



MEDIA RELEASE

World Agrees to Ban on Cluster Bombs

(Dublin, Ireland) After nearly two weeks of negotiations in Dublin, the world has agreed to ban cluster munitions.

In an historic breakthrough that will save thousands of innocent lives across the globe, Australia has joined the majority of other states represented at the Dublin talks and informally accepted the draft treaty.

“With this treaty we have outlawed every type of cluster munition that has ever been used,” says James Turton, Co-ordinator of the Cluster Munition Coalition of Australia.

Tonight’s provisional text will be formally adopted on Friday morning (Ireland time), after the various delegations have had a chance to report back to their national capitals.

The treaty includes strong provisions on all of the key issues: rejecting calls for a transition period - which would have allowed states to continue using cluster munitions and sets a maximum time limit on stockpile destruction.

Despite the development of a strong, new treaty the Cluster Munition Coalition of Australia is challenging our government to take a proactive role in ensuring that states who haven’t signed the treaty never use cluster munitions again.

“We congratulate the Australian Government on their efforts to secure a strong legal instrument that bans all cluster bombs forever. However we’re deeply disappointed that Australia is responsible for inserting a loophole in the treaty and we will be holding the government to account to ensure that cluster munitions are never used again.” says Austcare Chief Executive and former UN Mine Action Advisor, Archie Law.

More than 100 government delegations and 300 specialist campaigners from around the world have spent the past fortnight working on the most significant disarmament treaty in more than a decade.

“While we’re not entirely happy with the provisions on interoperability, in general this is a strong treaty that marks the beginning of the end of these devastating weapons,” says James Turton.

“I am very proud that countries have made the right decision here and prioritized people over weapons,” says Branislav Kapetanovic, who’s in Ireland after a cluster bomb claimed his arms and legs.

For more information and interviews please call (in Dublin):
Television overlay of clusters in the field was linked from SBS on Monday 19th.
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