

Statement on Stockpile Destruction
Convention on Cluster Munitions 8th Meeting of States Parties
Geneva
3 September 2018



When we released *Cluster Munition Monitor 2018* last Thursday, we highlighted the untarnished compliance record regarding the convention’s core prohibitions. One of the most visible examples is seen in stockpile destruction, where all of the first states with cluster munitions to ratify the convention destroyed their stocks within the convention’s eight-year deadline.

This achievement shows the world that States Parties take their obligations seriously and are committed to implementation. It also demonstrates to states considering joining the Convention on Cluster Munitions that the provisions are not overly burdensome or impossible to implement.

Four States Parties completed destruction of their stockpiled cluster munitions during the previous year: Croatia, Cuba, Slovenia and Spain. We warmly welcome this achievement. We encourage them to report in detail on the process and appreciate Croatia’s detailed PowerPoint presentation here. We did not hear from Cuba today and urge it to provide details on the exact quantity and types of cluster munitions and submunitions destroyed.

During 2017, seven States Parties—those four plus Peru, Slovakia, and Switzerland—destroyed a collective total of 33,551 cluster munitions and 1.7 million submunitions. This is the lowest number destroyed since the creation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

However, the reason for that is positive: the vast majority—99 percent—of the total reported global stocks of cluster munitions once held by States Parties have now been destroyed. As the Monitor reports, 33 States Parties have completed destruction of their stocks, collectively destroying 1.4 million cluster munitions containing more than 177 million submunitions.

State Party Slovakia destroyed a substantial number of cluster munitions over the past year and we hope to hear from Slovakia at this meeting. Switzerland is on track to complete the destruction of its cluster munition stocks by the end of this year. With the technical support of Norwegian People’s Aid, Botswana and Peru

have made substantial progress over the past year to plan and prepare for the destruction of their stockpiled cluster munitions within the convention's deadlines.

Yet, as always, it is not all good news. We therefore bring the following concerns to your attention for our collective follow-up:

- Bulgaria has reported the possession of a substantial number of cluster munitions, but still [has not started destroying](#) them. There is just one year left until its 1 October 2019 stockpile destruction deadline. We appreciate the update provided today, but are disappointed to hear that Bulgaria is considering making an extension request to its pending stockpile destruction deadline.
- Guinea-Bissau has [indicated several times](#) that it needs financial and technical assistance to destroy its stockpiled cluster munitions by its 1 May 2019 deadline. Yet it still has not disclosed the quantity and types of stockpiled cluster munitions as it is nearly seven years late delivering its Article 7 transparency report. Guinea-Bissau last participated in a meeting of the convention in 2015.
- There is evidence that Guinea [imported cluster munitions](#) back in the year 2000, prior to joining the convention. Yet it still has not provided its transparency report for the convention, which was due April 2015. Therefore, it is not possible to know if it still has stockpiled cluster munitions left to destroy.
- Signatories that possess cluster munitions, such as Indonesia and Nigeria, appear to have taken few, if any, steps to ratify the convention or to declare and destroy their cluster munitions.
- Cyprus is the last European Union member state to have signed, but not yet ratified the convention. It has not disclosed any information on its cluster munition stocks, but [we have learned](#) that 3,760 mortar projectiles and 2,559 submunitions that it transferred in 2014 for the purposes of destruction still have not been destroyed.

Under the convention's cooperative compliance measures, States Parties and others, including our campaign members, stand ready to help States Parties

requiring assistance. It is clear that several now need help to overcome financial, technical, and other challenges that are preventing them from swiftly destroying their cluster munition stocks.

Before concluding, we would like to highlight the fact that most States Parties have chosen not to retain any cluster munitions for training and research purposes. Nonetheless, 13 States Parties are retaining cluster munitions. This includes two of the newer States Parties, Bulgaria and Slovakia.

We are pleased to hear just now from the Netherlands that it intends to significantly reduce the number of cluster munitions that it has retained for research and training, but not consumed for these purposes since 2011. We were disappointed that Cameroon decided to retain all six of its stockpiled cluster munitions for research and training purposes.

Last year, Italy announced that it has destroyed the cluster munitions that it initially retained for research and training purposes and would not replenish those stocks. Several States Parties retaining cluster munitions have significantly reduced the number retained since making their initial declarations, including Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Spain.

That shows how the initial amounts retained were likely too high, but it still is not clear if current holdings constitute the “minimum number absolutely necessary” for the permitted purposes, as required by the convention.

We applaud the States Parties that have destroyed their cluster munition stocks and are not retaining any. It’s clear that most States Parties agree with the CMC that there is no compelling reason to retain live cluster munitions and explosive submunitions for the purposes of research and training.

Finally, the Cluster Munition Coalition supports both the guidelines on extension requests and the voluntary declaration of completion submitted to this meeting.