

Destroying Stockpiles of Cluster Munitions

Prepared by Human Rights Watch

Article 3 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions obligates all States Parties to destroy all stockpiles of cluster munitions under their jurisdiction and control *as soon as possible* but no later than eight years after the convention enters into force for the State Party.

Should States Parties need additional time to destroy cluster munition stockpiles, a request must be submitted and extensions for a period of up to four years may be granted.

Article 3 also allows for the retention of a “minimum number” of cluster munitions and submunitions for training in and development of detection, clearance, and destruction techniques and the development of counter-measures. It requires detailed annual reporting on the retained munitions.

Global Stockpiles of Cluster Munitions

A total of 85 countries have possessed stockpiles of cluster munitions at some point in time. Of these, 36 have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions as of June 2009.

It appears that today, 79 countries stockpile cluster munitions, of which 32 have signed the convention.

Countries that are no longer thought to have stockpiles include signatories **Australia, Honduras, Mali, and Spain**, and non-signatories **Argentina and Iraq**.

Total global stockpiles of submunitions contained in cluster munitions likely number into the billions. The **United States** alone possesses cluster munitions in its active inventory which contain between 730 million and one billion submunitions. Stockpiles of cluster munitions in **Russia** and **China** are likely to be comparable in scale. It is believed that many national stockpiles of cluster munitions consist of millions to tens of millions of submunitions.

Most states acquired their stockpiles by domestic production or importation from others. A total of 34 states have produced more than 200 types of cluster munitions. At least 15 countries have transferred more than 50 types of cluster munitions to at least 60 other countries. Some states simply inherited stockpiles of cluster munitions upon gaining independence, including Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Signatory States that have Stockpiled Cluster Munitions

Angola	Colombia	Honduras	Netherlands	Sweden
<i>Australia</i>	Croatia	Hungary	Nigeria	Switzerland
Austria	Czech Republic	Indonesia	Norway	Uganda
Belgium	Denmark	Italy	Peru	United Kingdom
BiH	France	Japan	Portugal	
Bulgaria	Germany	<i>Mali</i>	Slovenia	
Canada	Guinea	Moldova	South Africa	
Chile	Guinea-Bissau	Montenegro	<i>Spain</i>	

Non-Signatory States that have Stockpiled Cluster Munitions

Algeria	Estonia	Kazakhstan	Qatar	Thailand
<i>Argentina</i>	Ethiopia	Korea, North	Romania	Turkey
Azerbaijan	Finland	Korea, South	Russia	Turkmenistan
Bahrain	Georgia	Kuwait	Saudi Arabia	Ukraine
Belarus	Greece	Libya	Serbia	United Arab Emirates
Brazil	India	Mongolia	Singapore	US
China	Iran	Morocco	Slovakia	Uzbekistan
Cuba	<i>Iraq</i>	Oman	Sri Lanka	Yemen
Egypt	Israel	Pakistan	Sudan	Zimbabwe
Eritrea	Jordan	Poland	Syria	

Italicized states are thought to no longer possess stockpiles of cluster munitions.

The very limited confirmed information about the numbers of submunitions in stockpiles is detailed in the following table. The information for non-signatories Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia comes from US export notifications.

Submunitions Contained in Known Stockpiles of Cluster Munitions

Signatory States	
UK	38.7 million
Germany	33 million
Netherlands	26 million
France	14.9 million
Norway	3.1 million
Austria	798,336
Slovenia	52,920

Non-Signatory States	
US	730 million
Bahrain	6.1 million
Jordan	3.1 million
Morocco	2.5 million
Egypt	2.2 million
Saudi Arabia	1.2 million

Twenty-four of the 32 signatories that have stockpiles have not yet provided information on the number of cluster munitions or submunitions in their arsenals.



Destruction of Stockpiles

Several states have reported the destruction of at least some stocks since they signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions in December 2008.

- **Spain** completed the destruction of a stockpile of 4,724 cluster munitions (containing 233,261 submunitions) on 18 March 2009 in order to comply with its June 2008 national moratorium. It thus became the first to complete destruction since signing the convention. Spain intends to retain 836 cluster munitions (containing 28,615 submunitions) for training and countermeasures testing purposes permitted under Article 3. It is the only signatory thus far to announce the number of cluster munitions and submunitions to be retained.
- **Germany** began to destroy stockpiles in 2001, and as of February 2009, approximately 30% of the stockpile (compared to the 2001 total) had been destroyed. Germany announced in April 2009 that it would destroy its stockpile within the eight-year deadline set by the Convention on Cluster Munitions.
- In October 2008, **Norway's** Defense Minister stated that Norway had begun the process of destroying its stockpile of cluster munitions. In March 2009, the Norwegian Armed Forces and Nammo Demil Division signed a contract for the destruction of the Norwegian stockpile, with an anticipated completion date of July 2010. The destruction of these munitions is underway at Løkken Verk in Trøndelag.
- **Colombia** destroyed 41 stockpiled CB-250K cluster munitions in May 2009 at an event attended by civil society campaigners and the media.
- All **UK** stockpiles of cluster munitions have been removed from service and are now either in the process of being destroyed or contracts have been agreed for their destruction.

For two states, national legislation dictated deadlines for the destruction of stockpiles.

- **Belgium's** 2006 ban legislation requires all stocks to be destroyed within three years, which would be June 2009. In December 2008, the Belgian Foreign Minister confirmed that "stockpile destruction is well underway and should be finalized, under the contractual provisions, in the first part of next year [2009]."
- **Austria's** national law requires destruction within three years, which would be January 2011, but Austria said that it expected its stocks to be destroyed by the end of 2009.

Several countries reported having destroyed their entire stockpiles before international action to prohibit cluster munitions intensified in 2006.

- Military officials from **Argentina**, a non-signatory, stated that stocks of air-dropped BLG-66 Belouga and Rockeye cluster bombs were destroyed by 2005.
- Officials from **Honduras** stated in 2007 that the military destroyed its stockpile of air-dropped Rockeye cluster bombs as well as an unidentified type of artillery-delivered cluster munition in previous years.
- In December 2007, **Mali** announced that 10 years earlier it had destroyed its entire stockpile of cluster munitions.

Other states reported the destruction of specific cluster munition systems before the adoption and signature of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, including **Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland**, and the **UK**. These cluster munitions were usually destroyed because they were considered obsolete, and in some cases, considered too unreliable.

- The **NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA)** destroyed cluster munitions containing more than 65 million submunitions from 1997-2007 for NATO countries including **Belgium, Netherlands**, and the **UK**.



- The Nammo Group said in 2009 that it had demilitarized several million submunitions for NATO members in facilities in Norway, Sweden, and Germany over the past ten years.

Destruction of obsolete and beyond-shelf-life cluster munitions is a routine part of ammunition operations. For example, over the past decade, the US has destroyed on average 7,000 tons of cluster munitions per year at an average annual cost of US\$6.6 million. As of 2006, at least 103,473 tons of outdated cluster munitions were awaiting destruction. One industrial consortium (General Dynamics and EBV) built, tested, and opened a facility in the US within a year to destroy a stockpile of 38,538 cluster bombs containing over 23 million submunitions over five years (2005-2009). It is recovering and recycling nearly 94% of the materials.

Costs of Stockpile Destruction

Several signatories to the Convention on Cluster Munitions have disclosed some cost data:

- The Spanish government paid €4.9 million to the company Fabricaciones Extremenas SA (FAEX), of the Maxam Industrial Group, to dismantle and destroy the stockpile of 233,261 submunitions.
- The Minister of Defense of Austria told the Parliament that the destruction costs for its stockpile of 798,336 submunitions would amount to €1 million.
- Germany has estimated the costs of destruction at about €40 million.
- Norway has estimated that the cost of destruction of its 52,000 155mm cluster munitions would be €40 per projectile.
- The cost for destroying the existing stockpile (size unknown) in Italy is estimated at €8,123,380.
- One report estimated the cost of destroying Japan's stockpile (size unknown) at around ¥20 billion (approximately \$207 million).

