

Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Stockpile Destruction and Retention  
Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meetings  
8 April 2014



The Cluster Munition Coalition would like to warmly and enthusiastically congratulate those states that finished destroying their stockpiles of cluster munitions since the 4MSP: FYR Macedonia, the United Kingdom, and Denmark. You, and the 16 other States Parties that finished destruction long before their treaty-mandated deadline, have proven to the world that the Convention is working. Your determination to destroy your cluster munitions quickly shows that former stockpilers can permanently forswear the use of cluster munitions and take decisive steps to ensure they can never be used. You have also set the early implementation bar appropriately high for other states. As a citizen of the UK and a resident of Denmark, and as someone with experience working with the armed forces of both countries, I would also like to personally thank you for your leadership and determination in rapidly ridding the world of cluster munitions!

The first few years of the Convention have taught us a lot already about stockpile destruction, (as we've heard from the statements today). Again, we have seen that there is clear political determination among all States Parties to implement the Convention before their 8-year deadline. Just three and a half years after entry into force, nineteen States Parties have declared completion out of a total 33 states with confirmed stockpiles. States Parties have destroyed a total of over 1 million cluster munitions and around 130 million submunitions. These are impressive numbers!

We have also seen that the naysayers were wrong: it is not prohibitively expensive to destroy stocks of cluster munitions. In line with the standard set earlier by states such as Belgium, Norway, and others, Denmark was able to limit costs to 1 euro per submunition, and it appears Germany will destroy at a similarly low cost. All states have also been able to take considerable advantage of recycled materials. In addition, each state will save on the costs of stockpile storage and management, which can be considerable. Finally, we have seen proven techniques to destroy safely and economically smaller stockpiles, such as the SHADOW project run by Norwegian People's Aid.

Looking ahead, it appears there are still 14 States Parties with stocks to destroy. Most of these states have reported plans to destroy them in the near future, and all express confidence in their ability to meet their deadline. We understand – and please correct us if we're wrong – that Italy and Sweden plan to complete destruction this year, Germany and Japan expect to finish by the end of 2015, Switzerland in 2017, and France in 2018. Botswana announced plans to finish in 2013, but we do not know if this took place.

Both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Spain, which had declared completion of stockpile destruction, reported in early 2012 additional cluster munitions requiring destruction. Spain announced they would be destroyed before their deadline, but we would like to encourage them to present more details. We would also like to ask Bosnia and Herzegovina to share its destruction plans.

We also would like to hear concrete plans and timelines from Bulgaria, Croatia, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Peru, as well as a clarification from Burundi on whether it has a stockpile. Most of these states have expressed the need for international assistance to enable them to plan for and undertake destruction. Given the ready availability of low-cost solutions for stockpile destruction, we strongly urge donors to support such requests, as called for in Article 6.

Among signatory states, we also welcome the early completion of destruction by three states (Central African Republic, Colombia, and the Republic of Congo) as well as Canada's announcement that it plans to finish destruction this year. While Nigeria has shared information on the numbers and types of its stockpiles, we urge the other signatories with stockpiles (Angola, Guinea, Indonesia, and South Africa) to also report on the types and quantities they hold, as well as the steps they are taking to separate them from operational stockpiles and to begin destruction.

Finally, we would like to use this opportunity to again encourage all States Parties that have decided to retain cluster munitions for training and research purposes to keep the number under regular review to ensure it is the absolute minimum required, and to report regularly on the past and planned use of the retained munitions.

We close as we began, by celebrating States Parties' early successes on stockpile destruction. We invite all other states to follow suit on stockpile destruction and all other convention obligations.

Thank you.