

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 - for immediate release

CLUSTER BOMB BAN TREATY HITS HALF-WAY MARK New Zealand introduces ban legislation

(Wellington: 19 August 2009) The international treaty banning cluster bombs has now passed the half-way milestone to the 30 ratifications needed for it to become binding international law. Yesterday, the United Nations confirmed that Croatia become the fifteenth country to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 17 August. New Zealand has signed the Convention, but not yet ratified as legislation to implement the Convention must first be enacted.

“It is still possible that New Zealand can be one of the first thirty countries to ratify and make the treaty take effect, but this will require swift approval of the implementing legislation,” said Mary Wareham, coordinator of the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition (ANZCMC). “Entry into force is crucial to ensuring that the life-saving provisions of this convention become binding international law,” she added.

New Zealand was one of the first countries to sign the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 3 December 2008, but its legislation to implement the treaty must be passed before the government can ratify. On 21 July 2009, the Cluster Munitions Prohibition Bill was introduced in the New Zealand parliament. Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, Hon. Georgina te Heuheu has said that ratification of the Convention is her top priority.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions, signed by 98 nations since December 2008, prohibits cluster munitions, requires clearance of areas contaminated by unexploded cluster bomb duds, and establishes ground-breaking provisions for assistance to victims of the weapon. A total of 30 signatories must ratify to trigger entry into force of the Convention six months later. Fifteen signatories have ratified to date: Albania, Austria, Croatia, Germany, Holy See, Ireland, Japan, Lao PDR, Luxembourg, Mexico, Niger, Norway, San Marino, Sierra Leone, and Spain.

The ratifying states include five of the nations that led the process to create the convention: Austria, Ireland, Holy See, Mexico, and Norway. New Zealand and Peru are the only “core group” leaders that have not yet ratified. Spain, the first treaty signatory to complete destruction of its entire stockpile of cluster munitions, has ratified as have Germany and Japan, which have both committed to destroy their stockpiles of the weapon as fast as possible. Four countries where cluster munitions have been used are in the first fifteen: Albania, Croatia, Sierra Leone, and Laos, which will host the first meeting of states parties

to the convention within the first year of entry into force. None of the five Pacific signatories to the Convention on Cluster Munitions have ratified yet (Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, Palau and Samoa).

The ANZCMC is preparing a submission to the the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (FADT) Select Committee on the proposed Cluster Munitions (Prohibition) [Bill](#). The ANZCMC is a network of 23 non-government organisations and a member of the international Cluster Munition Coalition.

Contact: Mary Wareham, ANZCMC. Tel. +64-21-996-905, wareham@hrw.org