

The Cluster Munition Coalition is led by a Governance Board of:

Afghan Landmine Survivors Organisation, Action On Armed Violence, Asociación para Políticas Públicas-APP, Cambodia Campaign to Ban Landmines, Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas, DanChurchAid, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, ICBL Georgian Committee, IKV Pax Christi, IPPNW, Japan Campaign to Ban Landmines, Mines Action Canada, Nepal Campaign to Ban Landmines, Norwegian People's Aid, Protection.



Press Release

More Governments Condemn Use of Cluster Munitions by Syria

(Geneva-18 April) In a strong rebuke of Syria's ongoing and widespread use of cluster munitions, country after country this week condemned the Syrian government for this blatant disregard for the well-being of civilians. The firestorm of criticism came during an intersessional meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Geneva, which closes today.

During the meeting, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Cambodia, Croatia, Ecuador, France, Germany, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Lao PDR, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal and Zambia spoke to condemn cluster munition use by the Syrian government as well as to express their deep concern at any use of cluster munitions. Previously, Denmark, Switzerland and the United Kingdom as well as non-signatories Qatar and the United States have also made public statements condemning the use.

"If there was ever a time to speak out, it is now," CMC member Ayman Sorour of Protection (Egypt) told the meeting. "Continued stigmatization of cluster munition use depends on users hearing a rapid, roaring outcry from other states. We need your loud voices, and we need to hear them now."

Countries that have joined the Convention on Cluster Munitions have a legal obligation to speak out against use of this deadly weapon. Under Article 21 of the convention States Parties are obligated to '*discourage States not party to this Convention from using cluster munitions.*'

The outrage at Syria's use of cluster munitions came alongside a steady stream of reports of the positive impact the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions is already having.

Since the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (Oslo - September 2012), five countries have ratified the treaty - Peru, Australia, Nauru, Liechtenstein, Chad, and most recently – on 9 April – Andorra acceded, becoming the 81st State party to the Convention.

Cote d'Ivoire announced that it had completed the destruction of its stockpile of cluster munitions. Thirteen States Parties have already finished stockpile destruction. The United Kingdom reported that it has destroyed 83% of its arsenal, or 32.5 million submunitions. Collectively States Parties have destroyed more than 90 million submunitions. These are remarkable achievements for a treaty that has been in force for less than three years.

"Destruction of stocks leaves no doubt about the new international standard the convention is creating, which is no more cluster munitions—a truly comprehensive ban," said Sarah Blakemore, director of the Cluster Munition Coalition. "Stockpile destruction is prevention at its best. No stocks means no new use, no victims from new use, and no additional contaminated land from new use," she said.

States Parties also reported progress in clearing contaminated land and in providing assistance to cluster munition survivors and affected communities.

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Landmine survivor and Director of the Iraqi Alliance for Disability, Moaffak Alkhafaji, urged States Parties to “demonstrate solidarity with people that have suffered from cluster munition use and to...turn the promises of the convention into reality for all survivors,” by adopting national action plans for victim assistance and improving access to services. He noted positive examples of countries where there has been real action on accessibility, such as Afghanistan.

The Cluster Munition Coalition is a global civil society coalition working to end the harm caused by cluster bombs.

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Media Resources

- **CMC Intersessional Meeting page** - <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/ism2013/>
- **CMC webpage on Syria** - <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/syria/>
- **CMC YouTube Channel** - http://www.youtube.com/my_videos?o=U
- **Convention on Cluster Munitions** - <http://www.clusterconvention.org/>
- **CMC on Flickr** - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/clustermunitioncoalition/>
- **CMC Facebook** - <http://www.facebook.com/banclusterbombs?ref=hl>
- **CMC Twitter** - <https://twitter.com/banclusterbombs>
- **Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor**: For more facts on landmine and cluster munitions issues globally, and to view detailed country profiles, visit <http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php>