

Cluster Munition Coalition Newsletter

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International News

Sofia Regional Conference on the Convention on Cluster Munitions

The Sofia Conference took place from 18-19 September 2008. It was the first of a series of regional meetings designed to increase awareness and promote the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Eleven States from the region attended: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia (FRY), Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey. Donor and core group state representatives from Austria, France, Ireland, Norway also participated, along with representatives from UNDP, UNMAS, ICRC,

Bulgarian Red Cross, Council of the European Union, NAMSA, and CMC Campaigners from 15 countries including 7 countries in the region.



Photo: Mary Wareham

The Conference provided participants with a positive, informal atmosphere and succeeded in focusing governments' attention on the importance and timely issue

of preparing national policies to sign, ratify, and implement the CCM.

During the Conference, Albania, Bulgaria, and Croatia publicly announced that they will sign the CCM in Oslo in December and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia both made positive statements about their commitment to the Oslo Process. Other states confirmed privately that they will sign in Oslo. Greece, Romania and Turkey did not make any indication during the Conference that they would sign in Oslo.

<http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/calendar/?id=627>

Kampala Regional Conference on the Convention on Cluster Munitions

The Kampala regional conference took place from 29-30 September 2008. A total of 42 African governments discussed the Convention at the two-day conference, of which 28 announced, most for the first time, their intent to sign the Convention: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Republic of Congo, DR Congo, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda, Togo and Zambia. All of the 42 African states gathered in

Kampala agreed to an action plan that calls for the earliest possible signature and ratification. The CMC was represented at the conference by a delegation of 80 campaigners, from 28 countries. The CMC held a campaign workshop on 28 September in preparation for the conference. After the workshop The Ugandan

People's Treaty was launched at a concert organized by Margaret Arach Orech and her colleagues at ULSA, with performances by a number of well-known Ugandan artists including Bobi Wine and the Sweet Kid who also signed the People's Treaty petition. <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/calendar/?id=628>



Photo: Mary Wareham

International News

The Ban Bus – From the Balkans to Oslo, 1 October – 2 December 2008

On 1 October 2008 the Ban Bus embarked on an eight-week campaign trail through Europe to convince all governments to sign a groundbreaking treaty banning cluster bombs, in Oslo on 3 December 2008. Beginning in Serbia and ending at the signing ceremony in Norway, the Ban Bus will rally public support for the CCM and turn the eyes of the world on governments who are

resisting putting pen to paper and curbing ending the suffering of millions. Using sound, film and photo recording equipment, the Ban Bus will be recording its journey, collecting stories and generating a media storm in a bid to get every government to do the right thing and sign the treaty. For further information and the complete route check out: www.thebanbus.org



Ban Bus Launch, Belgrade, Serbia

Media Highlights of the Month

Daily Star (Lebanon): **'UN de-mining team in South to receive \$100,000 Nansen prize'**
http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=2&article_id=96044

Xinhua News Agency: **'African countries agree to sign international treaty on banning cluster bombs'**
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-10/01/content_10137042.htm

Business Daily (Kenya): **'African states unite in adopting cluster bomb ban'**
http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=10383&Itemid=5847

Associated Press wire story as IHT article: **'Cluster bomb campaign targets Balkans'**
<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2008/09/19/europe/EU-Bulgaria-Cluster-Bombs.php>

News Blaze: **'Ban Bus drives through Europe'**
<http://newsblaze.com/story/20080926110703krzy.nb/topstory.html>

This month the media team has been mostly working with campaigners on the Sofia and Kampala conferences and with the Ban Bus team to secure media coverage for the launch. They have also been developing a new media animation to launch during the Global Week of Action on YouTube, Facebook, news and campaigner websites worldwide. The team will now be focusing on the Laos conference and are working with the National Regulatory Authority for UXO and Lao PDR on a media trip to encourage the press to cover the conference and gather stories and film footage to put the Oslo signing ceremony on the news agenda.

Natalie Curtis, Media and Communications Officer, Cluster Munition Coalition, Natalie@stopclustermunitions.org

Campaign and Country Updates

Azerbaijan. Hafiz Safikhanov from the Azerbaijan Campaign to Ban Landmines has met with representatives from UNDP, ICRC and Embassies of Norway and Great Britain. He discussed with them the issue of cluster munitions in Azerbaijan and South Caucasus, and asked their support in lobbying the government of Azerbaijan to participate in the Oslo Process.

Hafiz Safikhanov, Azerbaijan Campaign to Ban Landmines, azerbaijan@icbl.org

Brazil. Cristian Wittmann from the Brazilian Campaign to Ban Landmines participated in an event organised by the Santa Maria section of the Brazilian Bar Association, which was attended by the Minister of Justice, Mr. Tarso Genro. Cristian delivered a speech on the cluster munitions issue and the position of the Brazilian government and asked for the Minister's leadership within the government to lead Brazil to the Signing Conference in Oslo.



Cristian Wittman, Brazilian Campaign to Ban Landmines, cristian@icbl.org

Bangladesh. Campaigners in Bangladesh met with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangladesh to discuss the government's position on the CCM. Campaigners handed over the CMC Briefing Paper on the CCM and in the discussion they were told that due to the upcoming national as well as sub district elections Bangladesh cannot commit to signing the CCM at the moment, but is open to sign the treaty at a later stage.



Nadira Mallik, LGSA,
nadiramallik@yahoo.com

Cambodia. Campaigners in Cambodia arranged a radio interview with Mr. Sam En, a cluster munitions survivor who lost both eyes and arms. The interview was broadcasted daily for two weeks.



Furthermore, the list of countries that have announced to sign the CCM was published in the Cambodia Daily newspaper, accompanied by a call on governments to come to Oslo in December.

Ny Nhar, Jesuit Refugee Service,
nynhar@yahoo.com

Chile. The President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet, has reiterated that Chile will sign the Convention in Oslo during the

visit of Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. This does not only show the compromise of Chile at presidential level but is also a great input for other governments in the region to follow the example.

Czech Republic. The Czech government has announced that it will sign the CCM in Oslo in December.

Ecuador. The government of Ecuador will host a regional conference on cluster munitions on 6-7 November 2008.

Egypt. The Institute for Peace Studies in Alexandria have launched a petition for a ban on cluster bombs:

<http://www.peacestudiesinstitute.org/En/petition.htm>

Ahmed Farid, Institute for Peace Studies Alexandria, Ahmed.Farid@bibalex.org

France. On 27 September 2008 Handicap International organised its 14th Pyramid of Shoes in 37 French cities inviting the public, VIP's and government officials to mobilize for an international treaty to ban cluster munitions.



Emblematic symbol of the victims of mines and cluster munitions, the Pyramid of Shoes was an intense day to collect signatures, to raise public awareness and to create media attention. During that day, more than 60 000 French signed the petition that calls on governments to ban cluster munitions, which brings the number of signatures collected by Handicap International to more than 600 000. The pyramids were an occasion to call on France, as the Presidency country of the European Union, to adopt a leading role in Europe by promoting the signature of the treaty to other European and non European countries and to call on its allies, such as the US, to join the Oslo Process.

Anne Villeneuve, Handicap International,
avilleneuve@handicap-international.org

Germany. In a meeting with CMC campaigners the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced that Minister for Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier will attend the Oslo Signing Conference to sign the CCM. The German government is also putting legislation in place to be able to ratify in Oslo. In cooperation with the Green Party campaigners are drafting a resolution for the European Parliament calling on governments to sign the CCM and to reject any other standard below the Convention. Campaigners also gave a lecture to the German Society of the UN on the CCM and they are working with parliamentarians to start initiatives with other parliaments to promote the Convention in other countries.

Thomas Küchenmeister, Actiongroup Landmine.de,
thomas.kuechenmeister@googlemail.com

Italy. During the event "4 Steps Toward a Better World" that took place in the North of Italy at Maserada del Piave on 20-21 September 2008, ICBL volunteers collected 600 signatures in support of the ban of cluster munitions and to ask the Italian Government to sign the CCM on 3 December in Oslo.



Tibisay Ambrosini, Italian Campaign to Ban Landmines,
t.ambrosini@campagnamine.org

India. Bina Nepam from the Control Arms Foundation of India has written a paper on the Convention on Cluster Munitions for the Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA), which is India's Defense Ministry's think tank. The paper will be published in the Institute's journal "Strategic Analyses". Besides campaigners are collecting signatures for the People's Treaty,

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and are working with parliamentarians to raise questions in parliament as to why India is not signing the CCM.

Bina Nepram, Control Arms Foundation of India, binalakshmi@gmail.com

Indonesia. A national workshop on the Convention on Cluster Munitions took place in Indonesia from 29 – 30 August 2008. The workshop was attended by approx. 25 officials and government representatives. Fred Lubang from Nonviolence International Southeast Asia was invited to give a presentation during the session on International Efforts Banning Cluster Munitions. The Indonesian MFA plans further workshops on the issue which will also involve civic society as well as students and the general public.

Fred Lubang, Nonviolence International Southeast Asia,

fred@nonviolenceinternational.net

Iraq. Campaigners in Iraq held a national symposium on international treaties dealing with handicapped and survivors. During the event campaigners called on their government to sign the Convention on Cluster Munitions.



On 20 September a National Day on Mine Risk Education was organised which was attended by landmine and cluster munition survivors, government representatives, parliamentarians, as well as media and NGOs.



Moaffak Alkhafaji, Iraqi Handicapped & Survivor Soc., moaffak_62@yahoo.com

Luxembourg. On 27 September Handicap International Luxembourg organised its Ninth Pyramid of Shoes. Campaigners distributed information materials to more than one thousand visitors on the main square of Luxembourg-city. Two professional deminers simulated a clearing operation, and a local actress delivered a satirical-political speech especially written for Handicap International. 500 new signatures were collected, which increases the overall number of signatures collected in Luxembourg to over 10,000. Some parliamentarians joined the Handicap International team for the event.



Luxembourg has publicly declared they will sign the CCM on 3 December.

Luxembourg has also told campaigners that in its CCM ratification legislation it intends to include a specific prohibition on any investment on cluster munitions. *Jérôme Bobin, Handicap International Luxembourg, jbobin@handicap-international.lu*

Netherlands. On 8 September Dutch CMC members handed over a petition to the Georgian Embassy in The Hague. Represented were Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands Refugee Foundation, Human Rights Watch and IKV Pax Christi. The petition was co-signed by UNICEF. The handover was picked up by the media, radio as well as TV.



Campaigners held two meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one of which was attended by Mark Hiznay from Human Rights Watch, to discuss developments within the CCW as well as the use of cluster munitions in Georgia. On 20 September, the Night of Peace, campaigners collected signatures for the People's Treaty.

Miriam Struyk, IKV Pax Christi,

Struyk@ikvpaxchristi.nl

Roos Boer, IKV Pax Christi,

Boer@ikvpaxchristi.nl

Nepal. A national seminar was held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 25 September under the theme of "Ban Cluster Bombs! Protect civilians and sign the Treaty". Speeches were delivered by Purna Shova Chitrakar, coordinator of NCBL as well as representatives from the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, ICRC and the Norwegian Embassy in Nepal.



More than 50 people attended the event. Participants included political leaders, representatives of different ministries, security forces, diplomats, NGOs/INGOs, human rights activists, media. *Purna Shova Chitrakar, NCBL, ncbl@mail.com.np*

Philippines. On 15 September, the Philippine Campaign against Cluster Munitions (PCCM) was launched.



Members of the Philippine Action Network on Small Arms (PhilANSA) and the Philippine Campaign to Ban Landmines (PCBL) participated in the event. For the launch an exhibition was set up explaining cluster munitions, the impact of the weapon and why a global ban is necessary.



Photos: Kara Santos

Jaymelyn Nikkie T. Uy, Center for Peace Education, Jaymelyn_jnuuy@mc.edu.ph

Romania. The Department of Peace Operations (PATRIR) has written to a national platform of development organizations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and UNDP to encourage a joint program upon the arrival of the Ban Bus. They will be meeting with representatives of the Foreign Ministry to see what events they can arrange around the Bus' arrival in Romania. Furthermore they are preparing for a possible meeting and presentation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a meeting and presentation to FOND members (the national platform of development organizations) and a talk at the university.

Kai Brand-Jacobsen, Department of Peace Operations, jacobsen@patrir.ro

Spain "Moviment per la Pau" organised a shoe pyramid in the centre of Barcelona to honour victims of landmines and cluster bombs.



Altogether 1000 pairs of shoes had been collected from several shoe companies, schools and the general public. A photo exhibition was set up for the event as well as information panels with maps and background information. Campaigners collected about 800 signatures.

Lucia, *Moviment per la Pau*, cooperacio@movimentperlapau.org

Sweden. More Swedish government pension funds announced that they will disinvest from cluster munition companies. Holdings are being sold on the advice of Ethical Council of the Swedish National Pension Funds, which has determined that the business operations of these companies contravene the CCM adopted by Sweden in May 2008.

<http://www.responsible-investor.com/home/article/cluster3/>

Switzerland. Geneva. On 16 September, the CMC and ICBL held a briefing on the CCM at Handicap International Switzerland's new Geneva office. A total of 12 African states attended (Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Congo, Djibouti, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda) and several more sent apologies. The briefing helped to increase awareness on the CCM ahead of the Africa-wide meeting on cluster munitions in Kampala, Uganda on 29–30 September. On 23 September a 2-person ICBL delegation met with the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the UN in Geneva. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and seek further details on the use of cluster munitions in the conflict between Russia and Georgia in August and to encourage Georgia to sign the CCM in Oslo in December (and join the Mine Ban Treaty soon). The Georgian representatives said that at the moment Georgia can not commit to sign the treaty in Oslo but hopes that the political situation will evolve by December to allow Georgia to sign.

Kasia Derlicka, ICBL, kasia@icbl.org
Susan Walker, ICBL, walker@icbl.org

UK. Campaigners in the UK have sent a letter to the UK Foreign Secretary asking the UK to start working towards implementing national legislation on

cluster munitions and to promote the Convention internationally to ensure widespread acceptance.

Portia Stratton, *Landmine Action*, pstratton@landminereaction.org

UN. From 10-15 September, a six-person CMC delegation visited seventeen diplomatic missions at the United Nations in New York to promote signature of the CCM. They met with Bangladesh, Brazil, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Qatar, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Tuvalu, and Yemen, as well as representatives of six UN agencies. The meetings resulted in a number of reports back to capitals. Only Greece, Malaysia and Russia said they would not sign in Oslo; the rest said signature was under consideration.

Mary Wareham, *Human Rights Watch*, wareham@hrw.org

Lora Lumpe, *USCBL*, lora@fcnl.org

USA. *Religions for Peace* have written to faith leaders in Japan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sweden, Finland, Thailand, Jordan, South Africa, Brazil, Cambodia and Canada asking their support in promoting the CCM and convincing countries to sign the Convention in Oslo in December. The message included an advocacy packet consisting of information materials and template letters to support religious leaders' advocacy efforts.

Allison Pytlak, *Religions for Peace*, allison.pytlak@gmail.com

Vietnam. Campaigners in Vietnam have been working with government officials, policy makers and international non-governmental organizations, to increase awareness of the issue of cluster munitions in Vietnam and the benefits of signing the CCM. Landmine Survivors Network in Vietnam, as part of the Steering Committee of the Landmine Working Group, has been working with representatives from the United Nations Development Programme and the Norwegian Embassy to organize a national workshop which is tentatively scheduled for the end of October.

Nguyen Thi Kim Hoa, *Landmine Survivors Network in Vietnam (LSN VN)*, nguyenthikimhoa@landminesurvivors.org

Take Action

Global Week of Action to Ban Cluster Bombs

27 October – 2 November 2008

The GWOA is a week dedicated to activities and media work to urge all governments to sign the treaty at the Oslo Signing Conference on 3 December 2008. Please take action during this week.

For more information go to <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/gwoa>

Please contact Laura for news on the activities you are planning laura@stopclustermunitions.org

Sign the People's Treaty and collect signatures

The People's Treaty is a global petition calling on governments to sign, ratify and implement the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Contribute to this global action by launching the People's Treaty nationally and setting a target of the number of signatures to be collected in your country before 3 December. The Global Week of Action, 27 October – 2 November 2008, will be a good opportunity for campaigners to promote the People's Treaty and organise petition handovers to their governments.

www.stopclustermunitions.org/peoplestreaty

SIGN THE PEOPLE'S TREATY

Cluster bombs cause predictable and unacceptable harm to civilians, both at the time of use and for many years after. It is my strong belief that these weapons are morally unacceptable.

I fully support the new international treaty on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, transfer, and production of cluster bombs.

Through their signature and ratification of this treaty, governments will legally commit themselves not only to ban cluster bombs, but also to clear contaminated land and provide assistance to victims and affected communities.

Through my signature on the People's Treaty, I commit to work to ensure that governments live up to their obligations.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

October 2008

1 October – 2 December

The Ban Bus – 'From the Balkans to Oslo'

6 October - 4 November

UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, UN Headquarters
New York, USA

20 - 22 October

The Safe Path - South East Asia Regional Conference on the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Lao PDR

21 - 24 October

Towards Oslo 2008: Workshop on Cluster Munitions, Croatia

27 October - 2 November

Global Week of Action to Ban Cluster Bombs, International

29 – 30 October

Faith Leaders Conference on Cluster Munitions, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

November 2008

3 - 7 November

Group of Governmental Experts, Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW),
Geneva, Switzerland

6 – 7 November

Ecuador Regional Conference on Cluster Munitions

10 - 12 November

Lebanon Workshop on Cluster Munitions

21 November

Launch of Landmine Monitor

24 - 28 November

Ninth Meeting of States Parties of the Mine Ban Treaty, Geneva, Switzerland

December 2008

2 - 4 December

Convention on Cluster Munitions Signing Conference, Oslo, Norway

3 December

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

10 December

International Human Rights Day



This Newsletter is a product of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC). For comments, feedback and submissions to the newsletter please contact Susan Hensel at susan@stopclustermunitions.org