

## **Cluster Munition Coalition Condemns Myanmar's Use of Cluster Munitions New Production, Use Runs Counter to International Law**

Download the briefing paper [here](#)

(Geneva, August 31 2023) – The Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) condemns new use of cluster munitions by the Myanmar government's armed forces and calls for an immediate end to use of this prohibited weapon. A new report by the CMC's monitoring wing shows how Myanmar's armed forces have used an apparently domestically produced cluster bomb in attacks in several parts of the country since 2021, including as recently as early June 2023.

“Myanmar's production and use of cluster bombs is gravely concerning as these indiscriminate weapons primarily kill and injure civilians. There can be no justification for using them,” said Dr. Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan, Cluster Munition Monitor researcher. “All governments should condemn this use of an internationally-banned weapon.”

Cluster munitions are delivered by artillery, rockets, missiles, and aircraft. They open in mid-air and disperse dozens or hundreds of submunitions, also called bomblets, over a wide area. Many submunitions fail to explode on initial impact, leaving duds that can indiscriminately wound and kill, like landmines, for years until they are cleared and destroyed. A total of 123 countries have prohibited the weapon under the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, but not Myanmar.

*Cluster Munition Monitor* has reviewed photographs showing the remnants of cluster bombs used in attacks by the Myanmar Air Force in Chin, Kayah, Kayin, and Shan states over the past 13 months. The most recent known cluster bomb attack by the Myanmar Air Force damaged a school in Kedong village tract in Kawkareik township, Kayin/Karen state on 6 June 2023. Another attack in Mindat township, Chin state in April 2023 also involved cluster bomb use. Remnants of this same type of cluster bomb were previously found in the same township after a July 2022 air attack that wounded 13 civilians, according to [Amnesty International](#).

These attacks are part of an internal conflict that has intensified in recent months in both northwest and southeast Myanmar, resulting in civilian casualties, widespread destruction of homes and other civilian objects, and displacing people. The conflict has also been characterized by extensive new use of antipersonnel landmines by all parties.

The cluster bombs used by the Air Force look similar to other products made by Myanmar's state-owned weapons production facility “KaPaSa” or Defence Products Industries of Myanmar, but there are no markings on the bomb remnants that show where they were manufactured or assembled.

The weapon consists of a 120mm mortar projectile with a plastic arming vane that is attached to an impact fuze that detonates each submunition on contact. Each cluster bomb has space for 12 mortar projectiles or submunitions on an internal frame. This weapon appears to meet the definition of a cluster munition under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which prohibits a “conventional munition that is designed to disperse or release explosive submunitions each weighing less than 20 kilograms each.”

Myanmar is not known to have produced or used cluster munitions previously, although a rudimentary cluster munition adaptor was documented a decade ago. (See [Cluster Munition Monitor 2013](#)).

The Cluster Munition Monitor has asked Myanmar's Ministry of Defence to confirm or deny its production and use of cluster bombs. No response was received as of time of publication.

At the United Nations General Assembly in November 2019, Myanmar [said](#) that it could not join the convention until a nationwide peace agreement is in place. In 2009, a Myanmar government official told a regional meeting that its forces “do not use cluster munitions.”

For further information see Cluster Munition Monitor briefing note [\[link\]](#).

## **Ends.**

*Note: The military regime changed the name of the country from Burma to Myanmar in 1989, but many ethnic groups in Myanmar's border areas and a number of countries still prefer to use the name Burma.*

## **About ICBL-CMC**

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC) works for a world free of landmines, cluster munitions, and other explosive remnants of war, where all lives are protected. A world where contaminated land is cleared and returned to local populations for productive use and where the needs of affected communities and survivors are met and their human rights guaranteed.

## **About the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor (The Monitor)**

The Monitor is the civil society initiative providing research and monitoring for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC).

*Cluster Munition Monitor* 14<sup>th</sup> annual edition to be released on 5 September 2023 will provide a global overview of recent efforts to implement and join the ban on cluster munitions, ensure clearance of cluster munition remnants, provide risk education, and assist victims of these indiscriminate weapons.

## **About the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions**

The convention comprehensively prohibits cluster munitions, requires destruction of stockpiles, clearance of contaminated areas, and the provision of risk reduction education and assistance for victims of the weapons. As of July 2023, 123 countries have joined the convention.

## **Contact**

### **Dr. Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan**

Cluster Munition Monitor researcher

[yeshua@icblcmc.org](mailto:yeshua@icblcmc.org)

**Links:**

- Cluster Munition Coalition - <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/>
- Cluster Munition Monitor - <http://www.the-monitor.org/en-gb/reports/2022/landmine-monitor-2022.aspx>
- Convention on Cluster Munitions - <https://www.clusterconvention.org/>
- CMC Twitter - <https://twitter.com/banclusterbombs>
- CMC Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/banclusterbombs/>
- CMC Flickr - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/clustermunitioncoalition>