



1 AUGUST 2010  
**BEAT THE DRUM**  
 to ban cluster bombs

### Kenya beats the drum for cluster munitions

To welcome the arrival of the international ban on cluster bombs, campaigners in Kenya held a successful drum beating concert at the Kenya National Theatre at the heart of Nairobi on Sunday August 1, 2010. Over 150 attended the event braved a biting Sunday cold which descended on the city from 10am. Besides, the organizers were worried that few people will turn up given that other high profile events



were taking place in the city. First there was the pro-draft constitution political rally (attended by the President and the Prime Minister in the company of 20 cabinet ministers) going on about three kilometers away from our venue. Second the anti-draft constitution campaigners (*Kenya is holding a referendum on a draft constitution on Wednesday, Aug 4, 2010*). Lastly, Sunday was the final day of the Africa Athletics Senior Championships also being held in the city. Organizers had to change the venue last minute due to the refusal by the city council to allow us on top the streets of the city for unknown reasons.

### Drumming



The drumming began at 2.30pm and went on uninterrupted for one hour. Thereafter, the Director of the Kenya National Theatre, Mr Odero Aghan, took to the stage and requested the drummers to belt out one

number which saw the entire house on the floor following the antics of the director. Speeches then followed.





In his speech, Mr Adan Wachu (left), the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) noted that both cluster munitions and landmines are two types of weapons similar and have no place in the arsenals of modern societies. He said that they belong to the same class as biological and chemical weapons. He urged the Attorney General's office and the ministries of state for defence and the ministry of foreign affairs to speed up the process of ratification of the treaty. He wondered why Kenya has gone into a phase of procrastination and lethargy yet it does not produce, use or stockpile cluster bombs. Mr Wachu also urged Kenya's neighbours and friends especially those with the East African Community to ratify the treaty. "As we go towards a political federation in this region, the harmonization of our foreign and defence policies will be a key ingredient. Ensuring that we all within the same international framework in the treaties we have ratified would encourage this process," he said.

### **Keynote speaker**

In his key note speech, Dr Mustafa Ali (inset), the Secretary General of the African Council of Religious Leaders noted that it is sad that Kenya will not be in Laos as a State Party and will therefore not be part of the team who will be making decisions on the implementation of the treaty and how it will be done. He noted that whereas Kenya has competing legislative priorities as well as an upcoming referendum on the Constitution on 4 August which is delaying the ratification process for the CCM, the government should consider ratifying this Convention as an urgent issue too. He again appealed to the minister for foreign affairs and the AG to provide information to the public on what Kenya is doing about the ratification of the convention.



He pointed out that since Kenya does not need parliamentary approval in order to ratify the Convention the government should ensure the timely enactment of strong national implementation legislation is achieved. He told the government to show leadership on this issue given that it is a natural leader in the region.

The drumming then resumed up to 6pm. In between, the panelists, led by Dr Ali held a press conference to articulate other issues of the Convention. Other members who constituted the press conference included Brigadier Githiora of ICRC, Mr Douglas Sidialo, a bomb survivor, Mr Gideon Mugah, deputy director of The Association for Physically Disabled in Kenya, Mr Lawrence Orowe (legal advisor Red Cross) and Mr Adan Wachu of SUPKEM.



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