

Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)



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H.E. Hor NamHong
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
No 161, Preah Sisowath Quay
Phnom Penh
CAMBODIA

Your Excellency

I am writing to urge the Government of Cambodia to take action to help eradicate the scourge of cluster munitions, a weapon that continues to kill and maim large numbers of civilians around the world.

Cluster munitions have created large humanitarian problems wherever they have been used. They are often inaccurate, they have a large area of effect, and they leave behind a legacy of many unexploded sub-munitions. The vast majority of those injured or killed by cluster sub-munitions are civilians, and tens of thousands of civilians have been killed or injured by their use. They further impede the efforts of war-torn communities and countries that are attempting to overcome the terrible effects of armed conflict.

Specifically, I urge your Government to join the 96 countries from around the world that have signed the *Convention on Cluster Munitions*. This comprehensive international ban on cluster munitions is the most important humanitarian and disarmament treaty of the last decade, requiring each country to destroy its stockpiles of this weapon within eight years. The countries that have already signed include stockpilers, former users and producers, and affected countries from all regions of the world.

When full implementation of the treaty is achieved, it will make a real difference to countless lives and livelihoods, by requiring clearance of contaminated land within 10 years and recognising the rights of affected individuals and communities to receive assistance.

With every new signature and ratification the emerging global norm against the use of cluster munitions is further strengthened. This stigmatisation of cluster munitions will help make sure they are never used again, even by states that may not join the treaty right away.

Please ensure that Cambodia joins the growing list of countries that reject these indiscriminate and inhumane weapons.

Yours sincerely

Dr Sue Wareham OAM
President

