



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION
WELLINGTON

21 June 2011

Ms Mary Wareham
Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition
200 Oriental Parade
Wellington

Dear Ms Wareham

Thank you for your letter of 27 May concerning the Criminal Code Amendment (Cluster Munitions Prohibition) Bill 2010. The Australian Government is a strong supporter of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and shares your concern about the devastating impact of cluster munitions remnants on civilian populations.

In developing the Bill, the Government gave careful consideration to the issues your organisation, and others, have raised. The Bill currently before the Senate faithfully implements the Convention. It ensures that all conduct that is prohibited by the Convention is the subject of a criminal offence under Australian law while also allowing conduct permitted by the Convention. After the Bill has been passed by both houses of Parliament, and all measures necessary to give effect to the Convention in Australia have been completed, Australia will take steps to ratify the Convention. The Government expects this to occur later this year.

Australia has a strong record in disarmament and international action to ban weapons that are excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects. Although Australia has not yet ratified the Convention we are already playing a constructive role to support the Convention's humanitarian objectives. Through Australia's Mine Action Strategy for 2010-2014, Australia has pledged \$100 million to contribute to global efforts to reduce the threat and socioeconomic impact of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war. This builds upon Australia's contribution of more than \$75 million for Mine Action in 2005-2009.

Yours sincerely

Nathan Goldstein
Second Secretary
Australia High Commission, Wellington