



# LANDMINE & CLUSTER MUNITION MONITOR



The research and monitoring arm of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition.

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## **More States Embrace Ban on Cluster Munitions In Face of New Attacks 90% of declared cluster munition stocks destroyed**

(Geneva, 3 September 2015) – States are rallying in support of the 2008 treaty banning cluster munitions amid global outcry against their use in five countries, finds the annual monitoring report released by the Cluster Munition Coalition today.

“More countries are embracing the ban on cluster munitions by joining the treaty and rapidly destroying their stocks—evidence that the treaty is working well five years on,” said Mary Wareham, Human Rights Watch, editor of the ban policy chapter of *Cluster Munition Monitor 2015*. “The new use of cluster munitions by a handful of armed forces outside the ban has been met with swift and strong condemnations, showing the stigma against their use is growing stronger.”

The convention comprehensively prohibits cluster munitions, requires destruction of stockpiles within eight years, clearance of areas contaminated by cluster munition remnants within 10 years, and assistance for victims of the weapon.

Cluster munitions have been used in Libya, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen in 2015—countries that are not part of the ban treaty. However, more than 140 countries have condemned new use of cluster munitions in Syria, while use in Libya, Sudan, Ukraine, and Yemen has also met with a strong response. None of the 93 States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions have used the weapons or engaged in any prohibited activities since its entry into force on 1 August 2010.\*

Much progress has been made in those five years since the convention took effect as states accede and ratify the ban treaty, destroy tens of millions of explosive submunitions from stockpiles, conduct clearance operations, and assist victims.

Since August 2010, a total of 46 signatories\* to the convention have ratified it, including Canada, Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Paraguay, and South Africa in the past year. Nine more countries have acceded to it, most recently Belize, Guyana, Palestine, and former cluster munition producer Slovakia.

Most of the 117 states that have signed or acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions are expected to attend its high-level First Review Conference, which opens in Dubrovnik, Croatia on 7 September 2015. Croatia was itself subject to the use of cluster munitions and is a strong proponent of the convention.

*Cluster munition use and casualties documented, survivor needs remain*

*Cluster Munition Monitor 2015* documents new use of cluster munitions since 2014 in five countries:

- Cluster bombs were dropped on two locations in Libya in early 2015, but it was not possible to conclusively determine responsibility;
- Sudan’s armed forces used air-dropped cluster bombs in Southern Kordofan province in the first half of 2015 and previously in 2012;

- Syrian government forces began using air-dropped cluster bombs in mid-2012 and then cluster munition rockets in attacks that are believed to be continuing, while Islamic State (IS) forces used cluster munition rockets in the second half of 2014;
- Ukrainian government forces and Russian-backed anti-government forces used cluster munition rockets in Donetsk and Luhansk provinces of eastern Ukraine in attacks that started in 2014 and stopped after a February 2015 ceasefire;
- Saudi Arabia and possibly other members of a Saudi Arabia-led coalition have used US-made cluster munitions in northern Yemen since March 2015 in attacks during operations against Ansar Allah forces (the Houthis).

*Cluster Munition Monitor 2015* reports casualties from cluster munition attacks in Syria and Ukraine in 2014. During the same period, people were killed and injured in 12 countries and three other areas by the unexploded submunitions that are left behind in high numbers after use. There have been at least 1,968 recorded cluster munition casualties in Syria since 2012.

“Cluster munition victims must see an end to the threat of harm, on the one hand, and major improvements in the adequacy of the services that they need on the other,” said Loren Persi, editor of the victim assistance chapter of *Cluster Munition Monitor 2015*. “That is the guarantee of the convention as well as their right, but assistance is still often out of reach for many cluster munition victims.”

Civilians continued to suffer the most harm among known cluster munition casualties, comprising 92% of all recorded casualties in 2010-2014, where the status was indicated. Horrifically, half of those killed and injured were children.

According to the report, estimated global casualties to date exceed 55,000, with the largest number of confirmed casualties recorded in States Parties, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Lao PDR—a country with the most reported casualties all time due to massive US cluster bomb use more than four decades ago. Nonetheless, the Convention on Cluster Munitions sets the highest standard for assistance to victims in international humanitarian disarmament law and has resulted in observable, but measured, improvements in the coordination and delivery of services according to *Cluster Munition Monitor 2015*. The 12 States Parties with cluster munition victims all provided some form of victim assistance in 2010-2014 despite funding shortfalls. Survivors in remote and rural areas, however, continue to face challenges in obtaining necessary assistance.

#### *Clearance underway and stockpiles being destroyed*

“Despite challenges, many of the two dozen-plus countries that are contaminated by cluster munitions remain committed to clearance of impacted areas,” said Jeff Abramson, coordinator of the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor initiative. “It is therefore all the more disturbing when cluster munitions are used, killing and harming civilians and creating new clearance burdens for struggling communities.”

At least 25 countries and other areas are contaminated by cluster munition remnants. According to the report, some 74km<sup>2</sup> of land was cleared and 69,000 submunitions destroyed during 2014. Between 2010 and 2014, more than 255km<sup>2</sup> of land was cleared worldwide and 295,000 submunitions destroyed, the vast majority by states that have joined the convention. Eight State Parties already succeeded in completely clearing their land of menacing cluster munition remnants.

Destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions under the Convention on Cluster Munitions is seen as a major success. According to *Cluster Munition Monitor 2015*, States Parties have destroyed 1.3 million cluster munitions and 160 million submunitions to date, representing 88% of stockpiled cluster munitions and 90% of submunitions declared by States Parties. In 2014 alone, more than 121,000 cluster munitions and 16.4 million submunitions were destroyed from stocks by France, Germany, Italy, Mozambique, Sweden, Switzerland, and other States Parties. Japan completed its stockpile destruction in February 2015, while Canada completed in 2014 before ratifying the convention in March 2015.

Even non-signatory the United States has destroyed a significant portion of its stockpile that was once comprised of approximately six million cluster munitions. In February 2015, the US said it has removed “approximately 221,502 tons of cluster munitions” from its active stockpile to destroy through demilitarization under a 2008 policy directive, while an additional 250,224 tons will be demilitarized by 2018.

Since the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, seventeen States Parties and non-signatory Argentina have ceased the production of cluster munitions, reflecting the widespread stigma against the weapon. Twenty-three States Parties have enacted specific legislation to enforce their implementation of the convention’s provisions, while 28 others have indicated that existing legislation will suffice to ensure their compliance.

Cluster munitions have been banned because of their widespread indiscriminate effect at the time of use, and the long-lasting danger they pose to civilians. Cluster munitions can be fired by artillery and rocket systems or dropped by aircraft, and typically explode in the air and send dozens and sometimes hundreds of smaller bomblets or submunitions over an area the size of a football field. Submunitions often fail to explode on initial impact, leaving dangerous remnants that pose the same danger as landmines until cleared and destroyed.

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\* Data last updated 24 August when the report went to printing. On 25 August, Rwanda ratified the convention, to become the 94<sup>th</sup> State Party and 47<sup>th</sup> signatory since August 2010 to ratify. On 31 August, Iceland ratified to become the 95<sup>th</sup> State Party and 48<sup>th</sup> signatory to ratify since August 2010.

**ENDS**

#### **About the Monitor:**

This is the sixth annual Cluster Muniton Monitor report and the sister publication to the Landmine Monitor report issued annually since 1999 by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), 1997 Nobel Peace Prize co-laureate. The Landmine and Cluster Muniton Monitor is coordinated by a committee of ICBL-CMC staff and representatives from DanChurchAid, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, and Mines Action Canada.

To mark the First Review Conference of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, the report reviews developments in the period since the convention entered into force on 1 August 2010. It also looks at activities in 2014 and the first half of 2015. It covers global trends in ban policy, survey and clearance of cluster muniton remnants, and casualties and victim assistance. Additional online resources profile every country in the world.

#### **Links:**

- **Cluster Muniton Monitor 2015** and related documents, available 10am CEST, 3 Sept. at: [www.the-monitor.org/](http://www.the-monitor.org/)
- **CMC Homepage** - <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/>
- **CMC YouTube Channel** - <https://www.youtube.com/user/CMCInternational>
- **Convention on Cluster Munitions** - <http://www.clusterconvention.org/>
- **CMC on Flickr** - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/clustermunitioncoalition/>
- **CMC Facebook** - <http://www.facebook.com/banclusterbombs?ref=hl>
- **CMC Twitter** - <https://twitter.com/banclusterbombs>
- **Landmine and Cluster Muniton Twitter** - <https://twitter.com/MineMonitor>

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