



Press Release

**For Immediate Release**  
**August 1, 2013**

**Convention on Cluster Munitions Celebrates Third Anniversary:  
Senators and Congressman Call on Administration to Review Cluster Munitions Policy and Join  
Ban Treaty**

**Washington, D.C.** - On the third anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the United States Campaign to Ban Cluster Bombs joins Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Sen. Patrick Leahy, and Rep. James McGovern in calling for the U.S. to review its existing cluster munitions policy and to take immediate steps toward joining the Convention.

“Every year cluster bombs kill and maim hundreds of innocent men, women, and children,” said Zach Hudson, coordinator of the U.S. Campaign to Ban Cluster Bombs. “The Convention on Cluster Bombs is saving lives every day as more and more states join and promise to never again use these devastating weapons. We echo this call for the United States to take these first steps towards joining the treaty.”

In a letter to President Obama dated July 17, Feinstein, Leahy, and McGovern urged the Pentagon to stop using cluster munitions immediately and requested a review of the Department of Defense’s (DOD) current policy on cluster munitions. They wrote, “Cluster munitions are indiscriminate, unreliable and pose an unacceptable danger to U.S. forces and civilians alike. The U.S. government’s cluster munitions policy is outdated and should be immediately reviewed.”

They further explained, “While we continue to advocate for the current congressional restrictions on the export of cluster munitions, we firmly believe that we must do more. DOD should immediately renounce its use of cluster munitions with submunitions that have a failure rate of greater than one percent. That would be an important step in putting the United States on a path to join the international Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).”

Campaigners in the United States also issued a letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Aug. 1, urging U.S. participation as an observer at the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention. The meeting will take place in Lusaka, Zambia, from September 9-13, 2013.

“U.S. attendance at the conference would demonstrate to the many nations impacted by cluster bombs that the U.S. is committed to ending the tragic legacy of these weapons,” said Hudson. “It’s time for the United States to assume a leadership role, join the conversation, and take significant action.”

The Convention on Cluster Munitions comprehensively bans the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions and places obligations on countries to clear affected areas, assist victims, and destroy stockpiles. To date, 112 states have joined the treaty, including most of the U.S.’s closest allies; 18 NATO countries have signed, including France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The DOD’s policy on cluster munitions was issued in July 2008, and states that by the end of 2018, the U.S. will no longer use cluster munitions with a failure rate higher than one percent. Only a miniscule percentage of the U.S. stockpile meets that standard.

In February 2013, Feinstein also re-introduced the Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act (S. 419) in the Senate, and McGovern re-introduced a companion bill (H.R. 881) in the House. The bill

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immediately prohibits U.S. funds from being appropriated for the development or use of cluster munitions with a failure rate of greater than one percent and mandates that cluster munitions can only be used against clearly defined military targets and will not be used where civilians are known to be present or in areas normally inhabited by civilians.

For more information, visit [www.uscbl.org](http://www.uscbl.org).

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**About the U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Bombs (USCBL):**

*The USCBL, currently coordinated by Handicap International, is a coalition of thousands of people and U.S. non-governmental organizations working to: (1) ensure no U.S. use, production, or transfer of antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions; (2) encourage the U.S. to join the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty and the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions; and (3) secure high levels of U.S. government support for clearance and assistance programs for victims of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.*

*The USCBL is the U.S. affiliate of the Cluster Munitions Coalition (CMC). Cluster bombs (cluster munitions) are large weapons which are deployed from the air by aircraft including fighters, bombers and helicopters. These bombs open in mid-air and release dozens or hundreds of smaller submunitions.*

**About the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC):**

*The CMC is an international coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in around 100 countries to encourage urgent action against cluster bombs. The CMC facilitates NGO efforts worldwide to educate governments, the public and the media about the problems of cluster munitions and to urge universalization and full implementation of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions.*  
<http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/>

**About the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM):**

*The Convention on Cluster Munitions bans the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions and requires countries to clear affected areas within 10 years and destroy stockpiles of the weapon within eight. The Convention includes groundbreaking provisions requiring assistance to victims and affected communities. Signed in Oslo in December 2008, the Convention entered into force as binding international law on August 1, 2010 and is the most significant international disarmament treaty since the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty banning antipersonnel landmines.*