

The Cluster Munition Coalition is led by a Steering Committee of:
Human Rights Watch, Landmine Action and Norwegian People's Aid (Co-Chairs),
DanChurchAid, Handicap International, International Campaign to Ban Landmines,
IPPNW Russia-Zambia, Landmine Resource Centre (Lebanon),
Mines Action Canada, Pax Christi, Protection (Egypt).



Minister Kasit Piromya
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Dear Minister Piromya,

On behalf of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), I would like to urge the Kingdom of Thailand to sign the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions. This is a significant year for this important humanitarian agreement as it marks two important milestones: the Convention will enter into force on 1 August and Lao PDR will host the First Meeting of States Parties (1MSP) from 9-12 November. In the 100 days counting down to entry into force, the CMC is encouraging states that have not yet joined the Convention to do so as soon as possible.

Cluster munitions kill and injure civilians both during conflict and long after a conflict has ended. 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. It also obliges all countries to support affected states in fulfilling their obligations. Since December 2008, a total of 107 governments have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions including stockpilers, former users and producers of the weapon as well as the majority of affected countries.

Thailand is well known for its leadership role on the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty. It is a natural next step for Thailand to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions as these two treaties share the same humanitarian vision and purpose. Although Thailand possesses cluster munition stockpiles, this should not be a barrier to joining this important agreement. Thailand has already announced that it does not intend to use cluster munitions and its stockpiles are outdated. The Convention also contains an eight year period in which States Parties need to complete the destruction of stockpiles. With a comprehensive plan put in place early enough, this should be an adequate timeframe to complete this task. Thailand would also be eligible for international cooperation and assistance to carry out destruction of stockpiles.

Every country wishing to prevent further suffering from the horrors of cluster munitions should join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and help stigmatise these weapons from being used again. We urge all countries to join as soon as possible and to participate in the upcoming First Meeting of States Parties (1MSP) that will be hosted in Vientiane, Lao PDR from 8-12 November 2010. We hope to see you in Vientiane.

Thomas Nash
Coordinator
Cluster Munition Coalition

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