



Talking points: lobbying your government to sign the Convention

- **The cost of destroying stockpiles is huge. We won't be able to fulfil our obligations if we sign the treaty.**

Every stockpiled cluster bomb is a humanitarian problem waiting to happen. Every cluster bomb that is destroyed means one less opportunity for civilians to be terrorized by the indiscriminate effects of the weapons during and long after attacks. As long as stockpiles of cluster bombs exist there is a risk they will be used or transferred for use by others. Destruction of stockpiled munitions is key to preventing further loss of lives or limbs and will help expand the stigma attached to these weapons. It is essential to destroy all stockpiles as soon as possible. States are able to seek financial and technical support to destroy their stockpiles. Investing this money in stockpile destruction is investing money in a safer future.

- **It is not a priority for our country to sign the Convention now.**

Cluster munitions have killed and maimed civilians for the past 60 years. The urgency of addressing the harm caused by cluster bombs was recognised by 94 states when a treaty banning cluster bombs was adopted signed in Oslo, Norway in December 2008. This is an historic agreement that your country should be part of.

1/3 of world's contamination is in Africa and Africa unless cluster munitions are prohibited throughout the continent and stockpiles are destroyed Africa is at risk from becoming the next victim of cluster munitions. Dealing with the problems that cluster bomb cause now by signing the treaty to ban them, will prevent a crisis that could be greater than landmines. It is essential that all victims of the weapon receive assistance immediately..

- **How strong can this treaty be without the support of the biggest producers and users like the US, China and Russia**

Very strong. Signing the treaty won't prevent countries from engaging in joint military operations with states that have not signed it. However they must tell their partners of their treaty obligations and discourage them from using cluster bombs. This makes it difficult for cluster bombs to be used in joint military operations as it remains illegal for any state who has signed the treaty to help with the use of cluster bombs.

Furthermore by stigmatising cluster bombs the treaty will create an international norm that governments are likely to follow whether they sign it or not. It will no longer be politically or morally acceptable to use a weapon that around 100 governments have outlawed. Russia, USA and China did not sign the Mine Ban Treaty either, but their usage has been radically diminished since the ban. Even countries that haven't signed the Convention, such as the US, are developing new policies, and even though it falls far short of the standards set by the Convention it shows recognition of the new standard. Although Russia recently used cluster munitions in Georgia they have denied use demonstrating the stigma associated with the use of cluster munitions.

- **Banning cluster bombs will weaken our armed forces ability to defend themselves**

The civilian harm caused by cluster munitions far outweighs their military utility. They have not been used in Afghanistan since early 2002 and NATO has a specific policy of not using them because of the risk of civilian casualties and the bad press associated with their use. The UK for example, has never deployed cluster munitions in Afghanistan - instead precision guided unitary

weapon systems like the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) are available to UK forces and in use against the Taliban.

- **We are concerned we cannot carry out our victim assistance / clearance obligations / stockpile destruction**

States parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions have the right to seek and receive assistance to fulfil its obligations (see Article 6: International cooperation and assistance). This includes technical, material and financial assistance. All states parties in a position to provide assistance are encouraged to do so, and states that have used cluster munitions have a particular obligation to provide assistance. It is the responsibility of the state needing assistance to request it.