



ROYAL MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Minister of Foreign Affairs

COPY

Oslo, December 2006

Dear colleague,

An increasing number of countries and humanitarian organisations have recognised that the use of cluster munitions too often has unacceptable humanitarian consequences. This is due to their frequently indiscriminate effects and the large number of hazardous unexploded duds left behind after a conflict is over. Many conflicts have demonstrated these consequences all too clearly. Calls are now being made by an increasing number of actors for urgent and resolute preventive action, including an appeal made by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to take urgent action to address the issue of cluster munitions.

The Norwegian Government gives priority to working in partnership with other interested countries and relevant organisations towards an international ban on those cluster munitions that have an unacceptable humanitarian impact. I believe that we are now at a stage where these calls should be coordinated and focused.

With this in view, Norway will host an international meeting in Oslo on 22 – 23 February 2007. We are inviting countries that are ready to explore ways to address this pressing humanitarian issue in a determined and an effective manner and are prepared to develop a new legally binding international instrument on cluster munitions. We will also invite relevant UN organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the NGOs from the Cluster Munitions Coalition that have been central in bringing attention to the problem.

My ambition for the meeting is that we will come together to outline the objectives and develop an action plan for a process leading to a new international instrument of international humanitarian law that will effectively address the unacceptable human and social costs of the

use of cluster munitions. This would include an integrated approach aimed at preventing use and transfer and destroying stockpiles of unreliable and inaccurate cluster munitions, as well as clearing affected areas and assisting victims in an effective and cooperative manner. This initiative does not exclude a continued discussion within the framework of CCW.

A more detailed programme for the meeting will follow. We would welcome any views and suggestions that could be included in the preparations for the meeting.

I sincerely hope that your country will be able to participate, preferably at senior official level. Please use the contact details below to let us know whether your country will be represented and by whom, and for any questions you may have regarding the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Jonas Gahr Støre

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