

people. I hope my actions today will help bring closure and finality to these matters.

NOTE: The statement referred to former White House intern Monica Lewinsky and U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright.

Statement on Landmines

January 19, 2001

Every year, landmines still active from wars past kill or maim thousands of innocent men, women, and children who simply find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. That is why, since I called for the worldwide elimination of anti-personnel landmines in 1994, the United States has taken the lead both at home and abroad to rid the globe of these hidden killers.

Five years ago, I ordered a ban on producing the most dangerous types of anti-personnel landmines, those that remain active and dangerous long after conflicts have ended. These are the kind of mines that have taken the lives of innocent children from Angola to Bosnia to Kosovo. The United States has since destroyed more than 3.3 million of these landmines, most of our stockpile. We have also budgeted \$970 million in a vigorous effort to find sensible alternatives. Our goal has been to end the use of all anti-personnel landmines outside of Korea by 2003, and we have aimed to sign the Ottawa Convention by 2006 if suitable options can be found that will allow us to maintain the warfighting capability and safety of our men and women in uniform.

America has also led the world in the effort to remove existing landmines. Since 1993, we have devoted more than \$500 million to this cause, working to remove mines from 35 nations. Our experts have helped train and equip more than one-quarter of all the people who are working to eliminate mines around the world. We have led the effort to bring higher safety standards to demining techniques and equipment. Through partnerships with everyone from the Government of Vietnam to DC Comics, we have worked to raise awareness of the dangers of landmines and to share information

that could lead to the disposal of even more. Our efforts are saving lives. In Cambodia, for example, the casualty rate for landmines has fallen by 90 percent since 1992. In some African nations, death from landmines has been nearly eliminated. I call upon the new administration to continue the Demining 2010 initiative.

While I am proud that we have made substantial progress toward eliminating the threat that landmines pose to innocent civilians around the world, there is work yet to be done. I urge the next administration to build on our progress and take the steps necessary to allow the United States to eventually sign the Ottawa Convention, while still meeting our security needs and protecting our men and women in uniform. The Defense Department has worked aggressively to find alternatives to anti-personnel landmines, and those efforts must continue if we are going to meet the Ottawa goals. As part of this effort, two decisions are pending. The first is whether to begin production of the Remote Area Denial Artillery Munition (RADAM). The second is whether to begin engineering and manufacturing development of the so-called "Man-in-the-Loop" system. Since more work must be done before we can reach our overall policy goals, I am deferring decision on these two programs. We halted the production of anti-personnel landmines in 1993 because there was no longer a need for additional mines, and I urge the new administration to continue this policy.

The principal reason that the United States needs to retain some anti-personnel landmines today is to protect our troops and allies. As the need for anti-personnel landmines is reduced, it is my hope that my successor will lead us closer to the day when we can rid the world of these weapons once and for all.