

*Contact:*

Mary Wareham, ANZCMC Coordinator  
200 Oriental Parade, Wellington  
Tel. +64 (21) 996-905 or (04) 971-4688  
[wareham@hrw.org](mailto:wareham@hrw.org)  
[www.stopclusterbombs.org.nz](http://www.stopclusterbombs.org.nz)

*Aotearoa NZ CMC members:*

African Pacific Voices NZ \* Amnesty International Aotearoa NZ \* Aotearoa Lawyers for Peace \* Auckland University Students' Association \* Caritas Aotearoa NZ \* Christian World Service \* Disarmament and Security Centre (Peace Foundation) \* Engineers for Social Responsibility NZ \* Global Focus Aotearoa \* International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War NZ \* National Council of Women NZ \* National Consultative Committee on Disarmament \* Oxfam NZ \* Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament NZ \* Pax Christi Aotearoa-NZ \* Peace Foundation NZ \* Peace Movement Aotearoa \* Soroptimist International NZ \* Umma Trust \* UN Association NZ \* UN Youth Association NZ \* UNICEF NZ \* Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Aotearoa



4 November 2011

HE Mr Paul O'Sullivan, High Commissioner  
Australian High Commission to New Zealand  
72 Hobson Street  
Thorndon  
Wellington 6011

RE: Convention on Conventional Weapons cluster munitions work

Dear High Commissioner,

We are writing to express our strong concern at Australia's active support for the conclusion of a protocol on cluster munitions at the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW), which will be held in Geneva on 14-25 November 2011.

If agreed, the August 26, 2011 version of the draft protocol would result in dramatically weaker protections for civilians than the strong protections provided in the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, which Australia has signed and is in the process of ratifying.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions absolutely bans the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of cluster munitions, and requires clearance and victim assistance. By contrast, the draft CCW protocol seeks to allow these activities to continue and its positive obligations on stockpile destruction, clearance, victim assistance, and international cooperation and assistance are far less detailed and comprehensive than those provided in the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

In addition to potentially weakening the stigma against cluster munitions contained in the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the draft protocol runs contrary to the primary purpose of international humanitarian law, which is to minimize suffering in war. The adoption of far weaker standards would represent an unprecedented and dangerous step backwards for the development of international humanitarian law. It could also undermine the humanitarian objective of the Convention on Conventional Weapons,

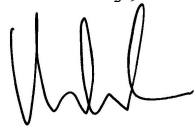
which seeks to minimize suffering from weapons that “may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects.”

The costly decade of CCW deliberations on cluster munitions should be ended at the Fourth Review Conference and all states should accept that the Convention on Cluster Munitions is the most appropriate legal means to address cluster munitions and the harm they cause. We urge Australia to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions and uphold its obligation to promote the Convention and discourage any use of cluster munitions.

If Australia is sincere about seeking an outcome that maintains the integrity of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, it should not be supporting the creation of a CCW protocol that would permit continued use, production, and/or transfer of a banned weapon. We urge Australia to not support the draft protocol and to recognize that there is no consensus on adopting it.

We would be willing to meet to discuss this matter with you further. We urge you to convey our message to the Government of Australia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Wareham', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mary Wareham  
Coordinator, Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition