



Cluster Munitions

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR RELIGIONS FOR PEACE



For more than 40 years, cluster munitions have killed and wounded innocent people, causing untold suffering, loss and hardship for thousands in more than 20 countries across the planet. These weapons cause death and injury to civilians during attacks and for years afterwards because of their lethal contamination. Cluster munitions hamper post-conflict rebuilding and rehabilitation and the dangerous work of cluster munition clearance absorbs funds that could be spent on other urgent humanitarian needs.

In May 2008, 107 governments met in Dublin, Ireland to negotiate an international treaty to ban cluster munitions. All participating governments unanimously adopted a new treaty—the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)—that bans cluster munitions, and obliges states to clear contaminated land and provide assistance to survivors and affected communities.

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LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, DR. WILLIAM VENDLEY



Aynalem did not come home on time. She was in school in her Ethiopian village when she lost her leg to a cluster bomb. She is one among thousands of the children, women and men grievously wounded or killed by cluster bombs. They lurk as a lethal threat to civilians in

some two dozen countries. They—like land mines—are indiscriminate. They wound and kill civilians both during and long after soldiers have left a conflict. Cluster bombs are insidious. They injure and kill the innocent, exacerbate communal wounds and choke the struggle for development in societies decimated by war.

Conscience call us to work together to stop the production and use of cluster munitions. We also need to advance care for survivors and ensure the international assistance necessary to clear contaminated areas. The Convention on Cluster Munitions, negotiated in 2008, provides a way to go forward—but enforcing this important treaty will require the cooperation of many.

Disarmament has been central to the mission of *Religions for Peace* since its founding. From 1970, we have

worked to advance nuclear weapons non-proliferation and reduction. It is important for *Religions for Peace* to respond to the changing threats of arms, including the threat of cluster bombs.

Religions for Peace can play a leading role in supporting and coordinating the efforts of senior religious leaders to address the challenges of cluster bombs. Religious leaders are uniquely positioned to share these concerns with their own communities. They can also urge their governments to implement a ban on cluster munitions. This toolkit is designed to assist religious leaders as they provide leadership on these two fronts. Importantly, this toolkit also addresses the link between religious communities and providing care to victims of cluster munitions. Providing care is a significant contribution that people of faith can make towards healing wounds made by these weapons.

Religions for Peace has also advanced its concerns over cluster munitions in major international forums, joined hands with other groups in the “Cluster Munitions Coalition” and taken the opportunity to help these secular groups understand the commitments of religious leaders.

To address the problems posed by cluster munitions, we need cooperation among religious communities and other stakeholders. The *Religions for Peace* toolkit can help equip us for this important work.

BANNING CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Statement of the *Religions for Peace* Executive Committee—May 2008

We, the *Religions for Peace* Executive Committee, call for the involvement of the entire *Religions for Peace* network in the global campaign to bring about a comprehensive ban on cluster munitions. We encourage all members of the *Religions for Peace* World Council and other leadership bodies to be advocates on this important issue. We urge all governments to become formal Party to the treaty that will be negotiated in Dublin, Ireland, in May 2008, as a way of taking concrete action for the protection of the vulnerable and the promotion of peace.

Religions for Peace has had a deep commitment from its founding to work for nuclear disarmament. Related concerns about peaceful co-existence and prevention of violent conflicts have compelled *Religions for Peace* to adopt a wider disarmament agenda. As part of this

effort, *Religions for Peace* is joining with the worldwide “Cluster Munitions Coalition” in calling for the end of the production, transfer, stockpiling, and use of cluster munitions.

For more than 40 years, cluster munitions have killed and wounded innocent people – most frequently children – causing untold suffering, loss and hardship for thousands in more than 20 countries. These weapons cause death and injury to civilians during attacks and for years afterwards. The lingering threat of unexploded cluster bombs hampers post-conflict rebuilding and rehabilitation and the dangerous work of clearance absorbs funds that could be spent on other urgent humanitarian needs. Without determined action, the civilian harm caused by these weapons both during and after conflict will continue to grow.

Our faith traditions call us to stand with those who have suffered, and to work together for the well-being of the human family based on our shared commitment to respect, justice, and peace.

The Role of Religion

The dignity and value of life as well as the human sufferings brought about by cluster munitions make it morally and ethically imperative to ensure the successful implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Religious leaders, and their respective communities, can act as channels of communication, helping to educate people about the dangers of these weapons and prevent future casualties, as well as contribute to the universalization of the treaty. These leaders and communities have particular cultural understandings, infrastructures, and resources that can unleash urgent common action. By emphasizing their moral authority, these communities can thus be instrumental in confronting violence, presenting alternatives to conflict, and urging reconciliation, peaceful co-existence and humanity.

Religions for Peace offers a special multi-religious platform for engagement and leadership that reaches across borders and can inspire new partnerships for positive action. *Religions for Peace* recently joined the Cluster Muniton Coalition (CMC) a global network of nearly 200 civil society organisations, including NGOs, faith-based groups and professional associations.

How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed for faith leaders at any level because they and their communities have the ability to raise awareness about cluster munitions and their effects, advocate for change and provide necessary care for survivors and their communities. Civil society has worked hand-in-hand with governments to create the most comprehensive instrument possible to address the suffering posed by this weapon, and faith leaders and their communities are a very important part of this work.

Section I of this toolkit explains the problem of cluster munitions—how they work, where they’ve been used, and why they are so devastating. It gives information about the Oslo process that led to the negotiation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and explores important articles of that treaty.

Section II offers steps that faith leaders can take on this issue in one of three ways: advocacy & media engagement; education and awareness; and survivor care. It explains the role of faith in each of these action areas, and provides suggestions for activities and initiatives.

Section III consists of templates and other materials that may prove useful in taking action.

SECTION 1:

The Scourge of Cluster Munitions

What are cluster munitions?

Cluster munitions are large weapons containing dozens to hundreds of smaller submunitions within a larger container. They are dropped from the air or fired from the ground, at which point the container opens in the air and scatters the bombs over a wide area—sometimes the size of 2-4 football fields. This impact is referred to as a “footprint” and is why cluster munitions are considered to be wide area-effect weapons.

As so many of the submunitions fail to work properly, huge quantities are left on the ground and, like landmines, remain a fatal threat to anyone in the area long after a conflict ends. Unexploded submunitions can detonate when people hit them with a tool while farming, or by inquisitive children attracted by their bright colours, or simply from someone stepping on them. The presence of such unexploded submunitions threatens life and limb, hampers provision of relief and impedes development for years after a conflict.

Timeline of Use:

Cluster munitions were first used in World War II by German and Soviet forces. During the 1970s, the USA used massive quantities of the weapon in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. More recently, cluster munitions were used extensively in the Gulf Wars, Chechnya, the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon. Cluster munitions have also been used in a number of conflicts in Africa.

Quick Facts:

- One cluster munition contains enough submunitions to cover an area the size of 2-4 football fields.
- In Laos, the United States dropped on average, an entire planeload of munitions every eight minutes for nine years.
- Cluster munitions have been used in at least 30 countries and areas.
- 34 countries are known to have produced over 210 different types of air-dropped and surface-launched cluster munitions.
- At least 13 countries have transferred over 50 types of cluster munitions to at least 60 other countries.

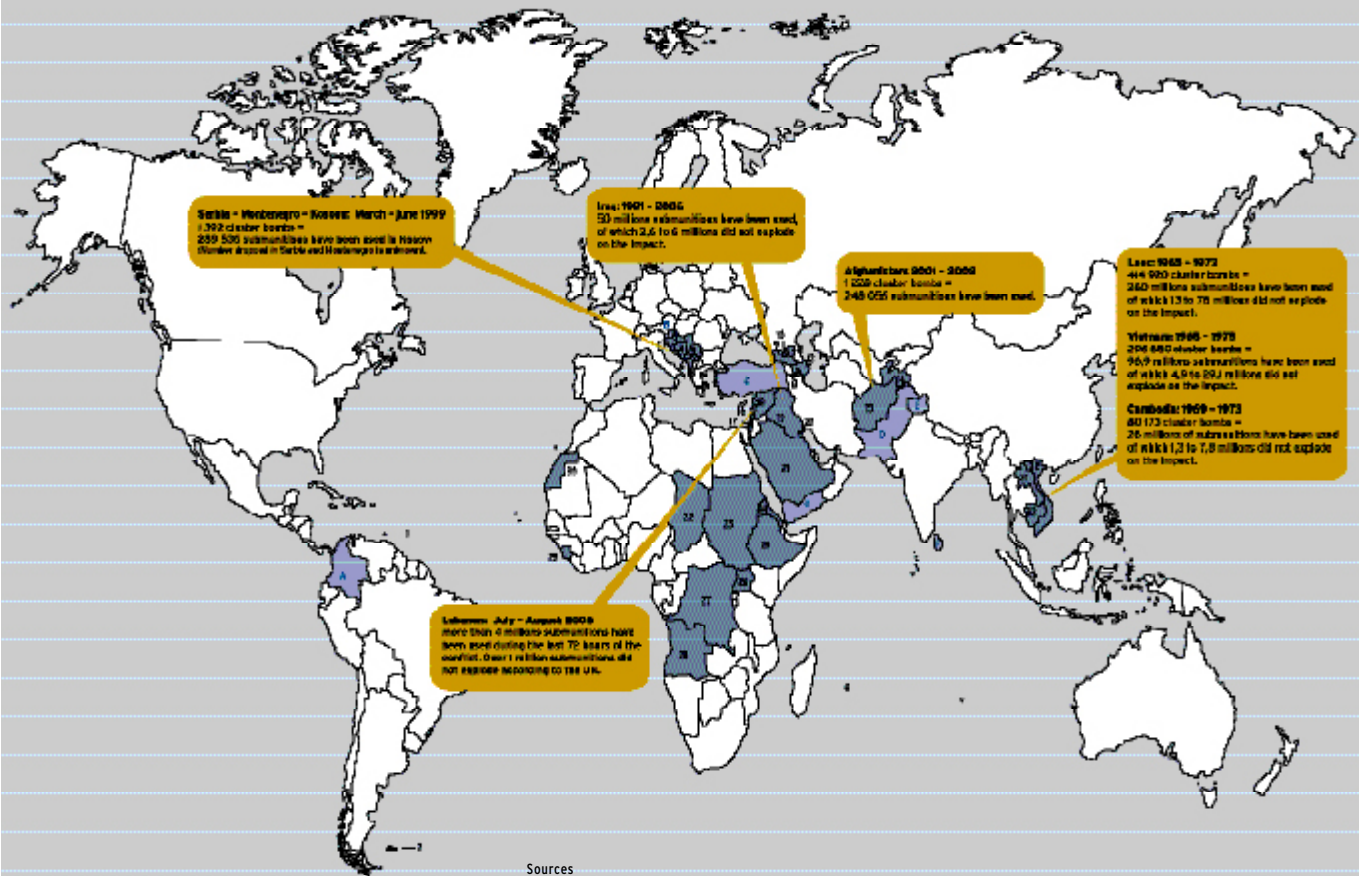


- Billions of cluster bombs are currently stockpiled by some 78 countries worldwide and around half of these countries have now agreed to destroy them.
- Tens of thousands of civilians worldwide have been killed or injured by cluster munitions.
- On average, 25% of civilian casualties are children. In some areas more than 50% of survivors are children. The small size and curious shapes of the bombs dispersed by cluster munitions make them particularly interesting to young people.

The Oslo Process

In February 2007 the “Oslo Declaration” gained the support of forty-six countries committing to conclude a legally binding treaty by 2008 that would prohibit the use, transfer, and production of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, destroy existing stockpiles, and provide adequate resources to assist survivors and clear contaminated areas. The ensuing series of diplomatic conferences became known as the “Oslo Process”. It culminated in the Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions which took place from 19-30 May 2008 and succeeded in negotiating a new instrument of international humanitarian law banning cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians—the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

AFFECTED AREAS



Sources
 Global Overview of Cluster Munition Policy and Practice—Human Rights Watch—December 2007
 Circle of Impact The Fatal Footprint of Cluster Munition on Peoples and Communities—Handicap International—May 2007
 Cluster Munition Coalition

- 1 - Grenada
 - 2 - Falklands
 - 3 - Croatia
 - 4 - Bosnia and Herzegovina
 - 5 - Serbia
 - 6 - Montenegro
 - 7 - Kosovo
 - 8 - Albania
 - 9 - Georgia
 - 10 - South Ossetia
 - 11 - Chechnya
 - 12 - Nagorno-Karabakh
 - 13 - Azerbaijan
 - 14 - Tadjikistan
 - 15 - Afghanistan
 - 16 - Lebanon
 - 17 - Israel
 - 18 - Syria
 - 19 - Iraq
 - 20 - Kuwait
 - 21 - Saudi Arabia
 - 22 - Chad
 - 23 - Sudan
 - 24 - Eritrea
 - 25 - Ethiopia
 - 26 - Uganda
 - 27 - Democratic Republic of the Congo
 - 28 - Angola
 - 29 - Sierra Leone
 - 30 - Western Sahara
 - 31 - Laos
 - 32 - Vietnam
 - 33 - Cambodia
- Suspected to be polluted:**
- A - Colombia
 - B - Slovenia
 - C - Turkey
 - D - Pakistan
 - E - Kashmir
 - F - Sri Lanka
 - G - Yemen



The Convention

The Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) is the international agreement that bans cluster munitions. It is an extremely comprehensive international instrument for ridding the world of this weapon and deals with everything from use, production and trade, to survivor assistance, clearance and stockpile destruction. It was adopted by 107 governments in May 2008 and opened for signature at a ceremony in December 2008. Like the Mine Ban Treaty, this new treaty is likely to have a powerful effect in stigmatising cluster munitions, so that even those countries that do not sign the treaty will not be able to use them without being subject to international condemnation.

How does the CCM define a cluster munition?

The CCM defines a cluster munition as a “conventional munition that is designed to disperse or release explosive submunitions each weighing less than 20 kilograms, and includes those explosive submunitions”. The definition is based on the effects of the weapon in question, and not just its components. For example, if a weapon has submunitions but also the technology to focus on a precise target—therefore not blanketing an area with its submunitions—it does not fall under this ban. These exceptions are very few though and as such, this approach allowed for a wider and more humane ban to be achieved.

What are the major obligations for a State Party to the CCM?

The central provision of the treaty is the ban on the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions. This makes it illegal in every country that joins the treaty (a State Party) for anyone to use cluster munitions or engage in any production or trade of the weapon. Other weapons that have been banned in this way include anti-personnel landmines as well as biological and chemical weapons.

Specifically, States Party are obligated to:

- never use cluster munitions, nor to “develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer them—directly or indirectly”;
- destroy clusters in their stockpiles within eight years of the treaty becoming binding;
- clear clusters in their territory within 10 years of becoming a State Party;
- in affected countries, conduct awareness education and ensure that survivors are cared for, rehabilitated and reintegrated into their communities;
- offer assistance to other States Party, for example in



THE LEGACY OF THE MINE BAN TREATY

The Mine Ban Treaty represents the first time in history that a widely used weapon was banned because of its horrific and indiscriminate impact on civilian lives. This treaty was propelled by a coalition of non-governmental organizations working with a few key governments—not unlike the momentum that led to the Oslo process to ban cluster munitions. In the process to negotiate this new treaty that bans a similarly indiscriminate weapon, governments were able to learn from the legacy of the Mine Ban Treaty and years of implementation challenges and successes.

One of these challenges involves obligations for clearance, which can be costly and time consuming and places the burden on the affected state. In the CCM, States Party that have used cluster munitions in the past on the territory of another State Party are ‘strongly encouraged’ to provide assistance to help clear and destroy cluster munitions including provision of technical data on the location and nature of the cluster munitions strikes. This is a new and very important development brought about by the difficulties, often financial, that affected countries have faced in clearing mined areas they were not responsible for originally contaminating.

Most significantly however, the CCM includes new and important obligations to protect and promote the human rights of cluster munitions survivors and to ensure they receive the different kinds of assistance they need in order to be able to live full and active lives. By using stronger and more thorough language than that contained in the Mine Ban Treaty, the CCM significantly raises the standard for survivor assistance in a very multi-dimensional way. It includes a reference to the consideration of age, gender and vulnerable groups in providing assistance, as well as an obligation for states to consult and involve survivors and their representative organizations when implementing survivor assistance policies and practices.



- providing for survivors or in clearance programmes;
- adopt national implementation measures (such as national legislation) in order to ensure that the terms of the treaty are upheld in their territory.

What are the key limitations of the CCM?

The CCM has limited authority on military operations conducted jointly by governments who have not signed the treaty, and those who have. Some worry that in real conflict, soldiers from a country that is a State Party might be ordered to use the weapon by the command of a State not Party. The CCM attempts to address this potential loophole for use through its Article 21 that requires States Party to encourage others to join the Convention and make “best efforts” to discourage Non States Party from using cluster munitions. However, the article is not clear that intentional assistance and indefinite foreign stockpiling are prohibited.

How does a country join the Convention?

The Convention opened for signature in December 2008. The signature is a symbolic act, however and ratification is the process that carries legal obligations and effectively becomes a contractual arrangement. The ratification process consists of national actions and approvals that vary in every state, which is followed by a second step of submitting a document to the UN. As set out within the CCM text, it will only become a binding piece of international law six months after the 30th country has ratified it.

The Humanitarian Message

Daniel

Hello, I am Danijel Ivi from Kosovo, now living in Serbia. I was injured when I was 11 years old. I went to the field to help my father but I took a shortcut and I stepped on a cluster. I was wounded and lost both legs and an eye. I was taken to the hospital in Belgrade where I spent 11 months. It took me four months to learn to walk again. The voice of those injured and of the survivors should be heard.

Ahmad

My name is Raed Mokaied and I come from Lebanon, where my son, Ahmad, was killed by a cluster munition. On the day of the accident, my wife, our two sons and I all went to a public park to celebrate Ahmad’s fifth birthday. Once we got to the park, we prepared food and a birthday cake with five candles for Ahmad. He went to play and we heard an explosion. I ran over and saw him bleeding because of the many injuries to his body. We rushed him to hospital in my car and he was moved by ambulance because he was critical. He suffered for four hours before finally dying.

I am sure no one, whatever their position as a politician, can give us an answer as to why my son was killed by a cluster munition. Ahmad was not a terrorist or a criminal; he was only a child who just wanted to play and enjoy life.

Yoeun Sam En

My name is Yoeun Sam En, I am 43 years old and I am a father, a husband and a rice farmer in Cambodia.

Decades after the cluster munitions were dropped during the Vietnam War, I was happily supporting my children and living in peace with my family when this cluster munition accident occurred and changed my life completely.

As I farmed, I often came across cluster munition remnants, and removed them so no harm could come to my children as they played in the fields. On that dark day in 2004, I was trying to remove a cluster bomb from the area when a major explosion occurred.

Nobody ever explained to us what we should do with those cluster munition remnants. In order to be able to still work the

rice fields, I had to take care, by myself, to clear the area, as nobody else was taking care of those cluster munition remnants.

I lost both my eyes and arms. My concern now is how I can feed and care for my children. Now my wife is playing a crucial role to support the entire family. Not only she, but also my two older

children had to stop studying and start working in the fields after my accident, since I cannot help them anymore!

What concerns me is that even 30 years after the war, these munitions kill and maim. They took my eyes and my arms, and they continue to destroy the lives of so many other farmers just like me.

SECTION II:

The role of religious leaders and communities

What strengths do people of faith offer the campaign against cluster munitions?

Religious communities are among the largest and best organized civil institutions in the world. They claim the allegiance of millions of people and can bridge the divisions caused by race, class and nationality. Their presence at every level of society gives legitimacy and a platform from which to speak about the problem of cluster munitions at many levels.

On a community level, religious leaders can reach out to large groups of people on a regular basis. This access is a physical one, but also refers to gaining the trust and respect of a community. This is an access not always available to national or international organizations. From this position, leaders can educate, mobilize and care for groups of people.

Through the religious community and its regular gatherings, there exists a natural network for education about the dangers of cluster munitions, or, if living in an unaffected region, to educate about the suffering this weapon causes. Similarly, this role enables religious leaders to mobilize their constituents around the issue to take action. Their constituents can continue to spread news and information about the problem, advocate with governments, fundraise or develop projects related to clearance and survivor care.

Finally, the comfort and hope found within faith communities is a natural environment to focus on providing care for survivors and affected communities, or advocating for their rights.

By virtue of the huge numbers of people that they represent, religious leaders, organizations and communities carry with



FAITH LEADERS LETTER

One way that representatives of diverse faith communities have displayed their commitment to ending the suffering caused by cluster munitions is through a letter signed by nearly 150 religious leaders and published internationally. This initiative was supported by the Cluster Munition Coalition, Pax Christi International and the World Conference of *Religions for Peace*.

It is but one demonstration of the instrumental role that multi-religious understanding and leadership played in guaranteeing the strongest treaty possible. It is an indication of a longer term commitment to this issue that acknowledges that without determined action on the part of faith leaders, the civilian harm caused by cluster munitions both during and after conflict will continue to grow.

[View the Faith Leaders Letter in Section III.](#)



them important political influence and power that can enact change in a national or international setting. They bring the voice of moral authority to the diplomatic process and another set of eyes to monitor the shaping and implementation of policies. For example, the tremendous level of suffering caused by cluster munitions leaves no doubt for most that this is a humanitarian issue. Yet the connection to the military and political priorities can make it difficult for governments to view it this way.

The following pages outline three types of action that religious leaders, communities or organizations can take on cluster munitions – advocacy and media engagement; education and awareness raising; and survivor care.

ADVOCACY & MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Advocacy refers to strategies, actions and solutions taken to influence decision making at any level of government. It is an important act to ensure that the ban on cluster munitions becomes a daily reality across the globe. Governments are the main actors in the process of banning cluster munitions and implementing the CCM. The more governments that sign and implement the Cluster Munitions Convention, the more real change can happen on the ground.

The key to successful campaigning is having a clear message. This might be developed in response to a change in government policy or a long-held attitude towards the CCM. Or, the message can be proactive and pressure a government to change that long-held attitude through condemnation. Think of the message as a clever way of answering the question: “What do I want to see happen?” The message that is promoted when advocating with a government can be a number of different ones:

- To sign or ratify the CCM
- Announce a moratorium on production of cluster munitions or make a statement guaranteeing no new use (for states outside the CCM)
- Implement national measures in accordance with survivor

assistance and rights

- Encourage other governments to join the CCM
- Begin clearing or destroying stockpiles
- Contribute financial or material aid to affected states

Remember that these can be adapted into local or regional contexts as well. Staying informed and educated is necessary to articulate clear messages and goals. Sometimes it helps to collaborate with similar-minded organizations, groups or networks and develop an action, but one that is in support of a campaign or message being expressed by many elements of civil society.

Suggested Advocacy Actions

Send a letter to a local, regional or national leader expressing interest and concern regarding your country’s progress on the cluster munitions issues. Your letters should be brief and clear. Explain the reasons for your request providing information and facts. Are there others advocating the same message? If so, write at the same time to achieve a greater impact. Distributing postcards throughout your community and asking people to sign and send them in an excellent way to spread advocacy action around.

Request a meeting with local, regional or national leaders to discuss their position on cluster munitions. Your targets should be the decision-making institutions and bodies, as well as individuals that have power and influence. Remember that while you are collecting information from the government on their position, this is also an opportunity to give information—information that could inform or shape decisions.

Attend international conferences. Diplomats that attend international conferences are trained to be approachable and expect to be lobbied. These conferences are the perfect moment to meet decision-makers, know their positions, develop a good relationship and provide them information. They can be approached at any time during the conferences. Do not hesitate to engage the conversation with them.

Engaging with media can be a powerful component of advocacy work, as it is a tool that can be used to build public awareness around an issue and support the change you are looking to achieve. By putting a message in the “public eye” and gaining public support, pressure builds on the government to acknowledge what is being lobbied for.

Commonly used types of media:

- **Television** (national networks, local stations, cable networks)
- **Radio** (national networks, local stations, university or college stations)
- **Newspapers** (national dailies, local dailies, community and special interest publications)
- **Internet sites** for organizations, clubs, news, or local event information
- **Blogs**
- **Newsletters** (electronic or hard copy)
- **Magazines**

Ways of engaging the media:

Write an op-ed. This kind of letter is the best way to get a message printed in a widely read section of the publication. The purpose is to educate the reader or to offer a different perspective on a topic. Identify three or four points that support and defend the argument and formulate paragraphs around each. Near the end, clearly re-state the argument and issue a call to action. Keep the length of the op-ed between 500 and 800 words.

Send a press release. The purpose of the press release is to let the media know about something new that is happening. It can be an event, a new development on an issue, a new action, a statement, etc. Put the important information in the beginning and use an eye-catching headline. Keep the entire release concise and easy to read.

Organize a press conference. A press conference should be held when there is an important announcement to make. If it is to announce a general statement, a press release will do the job. Choose speakers with expertise on different aspects of the cluster munitions issues. Bear in mind the importance of diversity in terms of faith traditions, gender, geography, etc. After the press conference, representatives of the media should have a press pack and some should be available for those who were not present.



TURNING FAITH INTO ACTION: THE COLLECTION FOR PEACE INITIATIVE

In the United States, faith communities of all religions are participating in the nation-wide ‘Collection for Peace Initiative’. This initiative invite local-level faith communities to, on a designated weekend, devote a portion of their service time to take a collection and sign a petition. The collection funds help with clearing contaminated areas, and the petition will be presented to the new President-elect of the United States, asking him to sign the new Convention on Cluster Munitions. Not only is this a fundraiser and important advocacy action, but a way for religious leaders to educate their constituents about this issue and inspire further action.

Give an interview. These are one of the most powerful tools to get a message across as the human interest pushes this story to the headline. To succeed in the interviews, prepare by finding out about the interview, its length and context. Ask about the audience and possibly the questions beforehand. Maintain

control over the interview while giving the reporter the feeling that s/he is in control. For example, state and restate the main message and then answer the questions asked.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Religious leaders and their communities have unique means of communication to share information about cluster munitions and their effects. Churches, synagogues, temples and mosques have weekly or sometimes daily access to communities in a direct form of communication. Through these regular gatherings, ideas can be shared in ways appropriate and relevant to each community – in their own language and in keeping with literacy levels and cultural norms.

This is especially important when educating about the risks of cluster munitions in contaminated areas. So many civilian casualties are the result of ignorance about the weapon and the harm it causes. Children in particular do not understand that the brightly coloured and sometimes shiny object they see is actually a bomb. After a conflict, cluster munitions can be found in familiar environments such as fields, schoolyards, roads and gardens, where civilians assume they are safe and go about life in a normal way. Through education and awareness, many future casualties can be avoided. Much like mine risk education, this has to be conducted in a method that will be understood by a community. Sometimes this needs to be visual rather than written, and sometimes must be communicated by someone that the community trusts and recognizes. In a post-conflict zone, outsiders are not always trusted. Religious

The **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** opened for signature and ratification on Friday, March 30, 2007, at United Nations Headquarters, in New York. A record 81 countries and the European Community signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and 44 signed the Convention's Optional Protocol, a mechanism to address individual violations and make country visits. The Disability Rights Convention is hailed as one of the most progressive human rights documents ever created. It defines the equality, inclusion and full participation of people with disabilities in society, and respect for their dignity and autonomy, as universal human rights.

leaders, however, fill this role in a natural way and can help save lives.

For areas that are not contaminated, it is equally important that the message about cluster munitions is spread. This can be done in support of political change or even fundraising for clearance in other parts of the world. These faith communities can still have a role in making change – in many ways education is the precursor to advocacy.

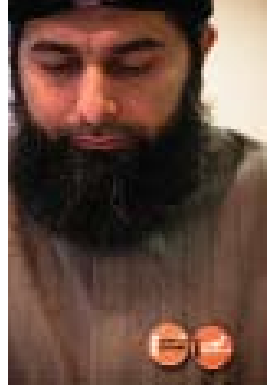
Suggested education and awareness actions

Educate yourself!

Incorporate prayer for survivors of cluster munitions and speak about the issue during a service. Use this opportunity to inform a congregation about the urgent need to address the international cluster munitions crisis.

Conduct an awareness session after a service. This can educate a community about real risk if in an affected area,





or the need to take action for problems elsewhere. Advertise ahead of time through a bulletin insert or similar.

Write material that links your faith with cluster munitions or disarmament more broadly. An organization in Pakistan created a small book on Landmines and Islamic Teachings, which has been used to educate and engage religious scholars.

Organize an awareness event for the broader community, such as a photo exhibit or information booth. Visual materials is a powerful way to illustrate the problems of cluster munitions. They give a human face to a message, especially if it includes stories from affected communities.

Organize a vigil for the survivors of cluster munitions. Perhaps there is a prevalent ethnic group in your community that has experienced cluster munitions and wishes to honour the survivors. This is a silent, solemn and powerful way of commemorating a tragedy. Religious leaders and faith-based organizations have an important role to play in these ceremonies.

Take action in a visible and peaceful way. Not only will this attract interest in the issue but it can help to win the support of others and spread a message. Buddhist monks in Cambodia showed support for the Mine Ban Treaty by leading peace walks with the problem of landmines as their theme.

Remind governments of their obligations through dialogue and engagement. Visible actions and gatherings spread the word not only to communities of people, but also to elected leaders.

SURVIVOR CARE

The same networks that allow for education and awareness building can also work together to provide care for survivors of cluster munitions accidents and affected communities. It is important that the impact of such an accident is understood as more than just physical. There are mental, emotional and social aspects that are just as painful. Many survivors, particularly women, speak of being excluded by their societies and even families after the accident. Considered a burden, they are frequently denied access to health care, education and employment. Cluster munition survivors struggle to achieve social acceptance, gain meaningful employment and ensure their rights are respected. Survivors and other people with disabilities are among the most impoverished groups in every society. Few have access to quality health care, rehabilitation therapy or prosthetics.

Affected communities need support in the same way affected individuals do. Typically, these are post-conflict areas that may still be lacking in stability or remain divided and prone to violence. The nature of a cluster munition is such that it limits access to vital areas such as roadways, waterways, or arable land. This reduces the community's ability to care for itself through food production, access to water and education. When there is lowered productivity in many communities across an entire nation there are definite effects on economy and development. When roadways are littered with bombs, teachers and medical practitioners cannot get through and these essential services are lost. Remember that it only takes only the suspicion of one or two hidden bombs in any given area to render it unsafe.

The faith community and place of worship is often a centerpiece in societies and an ideal place to develop programs and actions that give support to survivors. Helping people with disabilities to claim their rights and become active citizens is one of the most powerful ways that religious leaders and communities can improve the lives of survivors around the world.

There are two ways to approach this aspect of cluster munition action—through advocating for the rights of survivors, or implementing real action.

Advocating for survivors

Religious leaders can use their special role and influences to be an advocate for the rights of survivors, whether living in an affected area or not. All of the advocacy actions listed earlier, and methods for media engagement, can be used to promote the following messages related to survivor care.

Encourage affected states to provide assistance in accordance with human rights and guided by the principles of inclusion, accessibility and equality. Ensure that they develop concrete national action plans to deliver this assistance.

Encourage states to incorporate survivor assistance activities into existing mechanisms for development, human rights and disability.

Work with local governments to ensure that buildings are made accessible, particularly hospitals and schools.

Encourage states to ratify and implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Promote the inclusion of survivors in decision-making processes regarding implementation of assistance at different levels—national, regional, local. **Urge governments to provide aid to affected governments** for survivor assistance, or to non-governmental organizations that provide care and rehabilitation.

How to implement survivor care

Offer counseling and refuge. Faith communities offer hope and comfort and can offer the spiritual guidance and strength for survivors to heal. Extend this to the families of survivors.

Teach by example. Religious leaders have a great ability to influence behaviour change through their teachings, values and practices. In a place where survivors are shunned for their disability, ensuring that they are included in the community is a unique offering for survivors, and can lead to a deeper change in how the community treats survivors. Frame this not as a matter of charity, but rather as a recognition of rights.

Ensure that places of worship and faith-based hospitals, clinics, educational institutions are all fully accessible with ramps, wide doorways, etc.

Assist survivors and communities in finding new means of **employment, livelihood and/or relevant training.**

Fundraise for or innovate new programs to provide prostheses. An amputee's first artificial limb is transitional and may not fit properly within months, or will need eventual repair and replacement. Thus, the availability of long-term services must be guaranteed for necessary adjustments or replacement.

When **housing projects** are built for survivors, see that they are not set apart but instead are part of the community and facilitate full participation in society.

Work with local hospitals and medical practitioners to ensure that **emergency medical care** is available and facilities maintained with personnel and supplies. First aid training to respond to traumatic injury and severe bleeding increases the chance of survivors living long enough to receive emergency medical care.

Create linkages with faith groups who are in affected regions, and assist their survivor care abilities through fundraising, volunteer projects and cultural exchanges.

Tool: Sample Advocacy Letters

The two templates below are examples of advocacy letters. The first one is an example of a letter that encourages a state to sign the CCM. The second one is an example of a letter you could send to your government in support of the rights of survivors. In both cases, the format and premise can be adapted to your own message or needs at any time. Follow these guidelines to write an effective advocacy letter on any topic:

1st Paragraph—State what you want the person to do for you.

2nd Paragraph—State the most important facts that support your cause. You want this paragraph to explain the most compelling reasons for action.

3rd Paragraph—Talk about how the reader can make a personal difference. This paragraph should not just be facts, and should engage the reader in a personal way.

4th Paragraph—Thank the reader for considering your request, and provide information on how you may be reached.

Commonly Used Acronyms

CCM – Convention on Cluster Munitions

CMC – Cluster Munitions Coalition

MBT – Mine Ban Treaty

ADVOCACY LETTER TEMPLATE: STATES THAT DID NOT ADOPT CCM

GOVERNMENT'S ADDRESS

DATE

Dear Minister NAME,

I am writing to urge you to join the new Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) when it opens for signature in Oslo, Norway on 3 December 2008.

Last May, when the 107 states gathered at the Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions unanimously adopted the Convention on Cluster Munitions, they took a bold and visionary step towards enhancing the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The CCM prohibits the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions and sets groundbreaking humanitarian obligations for survivor assistance, clearance of contaminated land and destruction of stockpiles. Because of its wide-ranging practical implications, this new piece of international law will have a profound and positive effect on the lives of countless individuals and communities and prevent further lives from being shattered in the future. Simply put, this is the most significant humanitarian and disarmament treaty this decade.

There has been a remarkable level of support for the ban on cluster munitions across all faith traditions. Multi-

religious support for a ban on cluster munitions was demonstrated through a letter signed by 160 senior faith leaders representing the world's religions. This followed statements from other major religious organizations, such as the World Council of Churches and Pope Benedict XVI. By joining with those individuals that recognize the need to end the cruelty caused by cluster munitions, and by participating in the Oslo Process, GOVERNMENT has the chance to demonstrate a firm commitment to humanity.

I strongly urge GOVERNMENT to make this commitment and add your signature to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in December 2008 and urge other states to do the same. You have a rare opportunity to eliminate a truly inhumane instrument of war and move fellow nations forward along a path towards peace.

Signed,

Name

Religious Affiliation

Title, Organization/Business

Street Address

City/State

Postal Code/Country

ADVOCACY LETTER TEMPLATE: IN SUPPORT OF SURVIVOR CARE

GOVERNMENT'S ADDRESS

DATE

Dear Minister NAME,

I am writing to congratulate COUNTRY on joining the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and urge you to move quickly to fulfill your obligations to assist survivors and affected communities.

The CCM sets groundbreaking humanitarian obligations for survivor assistance. Survivor assistance refers to physical care and rehabilitation as well as to economic and social re-integration. The needs of survivors must be addressed through projects and actions including medical care, the building of appropriate infrastructures, educational programmes and assistance. The voice of survivors must be heard and their organisations should be included in these processes. The rights of survivors must be reflected in national and international development programmes and policies. These rights are articulated in Article V of the CCM, which ensures victims of cluster munitions can enjoy their human rights.

PARAGRAPH ABOUT THE STATUS OF SURVIVORS IN YOUR COUNTRY—NUMBER OF SURVIVORS OR AFFECTED COMMUNITIES; NEW INCIDENTS; LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY TO HELP THEM—THE SOURCE OF YOUR CONCERN AND REASON FOR WRITING.

Religious communities share the conviction that life is a gift of God. Thus dignity and sanctity of life is a value that is deeply held and widely shared by religious communities. Cluster munitions violate that sanctity. Our religious traditions place upon us the responsibility of caring for one another; to give a voice to the voiceless. There has been a remarkable level of support for the Convention across all faith traditions, as that which is against human dignity has no place in a religion.

I strongly urge GOVERNMENT to hold firm to your commitment by placing survivor assistance higher on your agenda, to develop and/or implement a plan of action to address the needs and rights of mine survivors, and to develop and/or fully implement legislation to protect the rights of all persons with disabilities. While we cannot take away the pain of those affected, we can accompany them in their hope for justice

Signed,

Name

Religious Affiliation

Title, Organization/Business

Street Address

City/State

Postal Code/Country

Tool: The People's Treaty

THE PEOPLE'S TREATY

"Cluster munitions cause predictable and unacceptable harm to civilians, both at the time of use and for many years after. It is my strong belief that these weapons are morally unacceptable.

I fully support the new international treaty on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, transfer, and production of cluster munitions.

Through their signature and ratification of this treaty, governments will legally commit themselves not only to ban cluster munitions, but also to clear contaminated land and provide assistance to survivors and affected communities.

Through my signature on the People's Treaty, I commit to work to ensure that governments live up to their obligations."

The People's Treaty is an initiative to engage the public and put pressure on governments to sign the new Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Similar to a petition, it is a symbolic representation of the strong support of civil society to eliminate this weapon and the suffering it causes.

On the final day of the Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions, the 107 governments present adopted a newly negotiated treaty banning the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. While this was happening inside the conference, ordinary citizens were simultaneously

demonstrating their personal commitment by launching the People's Treaty.

When you add your signature to the People's Treaty, you join thousands of other people across the globe who are committed to ensuring the success of the CCM.

There are two ways to sign the treaty! As an individual citizen or as a community leader representing a congregation or organization. You can add your name by going to http://www.minesactioncanada.org/peoples_treaty. Your contact information will not be used or shared except to confirm your submission and as an endorsement of the People's Treaty.

Visit http://www.minesactioncanada.org/peoples_treaty/index.html for information in Spanish, French and Arabic.

Tool: Faith Leaders Letter

Below is the text of a letter signed by 130 faith leaders in April 2008, ahead of the final negotiation conference for the CCM. It was published in newspapers around the world and continues to serve as a shining example of the power of multi-religious cooperation on a humanitarian issue. Just one month later, 107 governments adopted a new treaty banning a weapon.

FAITH LEADERS' APPEAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL TREATY TO BAN CLUSTER MUNITIONS

As people of faith, we raise our voices for the protection of life and promotion of peace by calling on all governments to end the production, transfer, stockpiling, and use of cluster munitions.

For more than 40 years, cluster munitions have killed and wounded innocent people, causing untold suffering, loss and hardship for thousands in more than 20 countries across the planet. These weapons cause death and injury to civilians during attacks and for years afterwards because of the lethal contamination that they cause. Cluster munitions hamper post-conflict rebuilding and rehabilitation and the dangerous work of cluster munition clearance absorbs funds that could be spent on other urgent humanitarian needs. Without determined action, the civilian harm caused by these weapons both during and after conflict will continue to grow.

The voices of those whose lives have already been shattered by cluster munitions call us to take meaningful and courageous action. Our faith traditions call us to stand with those who have suffered, and to work for the well-being of the human family through relationships of respect, justice, and peace.

We are speaking out today on the Global Day of Action to Ban Cluster Munitions where people across all continents, cultures and faiths are taking action and calling for a ban on cluster munitions.

A comprehensive ban on cluster munitions can and must be negotiated one month from now in Dublin, Ireland, in May 2008. We urge governments to take up this heavy responsibility by seizing this opportunity to take concrete action for the protection of the vulnerable and for the promotion of peace.

Statements Of Faith

“Banning cluster munitions is not a work to honor the angels that have lost their lives by this morally reprehensible weapon, but to protect those not yet born.”

— Dr. Mustafa Ceric, Reis-I-ulema of the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
Co-President of *Religions for Peace*

“The Quran likens the saving of one life to saving all of humanity. If together we can ban cluster munitions we will save countless lives all over the world. Life is a gift from God.”

—Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra, Muslim Council of Britain

“On behalf of the Hindu Communities of Europe I fully support this ban and pray that all governments will unanimously sign the international treaty.”

—Mr. Martin Gurvich, Hindu Forum of Europe

“Cluster munitions are an abomination. They are proof that science and technology can be used for the most nefarious purposes. They are inhuman and have no place in our global village.”

—The Most Reverend Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town

“To fail to sign the treaty banning cluster munitions is to fail humanity.”

—Bishop Emeritus Gunnar Stålsett, Bishop of Oslo

“As a Buddhist monk, I fully support the new international treaty on the prohibition of production, transfer, use and stockpiling of cluster munitions which leave innocent people dead and disabled for the rest of their lives.”

—Venerable Vibol, Cambodian Buddhist Community

“Part of the mission of Pax Christi International is to share solidarity with the survivors, their families and affected communities. A cluster munitions treaty should be able to concretely improve the lives of people whose suffering has been caused by cluster munitions.”

—excerpted from Pax Christi International’s statement on cluster munitions

Statement from the Vatican

www.zenit.org/article-21653?l=english

Statement from the World Council of Churches

www.oikoumene.org/index.php?id=5616

Further Information and Resources

The Cluster Munitions Coalition

www.stopclustermunitions.org or

<http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/take-action/multi-faith/>

Be sure to find the member organization in your country or area!

Religions for Peace Cluster Munitions Programme

www.religionsforpeace.org/initiatives/cluster-munitions

The Ban Advocates

www.banadvocates.org

Convention on Cluster Munitions

www.clusterconvention.org

Human Rights Watch

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=arms>

International Committee of the Red Cross

<http://www.icrc.org/eng/cluster-munitions>

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