

Aotearoa NZ CMC members:

Amnesty International Aotearoa NZ, Aotearoa Lawyers for Peace, Auckland University Students' Association, Campaign Against Landmines, Caritas Aotearoa NZ, Christian World Service, Development Resource Centre, Engineers for Social Responsibility NZ, 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 Foundation Disarmament and Security Centre, 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



www.stopclusterbombs.org.nz

MEDIA RELEASE – 29 May 2009

NEW ZEALAND URGED TO RATIFY CLUSTER BOMB BAN **New report details New Zealand's role in creation of the new treaty**

The New Zealand government needs to step up its ratification of the new treaty banning cluster bombs said the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition today.

“New Zealand was one of the first countries in the world to sign the treaty banning cluster bombs, but our ratification of this crucial agreement is lagging,” said Mary Wareham, coordinator of the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition (ANZCMC). “There is a clear humanitarian imperative to ensure that this treaty takes effect as quickly as possible to avoid future casualties from cluster bombs,” she added.

New Zealand played a central role in the creation of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, including as host to a crucial meeting in Wellington in February 2008. It was one of the first countries to sign the treaty on 3 December 2008. Legislation to implement the treaty must be passed before ratification, but the Bill still has not been introduced in Parliament. Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, Hon. Georgina te Heuheu has told the coalition that ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions is her top priority.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions requires 30 ratifications to trigger entry into force six months later. A total of 96 governments have signed the Convention and seven have ratified. The ratifying states include five nations that led the process to create the treaty (Austria, Ireland, Holy See, Mexico, and Norway) and two countries where cluster munitions have been used (Laos and Sierra Leone).

“The new report issued today tells the compelling story of how New Zealand and other states heeded the call from survivors, deminers, and activists to ban cluster munitions, but further action is needed,” said Wareham. “To prevent further civilian casualties we urge all states to sign and ratify this treaty without delay,” she added

Five Pacific governments have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions (Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, Palau and Samoa) and other signatories include former producers, stockpilers and past users of cluster munitions. The treaty comprehensively prohibits cluster munitions and requires clearance of affected areas as well as comprehensive assistance to victims of the weapon.

According to the 288-page report, *Banning Cluster Munitions: Government Policy and Practice*, the prohibition on cluster munitions is firmly taking hold as more countries join the new treaty banning the weapon and hold-out states shift their policies in the right direction. The ANZCMC is participating in a Global Week of Action Against Cluster Bombs, which is targeting non-signatories to join the treaty. The ANZCMC is a network of 23 non-government organisations and a member of the international campaign to ban cluster bombs.

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