

A HISTORY OF HARM

A cluster bomb is a weapon that can contain up to several hundred small explosive bomblets. Dropped from the air or fired from the ground, cluster bombs break open in mid-air and scatter these bomblets randomly over a wide area. Anyone within the strike zone is likely to be torn apart, no matter if they are military or civilian. Many bomblets fail to explode as intended, leaving behind huge quantities of de facto landmines which continue to kill and injure for years, even decades after their use. Used in more than 30 countries, cluster bombs have killed and injured tens of thousands of civilians and devastated the livelihoods of countless more. Over 380 million bomblets were used by the United States in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam in the 1970s and many of these are still killing today. In the past decade cluster bombs have been used in the former Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Israel, and Georgia.



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Dtar lost his arms after finding a cluster bomblet whilst fishing in Laos. It had been on the ground for at least thirty years before detonating.

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BANNING CLUSTER BOMBS

The massive use of cluster bombs in Lebanon in 2006 propelled the remarkable diplomatic process to outlaw these weapons. With the active support of civil society united under the banner of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), an international treaty was negotiated in May 2008 and signed by 94 countries in December 2008. The Convention on Cluster Munitions bans the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of these weapons. It requires clearance of contaminated areas, destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions and also provides a comprehensive framework for assistance to cluster bomb victims and their communities.

JOIN THE TREATY

Approximately 100 countries have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions, but many more still need to sign including China, Israel, Russia and the United States. Those that have signed also need to ratify the treaty to be fully bound by its provisions. A total of 30 signatories need to ratify the treaty for it to take effect.

What are you doing to ban cluster bombs?

- Tell your government to sign, ratify and implement the treaty.
- Urge your Member of Parliament to work for swift ratification of the treaty.
- Sign the People's Treaty petition that calls on governments to join and implement the treaty.
- Find out who's taking action to ban cluster bombs in your country.

For more information and to take action go to:

www.stopclustermunitions.org/take-action

