



Press Release

## **Join our winning team to ban cluster bombs!**

### **1 August marks one year since international treaty became law**

(Wellington, 1 August 2011): One year after it became international law, campaigners are calling on all states that have not yet done so to join the 2008 treaty banning cluster bombs.

“The best way to stop cluster bombs from being used is to ensure that all governments get on board the international ban now,” said Mary Wareham, coordinator of the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition (ANZCMC). “We are winning the battle against cluster bombs, but need everyone to join the team against these deadly weapons to ensure their complete eradication.”

A total of 109 countries are part of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, of which 59 have ratified, including New Zealand. On 1 August 2010, the Convention formally entered into force and all its provisions become fully and legally binding on all countries that have joined. States that have not joined include major powers such as China, Russia, and United States and the Pacific nations of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

“Now that the Convention is international law, we expect all states to adhere to its prohibitions,” said Wareham. “No longer will we tolerate continued use of cluster bombs - enough civilians have suffered from the deadly effects of these weapons.”

There have been two known instances of cluster munition use since the Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force. In April 2011, government forces loyal to Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi used cluster munitions in residential areas of the city of Misrata. In February 2011, Thailand used cluster munitions on Cambodian territory during a border conflict. Neither Libya nor Thailand have joined the Convention.

Despite these set-backs, overall compliance with the Convention has been impressive. Eight States Parties and at least three signatories have already completed destruction of their stockpiles, destroying more than 589,000 cluster bombs containing more than 64 million explosive submunitions. Two countries—Albania and Zambia—have completed clearance and are now free from the threat of cluster bombs. In the year since the Convention became law, 21 signatories have ratified the convention and Grenada has acceded.

The ANZCMC is holding a public event in Wellington on Thursday, 11 August to celebrate the achievements of the Convention and to mark the count down to its Second Meeting of States Parties, which will be held in Beirut, Lebanon from 12-16 September 2011. This is part of a series of actions by campaigners in more than 50 countries to mark the first anniversary of the Convention and urge all countries to join it.

For more information,

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- ANZCMC website: <http://www.stopclusterbombs.org.nz>
- Notice of 11 August Event in Wellington, 11 August: <http://www.stopclusterbombs.org.nz/2011/07/11/690/>
- Facebook Notice for 11 August Event: <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=189580221099817>
- List of international events: <http://www.august1.org/events>
- List of countries that have joined the Convention: <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/treatystatus/>

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### **Cluster munitions**

A cluster munition (or cluster bomb) is a weapon containing dozens or 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.

### **Convention on Cluster Munitions**

The 2008 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 years. The Convention also includes groundbreaking provisions requiring assistance to victims and affected communities. Opened for signature in Oslo in December 2008, the Convention entered into force and became binding international law on 1 August 2010. Since the Convention entered into force on 1 August 2010 countries must join through a process of accession, which is a one-step process combining signature and ratification, meaning it often requires both government and parliamentary approval. The convention is widely regarded as the most significant international disarmament treaty since the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

### **New Zealand and cluster munitions**

New Zealand is one of six governments that led the 2007-2008 diplomatic Oslo Process that created the Convention on Cluster Munitions. New Zealand hosted a crucial meeting of the Oslo Process in Wellington on 18-22 February 2008 and chaired the negotiations on the definition of cluster munitions. It signed the Convention in Oslo on 3 December 2008 and enacted strong legislation to implement the Convention on 17 December 2009. New Zealand ratified the Convention on 22 December 2009, becoming a State Party on 1 August 2010. Minister of Disarmament and Arms Control, Hon. Georgina Te Heuheu led New Zealand's delegation to the Convention's First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Vientiane, Lao PDR in November 2010. She visited a province heavily affected by cluster bomb contamination and announced a funding contribution for clearance of cluster bombs and other explosive remnants of war in Lao PDR.

**About the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition (ANZCMC)**

The ANZCMC is a campaign of two dozen non-governmental organisations established in 2007 to support the call to stop cluster munitions from causing unacceptable harm to civilians. It is a member of the international Cluster Munition Coalition, which is the civil society engine behind the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Mary Wareham coordinates the ANZCMC, which is comprised of the following organisations: 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.