

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



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MEDIA RELEASE - for immediate release

CLUSTER BOMB BAN LEGISLATION PASSES New Zealand's ratification of the treaty imminent

(Wellington: 11 December 2009) Campaigners are celebrating the passage of the Cluster Munitions Prohibition Bill by the New Zealand parliament last night. With the unanimous vote in support of the implementing legislation, New Zealand's ratification of the international treaty banning cluster munitions is now imminent.

"It is fitting that this strong and comprehensive national law governing New Zealand's implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions was passed one year after the signing of the Convention and on international Human Rights Day," said Mary Wareham, coordinator of the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition (ANZCMC). "The swift passage of this law affirms New Zealand's position as a leader in the international effort to eradicate these terrible weapons which have posed unacceptable harm to civilians around the world."

After taking a leadership role in the international process to ban cluster munitions, New Zealand signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 3 December 2008. New Zealand's Minister of Disarmament and Arms Control, Hon. Georgina Te Heuheu, introduced the Cluster Munitions (Prohibition) Bill in parliament on 21 July 2009. Sixteen ANZCMC members then made submissions in support of the Bill's swift passage and ANZCMC coordinator Mary Wareham appeared before the Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade Select Committee to support the Bill. On 30 November 2009, the Select Committee reported back to parliament recommending passage of the amended Bill. Late on 10 December 2009, the Bill received its second and final reading during an expedited debate.

"We are pleased at how the Bill was strengthened and clarified through the Select Committee process, particularly with the addition of the prohibition on investment in companies that manufacture cluster munitions," said Wareham. "With the Bill's passage our dream that New Zealand will be among the first thirty countries to ratify and bring this new treaty into effect is about to be realized," she added.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions has been signed by 103 nations since December 2008. It 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. Twenty-six signatories have ratified to date: Albania, Austria, Burundi, Croatia, France, Germany, Holy See, Ireland, Japan, Lao PDR, Luxembourg, Macedonia FYR,

Malawi, Malta, Mexico, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Uruguay, and Zambia. A total of 30 signatories must ratify the Convention to make it become binding in international law six months after the 30th ratification has been received.

The ANZCMC is a network of 23 non-government organisations and a member of the international Cluster Munition Coalition.

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