

# National Statement by Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg Norway

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Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear friends of the Convention on Cluster Munitions,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you to Oslo on this historic occasion. Today we confirm that cluster munitions are banned forever.

That we, a partnership of states, international organisations and civil society, have moved the world forward. This convention will make the world a safer and better place.

This is also a special moment for me personally. As a boy I lived in Yugoslavia. A part of Europe that was to become a war zone 30 years later. The villages I remember from my childhood – where children lived and played – became littered with cluster munitions.

During my last visit to Serbia, I met one of the many victims: Branislav Kapetanovic. Branislav lost his arms and legs while clearing an area of cluster munitions. But Branislav did not lose hope. He did not lose courage. I am happy to see Branislav here today. Andrew Jackson, a former president of the United States, once said, “One man with courage makes a majority.” With courage and conviction, Branislav and others who suffered the same cruel fate turned their experience into action.

We will be indebted to these brave men and women forever. For their relentless efforts in transforming our dream of banning these weapons into the reality of the convention we are signing today.

Banning cluster munitions took too long. Too many people lost their lives and their limbs. Too many futures were shattered. The tragedy of their needless suffering is matched only by our joy today in being able to prevent more human misery in the future.

I am encouraged to see that the Convention on Cluster Munitions has already become a new norm, even before being signed by any of us. The Convention places a moral obligation on all states not to use cluster munitions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Partnerships and teamwork brought us here today. Cooperation between affected and non-affected states, civil society and international organisations. All working together towards a common goal: banning cluster munitions. I would like to thank all those who helped to make this possible. Some of you are here today.

We are proud that Norway has played a special role in the Oslo Process. We are prouder still for being in a partnership with all of you. We could only have done this together, and together we have truly made a difference.

Thank you.