

MAJOR FINDINGS

Cluster Munition Monitor 2023

As of 3 August 2023

Status of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions

- The convention is in good standing, with a total of 112 States Parties and 12 signatories. The last country to accede to the convention was South Sudan in August 2023, while Nigeria ratified it in February 2023.
- An annual United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution promoting the convention was adopted in December 2022 by 144 states, including 36 non-signatories to the convention. Russia was the only country to vote against it.

Use of Cluster Munitions

- There have been no reports or allegations of new use of cluster munitions by any State Party since the convention was adopted in May 2008.
- Cluster munitions were used extensively in Ukraine during the reporting period (from August 2022 to July 2023), while new use was also recorded in Myanmar and Syria.
- Russia has used cluster munitions repeatedly in Ukraine since invading the country on 24 February 2022, while Ukrainian forces have also used them.

Casualties and Contamination

- Globally, there were at least 1,172 new cluster munition casualties across eight countries in 2022. This is the highest annual number of people killed and injured by cluster munitions that the Monitor has recorded since it began reporting in 2010.
- Of the total casualties in 2022, 987 were caused by cluster munition attacks, with the vast majority (890) recorded in Ukraine. Previously, in 2021, no new casualties were recorded from cluster munition attacks worldwide; all were from remnants of cluster munitions.
- There were at least 185 casualties from cluster munition remnants worldwide during 2022, compared to 149 in 2021.
- Through its reporting since 2010, the Monitor has shown how cluster munition remnants, especially submunitions, disproportionately harm civilians, with children particularly at risk of harm.
 - In 2022, civilians represented 95% of all cluster munition casualties.
 - Children accounted for 71% of casualties from cluster munition remnants, where the age group was recorded.

- A total of 29 countries and other areas are contaminated or suspected to be contaminated by cluster munition remnants, with 11 being States Parties to the convention, including the most recent country, South Sudan.

Stockpile Destruction and Retention

- Since the convention's adoption in 2008, States Parties have collectively destroyed 99% of the cluster munition stocks that they declared, destroying 1.48 million cluster munitions and 178.5 million submunitions.
- Bulgaria destroyed the last of its stockpiled cluster munitions in June 2023. States Parties Bulgaria, Peru, and Slovakia destroyed a total of at least 4,166 stockpiled cluster munitions and 134,598 submunitions during 2022 and the first half of 2023.
- It is unclear if South Africa will meet its 1 November 2023 stockpile destruction deadline.
- Only 11 States Parties are retaining live cluster munitions for permitted research and training purposes, of which Germany has the highest number. Belgium destroyed 95% of its retained cluster munitions during 2022.

Clearance of Cluster Munition Remnants

- In 2022, States Parties reported clearance of approximately 93km² of cluster munition contaminated land and the destruction of 75,725 cluster munition remnants, primarily unexploded submunitions. This represents an increase on the 61km² cleared in 2021 but a slight decrease on the 81,000 submunitions destroyed.
- As of the end of 2022, Somalia was the only State Party left working towards its original clearance deadline of 1 March 2026, but it is not known if it is on target to meet it.
- The other contaminated States Parties have requested extensions to their original clearance deadlines, including Iraq until 2028 and Mauritania until 2026. Both of these extension requests will be considered and decided at the convention's Eleventh Meeting of States Parties in September 2023.

Risk Education

- In 2022, affected States Parties provided risk education warning of the dangers of cluster munition remnants and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) that reached men (35.3%), women (13%), boys (30.3%), and girls (21.4%).
- In 2022, men and boys remained the group at highest risk. Specifically targeted at-risk groups included farmers, shepherds and herders, people collecting wood and other resources, nomadic communities, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.
- The long-term socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic remained a reason for risk-taking behavior, particularly in Lao PDR and Lebanon, where people were forced to rely on harmful coping mechanisms such as scrap metal collection and entering hazardous areas for precarious employment, or to forage foodstuff to try to supplement diminishing livelihoods.

Victim Assistance

- Efforts to address the needs of cluster munition victims, and ensure the accessibility and sustainability of rehabilitation services, were reported in most States Parties with reported victims. However, the most affected countries continued to depend on dwindling international support for victim assistance.
- Victim assistance services faced challenges in States Parties Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Somalia, where healthcare systems faced shortages due to drastic national economic crises. Ongoing conflict in cluster munition affected countries outside the convention, including Myanmar, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen, also impeded the delivery of vital victim assistance while contributing to the fragility of health systems.
- International organizations and local partners continued to fill major gaps in the availability, accessibility, and sustainability of healthcare and rehabilitation services in many States Parties. The most recent State Party, South Sudan, has reported a dire situation for victim assistance, and international NGOs are responsible for 80% of health service delivery in the country.
- Iraq, Lao PDR, and Lebanon were reported to be updating their respective national victim assistance standards, to bring them in line with International Mine Action Standard (IMAS) 13.10 on Victim Assistance.

Production

- None of the 16 countries that still produce cluster munitions, or reserve the right to do so, are party to the convention.
- Russia continued to produce new cluster munitions in 2022, including at least two newly developed types that its forces have used in Ukraine since early 2022.
- In the United States (US), the last manufacturer of cluster munitions ended its production of the weapon in 2016. Yet the US is developing and producing replacements for cluster munitions that may still fall under the definition of cluster munitions prohibited by the convention.

Transfer

- Ukraine has publicly asked to be supplied with cluster munitions since 2022. In July 2023, the US announced that it would transfer an unspecified quantity of stockpiled cluster munitions to Ukraine. The 155mm artillery-delivered cluster munitions deliver dual-purpose improved conventional munition (DPICM) submunitions that have a “dud” or unexploded ordnance failure rate of less than 2.35%, but the US did not explain how this figure was reached.
- World leaders and officials from at least 21 countries have expressed concern over cluster munitions after the US decision to transfer them to Ukraine.
- Ukraine may have acquired cluster munitions from other countries in 2022 and/or 2023, but reports of such transfers have been denied by the countries concerned.

- In the past, at least 15 countries have transferred more than 50 types of cluster munitions to at least 60 other countries.

Transparency Reporting

- A total of 104 States Parties have submitted an initial Article 7 transparency report as required by the convention. Yet seven have not done so, of which Cabo Verde and Comoros are more than a decade late.
- Compliance with the annual reporting requirement has been sporadic as more than half of States Parties do not provide updates to their transparency reports annually.

National Legislation

- Niue was the last country to enact specific national legislation to govern its implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2021, making a total of 33 States Parties with specific implementing laws for the convention.
- A total of 22 States Parties are planning or are in the process of drafting, reviewing, or adopting specific legislative measures to implement the convention, while 43 States Parties regard their existing laws and regulations as sufficient.