



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **PeaceTrees Vietnam Responds to State Department’s Halt on Mine-Clearing Programs**

(Seattle, WA) January 28, 2025 – PeaceTrees Vietnam (PTVN) is deeply concerned about the impact of the United States (U.S.) Government’s directive to temporarily pause all work on U.S. Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA)-funded grants for an 85-day review period.

The directive, issued via email on January 25 by the State Department’s Office of WRA, cites alignment with the President’s [Executive Order on Reevaluating and Realigning U.S. Foreign Aid](#). This sudden suspension threatens to disrupt vital humanitarian programs globally and halt the operations of organizations, including PTVN, whose work aligns with U.S. national interests.

“We are gravely concerned about the human cost of this decision,” said Brendan Murphy, PTVN Board Chair. “Our programs not only save lives by clearing unexploded ordnance (UXO) but also foster safety, stability, and prosperity in communities historically impacted by war. This pause jeopardizes progress in regions where UXO continue to harm communities.”

Through partnerships with the U.S. government, local authorities, and international donors, PTVN has cleared tens of thousands of unexploded munitions in Quảng Trị and Quảng Bình Provinces, two of the most heavily bombed regions during the Vietnam War. This pause threatens to stall these life-saving efforts and disrupt ongoing projects, including the clearance of high-priority contaminated land and the construction of critical community infrastructure.

The directive also risks eroding trust with local partners and undermining 30 years of U.S. collaboration with Vietnam. “Clearing landmines and UXO not only protects lives but also reinforces U.S. diplomacy in Southeast Asia, making America both safer and more secure,” said Claire Yunker, PTVN’s Executive Director.

PTVN urges the State Department to reinstate demining programs worldwide, and calls on its community of donors, partners, and supporters to act by helping bridge the funding gap caused by the directive and support advocacy efforts by contacting their representatives.

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About PeaceTrees Vietnam (PTVN):  
PTVN is a U.S.-based nonprofit dedicated to addressing the legacies of war through landmine clearance and community development in Vietnam. Since 1995, PTVN has partnered with local communities to clear unexploded ordnance, return land to safe and productive use, and invest in educational and economic opportunities for future generations.