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STOCKPILE DESTRUCTION SIGNALS END FOR CLUSTER MUNITIONS New report looks at government engagement on ban treaty

GENEVA, Switzerland – 29 May 2009 – Several states that have signed the new international treaty prohibiting cluster munitions have already started to destroy their stockpiles of the weapon, even before the treaty formally takes effect, according to *Banning Cluster Munitions: Government Policy and Practice*, a 288-page report released today. The report is being issued one year after the conclusion of the negotiations of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Dublin, Ireland on 30 May 2008.

“Only a few years ago the destruction of these stockpiled cluster munitions would have been unthinkable, but there has been a sea change of opinion against this weapon,” said Steve Goose of Human Rights Watch, final editor of *Banning Cluster Munitions*. “In an incredibly short period of time, many governments have moved from staunchly defending the need for cluster munitions to completely rejecting them.” The new report documents, on a country-by-country basis, how and why such dramatic shifts occurred.

Many treaty signatories are expected to complete destruction of their stockpiles earlier than the eight-year deadline imposed by the convention. Spain completed destruction of its stockpiled cluster munitions in March 2009, the first to do so since signing the treaty. Several other signatories have begun to destroy their stockpiles of cluster munitions including Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions prohibits the production, use, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions, requires clearance of contaminated areas within ten years, and establishes ground-breaking standards for assistance to the weapon’s victims.

A total of 96 countries have signed the treaty since it opened for signature in Oslo, Norway on 3 December 2008, including 35 former users, producers, stockpilers, and/or exporters of cluster munitions. The treaty requires 30 ratifications to trigger entry into force six months later. Seven signatories have ratified to date: Austria, Holy See, Ireland, Laos, Mexico, Norway, and Sierra Leone.

“Even governments that have not yet signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions now acknowledge that cluster munitions cause severe humanitarian problems that need to be urgently addressed,” said Goose. “Hold-out states are starting to change their policies as the norm being created by this treaty takes hold. They are realizing that any country that uses cluster munitions in the future will be treated as an international outcast.”

Banning Cluster Munitions looks at how governments engaged in the “Oslo Process,” an unconventional fast-track diplomatic initiative started by Norway in November 2006 to create a legally-binding instrument to outlaw cluster



Landmine Monitor is a program of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and also provides research and monitoring for the Cluster Munition Coalition.

munitions. The report also shows how civil society groups organized under the umbrella of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) fought for a strong treaty.

“The bold and dynamic way in which the Convention on Cluster Munitions was created provides an encouraging example of how multilateral diplomacy can swiftly achieve life-saving humanitarian results,” said Richard Moyes of Landmine Action, one of the report’s editors. “The exemplary partnership between governments and civil society is a hallmark of this process.”

Charting the evolution of cluster munition policy in 150 countries, the report highlights dramatic changes experienced by major powers such as France and the UK. *Banning Cluster Munitions* also spotlights difficult issues from the treaty’s development and negotiation that are likely to remain contentious in the implementation of the Convention such as joint military operations among treaty signatories and non-signatories that reserve the right to use cluster munitions.

More than three dozen governments provided information for *Banning Cluster Munitions*, but there is still a dearth of official information available on cluster munition policy and practice. The great majority of governments that have produced, stockpiled and/or exported the weapon have provided no official details on those activities.

“The Convention should help increase the information available on cluster munitions, but all governments need to be as open and transparent as possible about cluster munitions so that we can address the humanitarian dangers posed by these weapons,” said Jacqueline Hansen, Landmine Monitor’s Program Manager.

Banning Cluster Munitions was written by Human Rights Watch and Landmine Action, two NGOs that played central roles in the creation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and serve as CMC co-chairs. The report was produced by Landmine Monitor, the civil society-based research and monitoring wing of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL).

Banning Cluster Munitions will be available at www.lm.icbl.org/cm/2009 at 01:00 GMT on 29 May 2009.

For more information or to schedule an interview contact in Geneva (GMT+1):

- Mr. Jean-Marc Jacobs, CMC, tel. +44-7515-575-174, email jean-marc@stopclustermunitions.org
- Ms. Jacqueline Hansen, LM, tel. +1-613-851-5436, email jackie@icbl.org
- Ms. Mary Wareham, HRW, tel. 64-21-996-905, email wareham@hrw.org

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

Experts are available for in-person and telephone interviews. They are well-versed in report findings, have in-depth knowledge of the cluster munitions issue, and can provide interviews on the cluster munition situation globally and in specific countries.

Interviews can be arranged in the following languages: English, French, and Spanish. To request an interview please contact:

- Mr. Jean-Marc Jacobs, CMC, tel. +44-7515-575-174, email jean-marc@stopclustermunitions.org
- Ms. Jacqueline Hansen, LM, tel. +1-613-851-5436, email jackie@icbl.org
- Ms. Mary Wareham, HRW, tel. +64-21-996-905, email wareham@hrw.org

Geneva (GMT+1)

Mr. Stephen Goose

Serving as Landmine Monitor's Editor-in-Chief from 1999–2004 and the Executive Director of the Arms division at Human Rights Watch, Steve Goose also sits on the Landmine Monitor Editorial Board and co-chairs the Cluster Munition Coalition. He served as final editor for *Banning Cluster Munitions*. Language: English.

Mr. Richard Moyes

Richard Moyes is Director of Policy and Research at Landmine Action, and is one of the co-chairs of the Cluster Munition Coalition. Moyes has produced and supervised research on the impact of cluster munitions, and represents Landmine Action as a member of the Landmine Monitor Editorial Board. Moyes edited *Banning Cluster Munitions*. Language: English.

Ms. Jacqueline Hansen

Jacqueline Hansen worked on advocacy projects related to landmines from 1999–2004 before assuming the role of Landmine Monitor Program Manager in 2005. Languages: English, Spanish.

Ms. Katherine Harrison

Katherine Harrison is a researcher with Landmine Action and since 2006 has actively followed the Oslo Process and negotiations of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, as well as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons meetings. Language: English.

Mr. Mark Hiznay

Mark Hiznay is a senior researcher in the Arms Division at Human Rights Watch, where he works on all aspects of cluster munitions issue. He is an expert on the technical and policy aspects of cluster munitions. Language: English.

Mr. Thomas Nash

Thomas Nash coordinates the Cluster Munition Coalition, the umbrella group for more than 300 civil society organizations working for a ban on cluster munitions. Languages: English, French, Spanish.

Ms. Mary Wareham

Mary Wareham has served as senior advisor to the Human Rights Watch Arms Division since July 2008, leading Human Rights Watch's campaign to convince governments to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Language: English.

QUICK FACTS

Since it was opened for signature on 3 December 2008, a total of 96 countries have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions including 35 former users, producers, stockpilers, or exporters of the weapon. Signatories include 20 of the 28 NATO members and 14 countries that are affected by cluster munitions, such as Afghanistan, Lao PDR, and Lebanon.

To date, seven signatories have ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions: Austria, Holy See, Ireland, Lao PDR, Mexico, Norway, and Sierra Leone. Thirty ratifications are required to trigger entry into force of the convention six months later.

Cluster munitions have been used in 33 countries and disputed territories since the end of World War II. The most recent use was in August 2008 when both Russian and Georgian forces used the weapon in South Ossetia, killing or injuring at least 70 civilians. *Banning Cluster Munitions* highlights major cluster munition users Israel, Russia, and the United States, which have not signed the convention. The report also details lesser known instances of cluster munition use including by the US during the invasion of Grenada in 1983 and by Nigeria in Sierra Leone in 1997 as part of the ECOMOG peacekeeping operation.

A total of 34 states have developed or produced more than 200 types of cluster munitions. Fourteen of those states have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions, forswearing any future production. A total of 17 non-signatories are believed to continue to produce today: Brazil, China, Egypt, Greece, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, South Korea, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Turkey, and the US. Three more non-signatories—Argentina, Iraq, and Serbia—apparently no longer produce cluster munitions.

A total of 79 countries are believed to possess stockpiles of cluster munitions, including 31 signatories to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The total global stockpiles of submunitions contained in cluster munitions likely number into the billions. The US alone possesses between 730 million and one billion cluster submunitions. Several signatories have begun the process of destroying their stockpiles of cluster munitions including Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and the UK. Spain completed destruction of its stockpile in March 2009, the first country to do so since signing.

While the true scope of the global trade in cluster munitions is difficult to ascertain due to lack of official information, at least 15 countries have transferred more than 50 types of cluster munitions to at least 60 other countries. The US has transferred hundreds of thousands of cluster munitions to at least 30 countries.

Non-signatories are starting to change their policy and practice on cluster munitions as the norm created by the convention begins to take hold. The US has banned and Singapore has enacted a moratorium on export of cluster munitions. Some non-signatories have imposed restrictions on the possible future use of cluster munitions including the US, Poland, and Romania.