

*"The ban will put a stop to future use of these weapons, but true success will be the difference it makes to people in affected countries like Iraq. No one should go through what I went through and the Iraqi authorities now have a real opportunity to make that a reality by signing the treaty."*

*Ayat Syleiman Ali, Iraqi cluster bomb survivor and member of the Ban Advocates group of survivor advocates*

Mr. Hoshyar al-Zebari  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Opposite State Org. for Roads and Bridges  
Karradat Mariam  
Baghdad  
Iraq

29 May 2009

Dear Minister,

I am writing to congratulate Iraq on the Cabinet's recent decision to join the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions and urge swift signature of this important agreement.

This international treaty comprehensively prohibits cluster munitions, requires destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions within eight years and clearance of contaminated land within 10 years, and recognises the rights of individuals and communities affected by the weapon to receive assistance. Since December 2008, a total of 96 governments have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions including stockpilers, former users and producers of the weapon as well as affected countries from every region of the world.

Iraq participated in several diplomatic meetings held to develop the draft text of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, including the negotiations in May 2008. As an affected country Iraq should benefit from the Convention's provisions on international cooperation and assistance.

Every country wishing to prevent further suffering from the horrors of cluster munitions should join the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This instrument is crucial to ensure the stigmatisation of cluster munitions to make sure this weapon is never used again.

Yours sincerely,

C.c:

- Dr Narmeen Othman, Minister of Environment
- Dr Ayaad Alsamarrae, Chair of Parliament
- Mr. Mustafa Radhi, Foreign Affairs Committee
- Mr Hadi Alameri, Defence Committee
- Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati, Ambassador  
Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations  
14 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10021  
United States  
Fax: + 1 212 772 1794
- Mrs. Ahlam Al-Gailani  
Counsellor  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.  
Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28a  
1209 Geneva  
Switzerland  
Fax: +41 22 733 03 26