

Germany Announces Its Continued Commitment to the Ottawa Convention

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In light of the unstable security environment marked by Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its ongoing military threat to the Euro-Atlantic community, the Ministers of Defence of Poland and the three Baltic States – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – on 18 March 2024 announced their countries' intention to withdraw from the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention). At the time, the Convention had 133 parties. On 1 April 2025, Finland followed suit. The country's prime minister wrote on the platform X: 'Finland will prepare for the withdrawal from the Ottawa Convention.' These announcements triggered questions about Germany's position on the Ottawa Convention in light of the changing security environment. Germany had been a champion of the Convention for years. In response to a media enquiry, the Federal Ministry of Defence declared on 2 April 2025 that it had 'taken note of' the announcement by several NATO member States on the alliance's eastern flank to withdraw from the Ottawa Convention. The Federal Ministry of Defence then stated: The Federal Government maintains its position that as a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines Germany fully complies with the obligations under the Convention. This raised the question of whether the German Army's 45th Panzer Brigade stationed in Lithuania could in future hide behind anti-personnel mines laid by the Lithuanian army without violating the Ottawa Convention.