

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

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, IPPNW,

Mines Action Canada, Nepal Campaign to Ban Landmines, Norwegian People's Aid, Protection



27 March 2015

Prime Minister  
Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques  
King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud  
Riyadh  
Saudi Arabia

***Re: Air strikes in Yemen***

Excellency,

The Cluster Munition Coalition, a group of non-governmental organizations in 100 countries working to end the suffering caused by cluster munitions, requests that the armed forces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia refrain from using any cluster munitions in the “Storm of Resolve” military action in Yemen, which began on 25 March.

Cluster munitions have been banned under the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, on the basis of the unacceptable harm they cause to civilians both at the time of attack and in the longer term. Strikes have an indiscriminate large footprint and leave behind unexploded submunitions that failed to function as designed and remain a fatal threat long after use.

Given the globally recognized emerging norm against the weapon, the use of cluster munitions has a considerable political cost on the international scene. The recent use of cluster munitions in Syria and Ukraine has been widely condemned. Saudi Arabia is not a party to Convention on Cluster Munitions, which 116 nations have joined, but it has [participated](#) as an observer in key meetings of the treaty and voted in favor of UN General Assembly resolutions condemning recent cluster munition use, including the UNGA [Resolution in 2013](#) condemning use by Syrian government forces.

Yemen is already contaminated by cluster munition remnants, including unexploded submunitions that endanger civilians. There is [credible evidence](#) that Saudi Arabia used cluster bombs in air strikes on Yemen’s northern Sada’a governorate in November 2009. Further, U.S. records show that Saudi Arabia has received cluster bomb exports, while Yemen is believed to stockpile only cluster munitions of Soviet origin. Unless modified, Yemen’s Soviet supplied aircraft are not capable of delivering US-made cluster bombs and the Houthi rebels do not operate aircraft capable of using cluster munitions. Therefore, if any US-made cluster bombs are found in Yemen following attacks, evidence would indicate Saudi Arabia as being the likely source.

We therefore call on Saudi Arabia to accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and, until then, abide by the spirit and intent of the convention by not using cluster munitions under any circumstances.

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We thank you in advance for the actions you will take on this issue. We are available to discuss the matter further with representatives of Saudi Arabia at the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, and we will communicate with the Permanent Mission to this effect in the coming days.

Sincerely,  
Megan Burke  
Director

cc. H.E. Mr. Faisal Bin Hassan Trad, Ambassador and Permanent Representative,  
Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations, Geneva