



## AUSTRALIAN NETWORK TO BAN LANDMINES AND CLUSTER MUNITIONS INC

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Memorandum August  
2012

### **Flawed Australian Legislation Enacted**

The flawed Australian cluster bomb legislation passed the Senate on Tuesday August 21, severely disappointing advocates for change, both in Australia and internationally.

The legislation thus retains provisions for ADF personnel to actively assist in the use of cluster munitions and also allows the stockpiling of foreign owned cluster bombs on our soil.

We welcome the assurances by the government that no foreign stockpiling will be authorised but deeply regret the fact that this commitment was not enshrined in legislation. If the government will not in fact authorise such stockpiling, either now or in the future we can see no logical reason to have included the provision in the legislation. The fact remains that statements can be overturned and policy changed without further recourse to Parliament.

We also welcome assurances that Australian military personnel will be governed by Australian law and Australian military practices and procedures. Unfortunately this assurance is not encouraging when the legislation allows for involvement that we believe completely flies in the face of the humanitarian intent of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

I would like to thank all our members and supporters for your help, encouragement and financial support.

I would also like to thank Senator Scott Ludlam for his constant support, his compassion and integrity, both and inside and outside the Senate chamber. Senator Ludlam's questioning during the debate on Monday and Tuesday was insightful and relentless and could not fail to win admiration from those of us who campaigned so hard. Senator Ludlam was strongly supported during the debate by Independent Senator Nick Xenophon from South Australia. Senator Xenophon has shown unequivocal commitment to amendment of the legislation and we also thank him.

Our task now is two fold. Firstly we need to work hard to encourage other countries to become party to the Convention, thus strengthening it and establishing a strong global norm against the use of cluster bombs.

Secondly we need to keep a watching brief on the government. We have been told that the Minister for Defence will make a statement reaffirming the government's commitment not to authorise foreign stockpiling on our soil when Australia deposits its instrument of ratification to the Convention.

One aspect of our work has come to a close. There is much left to do and we hope we can count on your continued support.

*Lorel Thomas National Co-ordinator ANBLC*

## Anniversaries

As campaigners in Serbia prepared to celebrate the second anniversary of the Entry into Force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on August 1, disaster struck. Two young men were killed in a cluster bomb accident in Mt. Kopaonik in South Serbia. The details of the accident are still unknown. This area has been declared "cleared" on several occasions. The Serbian Mine Action Center announced earlier this year that Kopaonik would finally be cleared of unexploded cluster bombs by the end of July.

This August also marks both the sixth anniversary of horrific cluster bomb strikes in Lebanon and the fourth anniversary of cluster bomb strikes during the 2008 week-long conflict between Georgia and Russia.

These poignant anniversaries are important reminders of the deplorable harm these weapons cause to innocent people.

Read more at: <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/news/?id=3784>

Unfortunately, the killing continues. A terrible mine incident happened only days ago in the municipality of Olovo, about 50 kilometers north of Sarajevo. A six year old boy was killed and his father suffered serious injuries when collecting wood in a marked minefield. Similar incidents have also recently happened in Lebanon when villagers were collecting wood.

Firefighters in Bosnia have also been hampered in their efforts to contain wildfires as the blaze set off explosions in minefield dating from the war in the 1990's.

## Focus on Eastern Cambodia

The landscape of Eastern Cambodia is about to get a little safer.

A significant resource-boost to Demining Unit 5, which is responsible for overseeing the government's mine action efforts east of the Mekong, will see more deminers working to alleviate the impacts of cluster bombs and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) on affected communities in Eastern Cambodia. Funding from the United States has enabled the recent deployment of 75 staff. These staff will be organised into explosive ordnance disposal and battle-area clearance by village teams with the aim of starting operations in Svay Rieng, Prey Vieng and Kampong Cham.

H.E. Heng Ratana who is director general of the government's demining arm, the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), was quoted in the national newspaper last month, 'CMAC plans to devote more attention to the eastern half of the Kingdom'. He continued saying that greater development in Eastern Cambodia has created a greater need for demining. "We are not really changing the focus from the west to the east; we are just changing the balance of resources."

Even with this encouraging development in Eastern Cambodia, mine action to remedy the extensive contamination, left over from the United States bombing campaign during the Vietnam War, will need to continue into the foreseeable future.

'In Search of Safe Ground' seeks to raise awareness about the plight of people living east of the Mekong, so that these affected communities may have the right to a safe future.

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2012071757457/National-news/wars-legacy-unites-cambodia-and-laos.html>

### Membership Subscription Reminder

Please forward your membership renewal/new subscription of \$20/ \$10 Concession to:  
PO Box 51, Kensington Park 5068 as soon as possible. (Form on website, or see back page.)

### Donations

ANBLC is a voluntary organisation and donations are needed to cover our running costs.  
Please forward donations to the address above, or  
PO Box 445, Walkerville. SA 5081.

## "Save Lives and Limbs" Poetry Competition in South Australia

For the third year the SA Group of ANBLC has organised a Student Poetry Competition. This year an Open category was also introduced, in association with Friendly Street Poets. The Prizegiving Ceremony was held on 1st August, chosen for its significance as the second anniversary of Entry into Force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 1st August, 2010.

The brief for this competition was that: "All poems should inspire people to think about the issue of landmines and cluster bombs and the effects on people who lose their lives or are injured by them." All the winning entries do just that - though from very diverse standpoints. A selection will be printed in this and later editions of the Memorandum.

Madeline Porter's winning Student poem *The Hidden Grim Reaper*, is recalling the death of a playmate.

The ceremony was addressed by Dr Lynn Arnold AO, former SA Premier, former CEO of World Vision and until very recently CEO of Anglicare. The prizewinning poets read their poems aloud.



Madeline Porter reads her winning poem: 'The Hidden Grim Reaper'. Dr Lynn Arnold AO and Helen Stanger are in the background.

## The Hidden Grim Reaper

Hop, jump, skip, spring,  
slip over. We slip on the vines at the bottom of the trees.  
The weather is hot and dry like burning wood.

Five human legs are playing on the hot, dry dirt.  
Two more metal legs supported under the armpit, help one human leg stand up.  
We play here every day, but forget,  
forget the dangers under the ground.

We are surrounded. Surrounded by an insidious and persistent danger that is invisible to us.  
We know they're near. Underground. Ready to explode.

We see the metal signs every day. Warning us not to be here.  
We see the skull and crossbones warning us not to enter. We glance for a second, but glare away,  
at the sign trying to guard us.  
But how, how can an old, rusted piece of metal guard us?

We forget instantly this guardian sign.  
But we remember the sounds. The bang and sharp, strident, screeching screams.

We have no fear and forget until we hear again,  
the deafening, familiar bang. Until we see blood.  
One wrong foot and it has happened again: the grim reaper has appeared from its refuge.

*By Madeline Porter*

## The Dust at my Feet

Dust on our feet stirred with life as we ran;  
just us three.  
Cool breeze shuffled fresh leaves,  
mottled light made patches.  
A ball was at our feet  
rolling, skimming, starting,  
stopping.  
Our friend hopped, we darted,  
dodging each other,  
forgetful  
of the small, embedded mines.

If only we'd seen the shadowed, rusty sign beyond.  
Listened  
to the chink-creak of crutches.  
Remembered  
those sad stories of fate, mournfully told. Now

I can see the sign, hear the crutches,  
remember those stories.  
Staring me in the face,  
in the grave dust at my feet.

*By Emily Cathro*



## **Interview with Peter Stewart**

Here is an interview with Peter Stewart of the Christian Centre for Social Action in Perth, who has recently retired from the National Committee after having been involved in the Network from early years.

Sister Pat Pak Poy began the movement and circulated the public petition in 1991.

### **When and how did you get involved?**

Initially Pat Pak Poy had asked Bernadette Kennedy, who refused due to other commitments. Bernadette then phoned me to discuss the issue and recommended me to Pat. I formed the WA committee in 1993, possibly 1994.

### **Can you tell us about some highlights of the Network in WA?**

Bernard Carney joined the Network and wrote the powerful song "Gardens of Death". This became an international theme song used to open landmine rallies and conferences around the world, including the Regional Conference on Landmines in Budapest in 1998.

This song was also used to introduce full-day student conferences held at Trinity College. These were addressed by landmine experts such as James Trevelyan, Winthrop Professor of UWA, who was designing a simplified robotic demining device. Other speakers included Jenny Stedmon, an anaesthetist at Fremantle Hospital who had been working with landmine victims during periods of work with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in areas of conflict overseas.

Through Bernard Carney's music connections we held a fundraising concert at the 'Fly By Night Club', donating the proceeds to the national campaign. Over the years we held a range of fundraising activities, with dinners, concerts, and events.

For eight or ten years we held yearly vigil protests in Perth City Centre outside the Wesley Church during Landmines Week. Graham Edwards, when a State Labor MP (later Federal Member for Cowan) became involved after coming to one of the City Centre protests.

I attended several international conferences with Sr Pat Pak Poy: Ottawa on anti-personnel mines in December 1997 and Dublin and Oslo in 2008 on cluster munitions being particularly noteworthy.

Another highlight was the launch of Pat Pak Poy's book 'A Path Is Made by Walking It' at the CCSA.

### **Are you satisfied that most of the work has been done, or do you see a need for the work to continue?**

I think that in Australia most of the work has been done. However we still need to work on the Asian front. One of our big contributions here is the ability to raise funds to support countries who need to work on ratification and/or cleanup and support of victims.

## **More Vigilance Needed on global Landmine Ban**

*Excerpt from an ICBL Press release at the conclusion of the 2012 Mine Ban Treaty Intersessional meetings in Geneva.*

A meeting of nearly 100 states and dozens of international organisations to discuss progress on the global ban on antipersonnel landmines ended in late May with both good and bad news.

While celebrating landmine-affected Somalia becoming the 160th State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty this week, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) has also been compelled to raise alarm bells at The conference.

Confirmed use of antipersonnel landmines in four non-States Parties in the last year, and serious allegations of use in three states that have joined the Treaty, is of particularly serious concern.

"With these very worrying reports of use of landmines we fear that the global stigma the Mine Ban Treaty has established in the 15 years since it was adopted is under attack," said Kasia Derlicka, Director of the ICBL.

Also highly disturbing is the fact three states - Belarus, Greece and Ukraine - remain in violation of the Treaty for missing their stockpile destruction deadlines, with no destruction currently under way in any of these states.

Some countries reported significant achievements in clearing their land, but in many others where people live in daily fear from landmines progress remains frustratingly slow. The ICBL and the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) both expressed serious concern that the list of countries requesting extensions to clear their land is growing faster than the list of those who have been declared mine-free.

"We heard many states express their commitment to meeting their clearance obligations, but we need to see concrete plans and much quicker progress. Countless families are waiting to be able to use this land without fearing for their lives," Derlicka said.

States and civil society organisations used the meetings to discuss whether programmes to provide assistance to victims is actually making a difference in the daily lives of survivors. The ICBL emphasised that monitoring progress at the local level is not only possible but is happening in Cambodia among other places.

## **Annual General Meeting**

The 2012 Annual General Meeting of the Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions will be held at 1 pm on Sunday October 21 at the Australian Quaker Centre, Silver Wattle 1063 Lake Road Bungendore NSW

All members are entitled to stand for election to the committee and to vote at the AGM.

An application form for membership on the committee is included in this Memorandum.

All applications for committee membership must reach the National Coordinator by Sunday September 23, ie 28 days before the AGM.

All applicants must be proposed and seconded by members of ANBLC.

Names of all those standing for committee positions will be made public along with a formal notice of the AGM at least 14 days before the AGM

*Lorel Thomas National Co-ordinator ANBLC*



AUSTRALIAN NETWORK TO BAN LANDMINES  
AND CLUSTER MUNITIONS INC

Committee Nomination Form

I.....

of .....

a member of the Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions, Inc nominate

.....

of.....

a member of the Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions Inc, as a  
member of the National Committee of the Association

Signed.....Date.....

.

I.....

of.....

a member of the Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions, Inc  
second the nomination

of.....as a member of the National  
Committee.

Signed.....Date.....

...

I.....

of.....

Accept the nomination as a member of the National Committee.

Signed.....Date.....



**AUSTRALIAN NETWORK TO BAN LANDMINES  
AND CLUSTER MUNITIONS INC**

Please complete the details below and post to:  
PO Box 51, Kensington Park SA 5068

**ANBLC Membership Pledge: As a Member of ANBLC:**

I believe strongly that anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions are indiscriminate and inhumane and therefore should be totally banned worldwide.

I believe that I have power to assist with the universalisation of treaties to ban anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions throughout the world.

- As a Member of ANBLC I will (please tick those items below you wish to commit to):
- talk to my friends and colleagues about this campaign and where possible spread the word
- more widely.
- assist ANBLC where possible with advocacy, mailing campaigns and public
- communication.

ANBLC Annual Membership Fee : \$20 Individual/Organisation \$10 Student/Concession

Concession rate: If you feel that it applies to you, then that is sufficient.

Membership runs from 1st July to 30th June the following year.

New membership \_\_\_\_\_ or Membership Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ (please tick)

Name .....or Organisation.....  
Address.....  
Contact Person  
(Organ.).....Phone.....  
Email address.....

(Please list email address if you have one; Memorandum will then be forwarded by email.)  
Payment for: Membership : Individual/Concession/Organisation

\$.....  
Donation: \$.....  
Payment: Total of \$.....

If paying by Cheque ..... (tick) and enclose form and cheque

If paying by Direct Deposit payment .....(tick) and provide date of transfer .....  
Bank: Commonwealth Bank Account name: ANBLC  
BSB: 065-005  
Bank Account No.: 1026 3346  
Please ensure that your name or your Organisation's name will appear on our bank statement and post this form to ANBLC PO Box 51 Kensington Park SA 5068

Signed.....