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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 REACHES RATIFICATION MILESTONE Treaty To Become Binding International Law on 1 August 2010

(Wellington, 17 February 2010) – The international treaty banning cluster munitions has received its 30th ratification, meaning that it will become binding international law six months from now, the Aotearoa New Zealand Cluster Munition Coalition (ANZCMC) said today.

Burkina Faso and Moldova both ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions at the United Nations in New York on Tuesday, 16 February New York time [NZ time – Wednesday, 17 February], becoming the 29th and 30th signatories to ratify respectively and triggering an entry into force date of August 1, 2010.

“The swift pace at which the Convention on Cluster Munitions reached its 30th ratification reflects the strong desire of governments and civil society to never see this weapon used again,” said Mary Wareham, ANZCMC coordinator. “We’re thrilled that New Zealand was among the first 30 nations to complete ratification of this crucial international treaty.”

The 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions comprehensively prohibits cluster munitions, provides strict deadlines for clearance of affected areas and destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions, and requires assistance to victims of the weapon. Opened for signature in December 2008, it has taken fifteen months for the convention to attain the thirty ratifications necessary for it to become binding international law.

On 22 December 2009, New Zealand became the 25th state to ratify the convention. Earlier that month, the New Zealand parliament unanimously passed comprehensive legislation to implement the treaty: the Cluster Munitions Prohibition Act of 2009. New Zealand was a member of the seven-nation ‘Core Group’ that led the “Oslo Process” diplomatic initiative to create the Convention on Cluster Munitions. In February 2008, the government hosted a pivotal Oslo Process meeting in Wellington attended by 106 governments. New Zealand Ambassador Don MacKay played a key role in the negotiation of the convention. The ANZCMC is a network of 23 non-government organisations and a member of the international Cluster Munition Coalition.

“Throughout 2010, we will be campaigning for more countries to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions, but we cannot work alone,” said Wareham. “We need strong action by the New Zealand government to promote the cluster munition ban.”

A total of 104 states have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions, of which 30 have ratified. From the Pacific, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, Palau and Samoa signed the convention, but have not yet ratified while five other Pacific states participated in the Oslo Process, but have not signed: Marshall Islands, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The 30 states to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions includes leaders of the “Oslo Process” diplomatic initiative that created the Convention (Norway, Austria, Holy See, Ireland, Mexico, and New Zealand), countries where cluster munitions have been used (Albania, Croatia, Lao PDR, Sierra Leone, and Zambia), stockpilers of cluster munitions (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Moldova, and Slovenia), as well as Spain, the first signatory country to complete destruction of its stockpile. Other ratifying states are: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Luxembourg, Macedonia FYR, Malawi, Malta, Montenegro, Nicaragua, Niger, San Marino, and Uruguay.

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For more information, see:

- ANZCMC Review of the Cluster Munitions Prohibition Act of 2009 – http://www.stopclusterbombs.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/anzcmc_review_cmbill_22dec09.pdf
- Text of the Cluster Munitions Prohibition Act of 2009 – <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2009/0068/latest/DLM2171615.html>