Convention pursuant to its paragraph 2 of Article 20. Estonia submits a separate instrument of withdrawal to the depositary. The reasons motivating the withdrawal are as follows.

Since the ratification of the Ottawa Convention by Estonia in 2004, the security environment in Europe and the Baltic Sea region has significantly deteriorated. As a result, military threats to Estonia’s national security have markedly increased, posing serious challenges to the protection of its population, territory and sovereignty.

The decision to withdraw from the Ottawa Convention has been taken under exceptional circumstances, prompted by the Russian Federation’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine. This unlawful aggression has fundamentally destabilized the European security order and poses an existential threat to neighbouring states, including Estonia. By employing military force to pursue its imperialist objectives, Russia is acting in clear violation of international law, including the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to depositary notification C.N.446.2004.TREATIES-XXVI.5 of 17 May 2004 (Accession: Estonia).

In light of the significantly deteriorated security situation, Estonia needs to strengthen its deterrence and defence capabilities, and to maintain the broadest possible flexibility of action. Ensuring the effectiveness of Estonia's defence posture may require the employment of all appropriate means, in order to protect its population, territorial integrity, and independence. The decision of withdrawal was taken after thorough consultations and reconsideration of actual national security needs. This constitutes a limited and proportionate response to an acute and ongoing threat, based on the assumption that anti-personnel mines could have a considerable role in restricting the invasion and movement of hostile forces, if used in combination with other weapons systems and solutions.

Estonia reaffirms its unwavering commitment to international humanitarian law, including both customary international law and treaty obligations, notably the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977. Estonia recognises that, in any armed conflict, the right to choose methods and means of warfare is not unlimited, and that military operations must be conducted in accordance with the fundamental principles of military necessity, humanity, distinction, and proportionality. In accordance with international humanitarian law, Estonia remains fully committed to taking all feasible precautions to protect civilians and civilian objects during armed conflict. It acknowledges the continuing relevance of the humanitarian objectives set out in the Ottawa Convention.

Estonia remains strongly committed to international cooperation and assistance aimed at addressing the humanitarian consequences of anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war and reaffirms its readiness to support efforts that alleviate the suffering caused by these weapons. Estonia has already given notice of the withdrawal to the States Parties of the Ottawa Convention and the United National Security Council.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

Tallinn, 27 June 2025”

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In accordance with paragraph 3 of article 20 of the Convention, the withdrawal would take effect for Estonia on 27 December 2025, subject to the condition set forth in the said paragraph, which reads as follows:

“3. Such withdrawal shall only take effect six months after the receipt of the instrument of withdrawal by the Depositary. If, however, on the expiry of that six-month period, the withdrawing State Party is engaged in an armed conflict, the withdrawal shall not take effect before the end of the armed conflict.”

3 July 2025

