



Press release

Cluster Munition Monitor 2019

Cluster munitions continue to kill civilians

Montreal, 29 August 2019. Released today, the 2019 Cluster Munition Monitor report reveals that attacks involving cluster munitions continued to occur in Syria in 2018. The Monitor has recorded at least 674 cluster munition attacks in Syria since mid-2012. As up to 40% of these weapons do not explode on impact, these attacks have caused heavy contamination by cluster munition remnants, which pose a deadly and long-term threat for the local population. Globally, at least 149 people were killed or injured by cluster munition attacks and remnants in a total of eight countries and one territory. The conference of State Parties to the Oslo Convention, which bans the use of cluster munitions, is due to take place from the 2nd to the 4th of September in Geneva. HI is calling on states to enforce international law and to systematically condemn the use of these barbaric weapons.

- The 2019 Cluster Munition Monitor report assesses the implementation of the Oslo Convention which bans the use, production, transfer and storage of cluster munitions, for the period from January to December 2018. The report also covers the first half of 2019, where information is available.
- **In 2018, new uses of cluster munitions were reported only in Syria: At least 38 cluster munitions attacks** occurred in Syria between July 2018 and June 2019. Since mid-2012, the Monitor has recorded at least **674 cluster munition attacks** - when attacks were first seen in the country.
- The Monitor recorded **149 new cluster munition casualties in 2018 globally** caused either by attacks using these weapons (**65**) or as a result of cluster munition remnants (**84**). It represents a sharp decline from 951 recorded in 2016, mainly due to a change in the Syrian conflict context. This figure remains a major cause for concern: **99% of cluster munition victims are civilians**.
- **According to the Monitor, the majority of annual casualties in 2018 (53%) were recorded in Syria**, as has been the case since 2012: In Syria, **65 casualties of cluster munition attacks and 15 casualties of cluster munition remnants** were reported in 2018, knowing that the actual figures are likely to be higher due to limited access and difficulties collecting data.

- Up to 40% of cluster munitions do not explode on impact when they are launched during an attack. In 2018, **casualties from unexploded cluster munition remnants** were recorded in **eight countries and one territory**: Afghanistan, Iraq, Lao PDR, Lebanon, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Yemen, and Nagorno-Karabakh.
- In 2018, **Yemen had the highest recorded casualties due to cluster munition remnants (31)**. 40 years after the conflict, **casualties continue to be recorded in Lao PDR (21)**. These figures highlight the dramatic consequences of using cluster munitions, which create long-term contamination by explosive remnants and a deadly threat for the population.
- 14 State Parties to the Oslo Convention have cluster munitions victims. The Monitor reports that many face continued decline in funding for community-based work and hampered access to rehabilitation and economic activities. In many countries, more services, better coordination and greater integration into national systems remains necessary. Access to rehabilitation services for survivors in remote and rural areas also need to be improved in at least 3 states (Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq).
- **Quote 1:** “HI is calling on belligerent parties to immediately end the use of cluster munitions. It also calls on states to put pressure on countries that use cluster munitions to end this practice. Any new use of these weapons should be condemned. Only by systematically condemning their use and stigmatising those responsible, and calling on all states to sign the treaty, will the international community be able to reduce and eventually eradicate the use of cluster munitions.”
- **Quote 2:** “The Oslo Convention has made great strides in protecting civilians against the scourge of cluster munitions: every year, existing stockpiles are destroyed and significant areas of contaminated land are cleared, while these weapons are increasingly stigmatised. State Parties have also made a lot of progress with respect to victim assistance, but the countries affected are still finding it difficult to fund necessary services for victims, who all too often live in extremely difficult conditions.”
- Since the Convention came into force on 1st August 2010, **35 State Parties have destroyed 1.5 million cluster munition stockpiles, i.e. a total of 178 million sub-munitions**. This represents 99% of all cluster munitions declared by State Parties.
- In total, **26 states and three regions remain contaminated by sub-munition remnants** worldwide.

Cluster bombs are weapons containing several hundred mini-bombs called cluster munitions. Designed to be scattered over large areas, **they inevitably fall in civilian neighbourhoods. Up to 40% do not explode on impact**. Like anti-personnel mines, they can be triggered by the slightest contact, **killing and maiming people during and after conflicts**. As they make no distinction between civilians, civilian property and military targets, cluster bombs violate the rules of international humanitarian law.

The Oslo Convention, which bans the use, storage, transfer, production and sale of cluster munitions, was opened for signature in December 2008. Currently, 120 countries are signatories to this convention.

About Humanity & Inclusion

HI is an independent international aid organisation. It has been working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster for 35 years. Working alongside people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, our action and testimony are focused on responding to their essential needs, improving their living conditions and

promoting respect for their dignity and basic rights. Since it was founded in 1982, Humanity & Inclusion (formerly Handicap International) has set up development programmes in more than 60 countries and intervenes in numerous emergency situations. There are eight national associations within the network (Germany, Belgium, Canada, United States, France, Luxembourg, UK and Switzerland), working tirelessly to mobilise resources, co-manage projects and increase the impact of the organisation's principles and actions. HI is one of six founding organisations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize and winner of the Conrad N. Hilton Award in 2011. HI takes action and campaigns in places where "living in dignity" is no easy task."

For more information: <http://www.hi-canada.org>