

The Cluster Munition Coalition is led by a Governance Board of:

Afghan Landmine Survivors Organisation, Action On Armed Violence, Asociación para Políticas Públicas-APP, Cambodia Campaign to Ban Landmines, Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas, DanChurchAid, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, ICBL Georgian Committee, IKV Pax Christi, IPPNW, Japan Campaign to Ban landmines, Mines Action Canada, Nepal Campaign to Ban Landmines, Norwegian People's Aid, Protection and Religions for Peace.



Campaign issues call to join the team banning cluster bombs: *Treaty banning weapon marks one year anniversary*

(London, 1 August 2011): Campaigners are calling on all countries to join the treaty banning cluster bombs, marking one year after it became binding international law.

“The best way to stop cluster bombs from being used is to join this treaty and do so now,” said Laura Cheeseman, director of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC). “We are winning the battle against cluster bombs, but need all states to join the team against these deadly weapons.”

A total of 109 countries are now on board the Convention on Cluster Munitions. In the 12 months since it entered into force internationally, 21 countries that previously signed the treaty have ratified it, and one country has acceded (a one-step process of signing and ratifying).

“An impressive amount has been achieved in the cluster bomb ban treaty’s first year of life,” said Laura Cheeseman, director of the Cluster Mution Coalition (CMC). “Stockpiles are being destroyed and contaminated land is being cleared, preventing thousands more lives being lost as a result of these weapons,” she added.

The entry into force of the Convention, exactly one year ago today, started the clock ticking for states to destroy their cluster munition stockpiles and clear contaminated land within the deadlines set by the Convention.

More than 589,000 cluster bombs containing more than 64 million explosive submunitions have now been destroyed thanks to the Convention, with eight States Parties and at least three signatories having already completed destruction of their stockpiles.

Two countries – Albania and Zambia – have completed clearance and are free from the threat of cluster bombs.

Many more countries are well on their way to implementing the Convention, including by taking steps to protect the rights and meet the needs of cluster munition survivors.

“But this is just the beginning of the work that needs to be done,” said Cheeseman.

Despite recent progress, cluster bombs were used this year by the Thai military in Cambodia, and by Gaddafi’s troops against civilians in Misrata, Libya. These incidents were met with international criticism, demonstrating that even countries that are still outside the ban are not exempt from condemnation if they use these weapons. At a meetign in June, both Cambodia and Thailand indicated that they are taking steps to accede to the Convention in the near future.

Join the Team!

To mark this first anniversary, cluster bomb survivors and communities that have been affected by cluster bombs, as well as campaigners in more than 50 countries, will take part in sports events symbolising the global team of countries that have joined the treaty to ban cluster bombs.

In Lebanon, where four million submunitions were dropped during the 2006 war, keen footballers will play a match against a football team of cluster bomb survivors to celebrate the progress of the ban.

In Lao PDR, where more than 270 million cluster submunitions were dropped between 1964 and 1973 giving it the unfortunate distinction of being the most severely contaminated country from cluster bombs in the world, campaigners will hold a football tournament with 16 teams competing for the “Adieu Bombie” cup.

Amongst the many other global activities there will be:

- Wheelchair basketball matches in three countries, including one with the participation of paralympian Tina McKenzie in Australia
- A football match with landmine survivors in Georgia
- A sitting volleyball tournament in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- A team of women giving a demonstration of national sport ‘Nzango’ in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- A cheerleading event in the Hague, Netherlands

“Joining the team banning cluster bombs will save countless lives by preventing future use of these indiscriminate weapons, and will give hope to contaminated communities worldwide,” said Steve Goose, director of Human Rights Watch’s Arms Division and Chair of the CMC Governance Board.

“But it also means becoming part of a rare international movement with humanitarian aims at its core, rather than more narrow national interests. The huge achievements that have been made by the partnership of governments, civil society, international organisations and UN agencies in banning cluster munitions deserve to be celebrated. We expect to see many countries joining our winning team in the near future, and eventually all should come on board,” he added.

The CMC is now counting down to the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions to be held in Beirut, Lebanon from 12-16 September.

Here states will be expected to make announcements about their progress made under the Convention, as well as their future plans to implement the convention quickly.

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The Cluster Munition Coalition

<http://www.stopclustermunitions.org>

Notes to editors:

For more information on the CMC’s global activities to celebrate this anniversary please visit

www.august1.org or follow the CMC on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Cluster-Munition-Coalition/235782059788679>

About cluster bombs:

A cluster munition (or cluster bomb) is a weapon containing multiple - often hundreds - of small explosive submunitions or bomblets. Cluster munitions are dropped from the air or fired from the ground and designed to break open in mid-air, releasing the submunitions over an area that can be the size of several football fields. This means they cannot discriminate between civilians and soldiers. Many of the submunitions fail to explode on impact and remain a threat to lives and livelihoods for decades after a conflict.

About the Convention on Cluster Munitions:

The Convention on Cluster Munitions bans the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions and requires countries to clear affected areas within 10 years and destroy stockpiles of the weapon within eight. The Convention includes groundbreaking provisions requiring assistance to victims and affected communities. Signed in Oslo in December 2008, the Convention entered into force as binding international law on 1 August 2010 and is the most significant international disarmament treaty since the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty banning antipersonnel landmines.

About the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC):

The CMC is an international coalition with more than 350 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in around 100 countries to encourage urgent action against cluster bombs. The CMC facilitates NGO efforts worldwide to educate governments, the public and the media about the problems of cluster munitions and to urge universalisation and full implementation of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions.

<http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/>

The following 109 countries have joined the Convention on Cluster Munitions (states parties in bold):

www.stopclustermunitions.org/treatystatus

Afghanistan, **Albania**, Angola, **Antigua and Barbuda**, Australia, **Austria**, **Belgium**, Benin, Bolivia, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, **Botswana**, **Bulgaria**, **Burkina Faso**, **Burundi**, Canada, **Cape Verde**, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad, **Chile**, Colombia, **Comoros**, DR Congo, Republic of Congo, Cook Islands, **Costa Rica**, Côte D'Ivoire, **Croatia**, Cyprus, Czech Republic, **Denmark**, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, **Ecuador**, **El Salvador**, **Fiji**, **France**, Gambia, **Germany**, **Ghana**, **Grenada**, **Guatemala**, Guinea, **Guinea Bissau**, Haiti, **The Holy See**, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, **Ireland**, Italy, Jamaica, **Japan**, Kenya, **Lao PDR**, **Lebanon**, **Lesotho**, Liberia, Liechtenstein, **Lithuania**, **Luxembourg**, **Macedonia FYR**, Madagascar, **Malawi**, **Mali**, **Malta**, Mauritania, **Mexico**, **Republic of Moldova**, **Monaco**, **Montenegro**, **Mozambique**, Namibia, Nauru, **Netherlands**, **New Zealand**, **Nicaragua**, **Niger**, Nigeria, **Norway**, Palau, **Panama**, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, **Portugal**, Rwanda, **Samoa**, **San Marino**, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, **St. Vincent and Grenadines**, Senegal, **Seychelles**, **Sierra Leone**, **Slovenia**, Somalia, South Africa, **Spain**, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Togo, **Tunisia**, Uganda, **United Kingdom**, **Uruguay**, **Zambia**.