



AUSTRALIAN NETWORK TO BAN LANDMINES AND CLUSTER MUNITIONS INC

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Just before Parliament rose in early July, I represented ANBLC at a briefing to the Liberal Party Foreign Affairs Policy Committee at Parliament House. This generated considerable debate and has led to some ongoing interchange with several politicians.

During July and the first half of August Parliament was in recess so our campaigning activities were largely centred around visiting politicians in their electorates wherever possible. It is our experience that the more politicians we reach, the more are convinced. Supporters on both sides of the party are now actively working to achieve better legislation, however it is still likely that the bill will pass in its present, flawed form.

The campaign for amendments to the bill received a boost when General Peter Gration, a former commander of the ADF, spoke out publicly in an interview on Radio National. He declared that the humanitarian impact of cluster bombs far outweighs any potential military utility, and called for stronger legislation. He also made the point that it seems unlikely that the US will stockpile cluster munitions on our soil and that there is no need for that provision to have been explicitly inserted in the proposed legislation. No other ratifying country has included such a specific provision and ANBLC and CMCA have been actively campaigning for it to be removed from the draft Australian bill. The interview can be heard and the transcript downloaded at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/nationalinterest/stories/2011/3280949.htm>

We have also generated articles online at:

<http://www.independentaustralia.net/2011/war/cluster-bombs-%E2%80%94-are-our-voices-being-heard/>

<http://rightnow.org.au/writing-cat/article/australia%E2%80%99s-cluster-bomb-ban-are-we-setting-the-right-example/>

August 1 saw the first anniversary of the Entry into Force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and to mark this occasion I was fortunate to be able to speak on cluster bombs as a cause of disability at Macquarie University in Sydney. This event was part of the university's Diversity Week and was ably organised by Anna King and her colleagues at the university.

My personal thanks go to all members and supporters who have written to, phoned or visited politicians over the past months.

Your support is invaluable, as always.

LOREL THOMAS
NATIONAL COORDINATOR

PLEASE MAKE URGENT CONTACT WITH LABOR PARTY POLITICIANS

We have indication that there is active discussion of the bill within the Labor Party. As part of our evolving campaigning strategy we now urge you to contact senior and influential Labor politicians and ask for amendments to the Bill.

For a list of politicians by Party, refer to the following web pages. You can click on the politician's name for contact details.

Senate:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/senators/homepages/index.asp?sort=party>

House of Representatives:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/members/mi-party.asp>

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions will be held at **1pm on Sunday October 30** at the Nunyara Conference Centre in Adelaide.

All members are entitled to attend and/or to vote. A list of those who have nominated for the National Committee, together with details on how to register a proxy vote will be circulated to all members in late September.

ETHIOPIAN PEACEKEEPERS KILLED BY MINES

Four Ethiopian peacekeepers were killed and seven others seriously injured late last month by a mine while on patrol in the disputed territory of Abyei Sudan (south), where the UN force has just begun a mission. Approximately 4,200 Ethiopian peacekeepers have been present in Abyei, a region on the border between Sudan and Southern Sudan and claimed by both countries.

The mine exploded in the village of Maboke occupied by Sudanese forces. Khartoum is a signatory of the Ottawa Treaty, banning the use of landmines.

The Khartoum government forces took control of Abyei on May 21 and more than 100,000 people have since fled to South Sudan. The governments of Sudan and Southern Sudan which have been independent since July 9, reached an agreement on June 20 providing for the demilitarization of the territory.

The Security Council of the United Nations last month adopted unanimously a resolution on sending a peacekeeping force in the Ethiopian territory of Abyei in the hope of easing tensions.

PAR-DIEU MAYENIKINI
COORDINATOR
AFRICAN PACIFIC VOICES NEW ZEALAND

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STUDENT POETRY COMPETITION

The SA Group of ANBLC has recently held its second Student Poetry Competition. The overall prizewinner will be included in the next Memorandum.

Prize-winning poems will be displayed at Adelaide's International Day of Peace event.

HELEN STANGER
SA COORDINATOR

LEBANESE WOMEN CLEARING CLUSTER BOMBS

Five years ago Israel rained cluster munitions on southern Lebanon to a degree the UN condemned as a "flagrant violation of international law". In the 72 hours before peace was declared on 14th August 2006, they fired as many as 4 million cluster bomblets into southern Lebanon.

Since then mine clearance teams have been painstakingly combing the undergrowth inch by inch for unexploded cluster bombs still littering the countryside. One of these teams, set up by the demining NGO Norwegian People's Aid and coordinated by the Lebanese army, is all-female.

The leader of the team, who has been working in the field for 4 years, says: "Women are more patient than men. That is why we are good at this job. We work more slowly – and maybe we are a little more afraid than men." One of her colleagues wants to sing and dance when she finds a bomblet. "I feel like I have saved a life," she beams. "If I find a cluster and take it out, then there will be no victim from it. The feeling is beyond description."

Lebanon is spearheading efforts to convince more countries to sign the international treaty banning cluster bombs and in September will host the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Cluster Munition Convention.

ADAPTED BY HELEN STANGER FROM:
HTTP://WWW.GUARDIAN.CO.UK/WORLD/2011/AUG/12/LEBANON-
WOMEN-CLEAR-CLUSTER-BOMBS

KILLING OF DEMINERS IN AFGHANISTAN

Thirty-one members of staff from the Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA) in Farah province of Afghanistan, including 20 civilian deminers, were abducted while clearing landmines in Shamalga village of Balabuluk district on Wednesday 6 July 2011.

Four of those abducted were killed. The ICBL understands that the remaining 27 have been released. "It is hard to comprehend such shocking brutality," said Kasia Derlicka, Director of the ICBL.

"These deminers had put themselves at daily risk to save vulnerable communities from the devastating effect of these indiscriminate weapons. The ICBL calls on all armed groups to halt attacks, abductions and threats to deminers, and we urge the Afghan government to take every possible measure to avoid further tragedy and bring the murderers to justice," Derlicka added.

Afghanistan remains one of the most severely mine-affected countries in the world. It also has the largest and most established demining programmes, with more than 10,000 people working for both national and international demining organizations.

"It is unthinkable that anyone could harm these humanitarian workers who are only trying to protect the lives and limbs of fellow Afghans," said Firoz Ali Alizada, ICBL Campaign Manager and a landmine survivor from Afghanistan.

According to Mine Action Coordination Center for Afghanistan (MACCA) in the past 20 years national organizations, alongside international companies and NGOs, have cleared 104 districts and 1,699 communities of mines and other explosive remnants of war. However, 2,056 communities throughout the country remain at risk.

The number of landmine and explosive remnants of war survivors in Afghanistan has been estimated to be 52,000–60,000.

The ICBL is very concerned that mine clearance personnel in Afghanistan have been frequent targets of armed violence or abduction since 2006.

For more information on the landmine situation in Afghanistan, which joined the Mine Ban Treaty in 2003, please see the Landmine Monitor Report at www.the-monitor.org/afghanistan.

Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions Incorporated
PO Box 445, Walkerville SA 5081 website <http://australia.icbl.org/>
National Coordinator: email australia@icblcmc.org or phone +613 9803 5139

ADAPTED FROM

[HTTP://WWW.ICBL.ORG/INDEX.PHP/ICBL/LIBRARY/NEWS-ARTICLES/WORK/AFGHANISTANJULY2011](http://www.icbl.org/index.php/icbl/library/news-articles/work/afghanistanjuly2011)

BURMESE CONVICT PORTERS PRESS-GANGED BY ARMY

Human Rights Watch and the Karen Human Rights Group released a 70-page joint report on 12th July, detailing the Burmese army's abusive treatment of convicts, forced to serve as porters under dangerous front-line conditions. These abuses include summary executions, torture, near-starvation and the use of porters as 'human shields' and are claimed to constitute war crimes. The organizations say that those responsible for ordering or participating in such treatment should be prosecuted, and they call for a United Nations-led commission of inquiry.

The report "Dead Men Walking: Convict Porters on the Front Lines in Eastern Burma," is based on 58 interviews with escaped convict porters used in military operations in Karen Province and Pegu Region from 2010-2011. They fled knowing that the risks of being killed by staying outweighed the risks of being killed while escaping.

"Convict porters are the Burmese army's disposable human pack-mules, lugging supplies through heavily mined battlefields. Press-ganging prisoners into deadly front-line service raises the Burmese army's cruelty to new levels" - Elaine Pearson, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch.

More information available at:
<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2011/07/12/burma-war-crimes-against-convict-porters>

HELEN STANGER
SA COORDINATOR

LIBYAN GOVERNMENT LAYS MORE MINES IN WESTERN MOUNTAINS

Libyan government forces have placed at least three minefields containing antipersonnel and antivehicle landmines outside the village of al-Qawalish in the western Nafusa Mountains, Human Rights Watch said in July.

"The government's blatant disregard for the

safety of its civilians is shameful," said Steve Goose, arms director at Human Rights Watch. "Landmines are a weapon that will claim civilian limbs and lives for years to come."

All three minefields are in areas with civilian traffic. Anti-government fighters have put up signs and markers to keep people from entering the areas. Three rebel vehicles had struck mines on the dirt roads earlier on July 6, destroying the vehicles and wounding three people, two of whom were hospitalized.

Government forces have placed the T-AB-1 antipersonnel mines in at least one other location in the Nafusa Mountains. In mid-June Human Rights Watch documented the presence of more than 150 of the mines near the town of Zintan. The T-AB-1 antipersonnel mine has a low metal content and is therefore difficult to detect once placed.

On June 23 Brazil's minister of external relations, Chancellor Antonio Patriota, condemned the use of antipersonnel mines "wherever they are used." Brazil has opened an investigation into the transfer of the landmines to Libya.

Brazil is a state party to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty and has not manufactured or exported antipersonnel landmines since 1989. Libya is one of 37 nations that have not joined the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

The de facto opposition authority in Libya, the National Transitional Council, formally pledged in April not to use antipersonnel and antivehicle landmines, and to destroy all landmines in its possession.

For more Human Rights Watch reporting on Libya, visit: <http://www.hrw.org/middle-eastn-africa/libya>

ADAPTED FROM HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH.

BURMA: LANDMINE VICTIM LANGUISHES IN HOSPITAL FOR ONE YEAR

A teenage boy, a victim of landmine has been languishing without any hope of living a normal life again in a hospital ward in Imphal, Burma for over one year without any compensation from the Government.

His left leg and right arm have been amputated and his right leg is set to meet the same fate shortly. On February 18, 2010, as 17-year-old Ngampao Haokip, accompanied by his colleagues James, Tinneng and Sokholun were coming back from their jhum field, James stepped on a landmine.

The explosion and shrapnel from the mine killed James instantly while the other three sustained critical injuries, recalled Haokip, who has been treated in a hospital since February 2010.

All the victims were from Lonpi village in Manipur. The area, especially near the border and in the dense jungle, is infested with underground groups which had planted hundreds of landmines to keep at bay security forces. The area is strategic in the sense that Myanmar is just across the frontier where they can find sanctuary in the event of the security forces launching an offensive.

Tinkhoneng, mother of Ngampao Haokip said until now not even a dreg of compensation has been forthcoming from the State Government. "We are unable on many occasions to even pay for the kitchen rent of Rs five at the hospital let alone footing the escalating bills of treatment at the hospital," she added.

For the complete story visit: <http://e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=4..100611.jun11>

THE SANGAI EXPRESS



NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions (ANBLC) has a National Committee which determines day to day campaigning activities and fund raising projects. Positions on the committee may be held by State or Regional coordinators, by the Youth Coordinator, the Memorandum editor or other active campaigners.

Committee members do not initially need to be expert or especially knowledgeable about the campaign to ban landmines and cluster munitions, but they should demonstrate active interest and involvement in the aims and activities of the campaign. Involvement with the Committee enables members to take their interest further and to be engaged with local and international campaigners working towards a mine and cluster bomb free world.

As our committee membership is comprised of volunteers from various states, much of our correspondence is done by email. We also have a monthly teleconference (usually at 5pm EST) and an annual weekend face to face conference, usually held in conjunction with our AGM. Committee members' costs are covered to dial into teleconferences and to attend face to face meetings.

Committee members are expected to attend the monthly teleconferences and the annual face to face meeting wherever possible. Decision-making is generally made by consensus and can be either via emails for urgent decisions, or following discussion at teleconferences. Committee members are encouraged to lead or be involved in a cohesive group of campaigners, whether this be at a local, state or regional level or online. This enables fundraising or awareness raising activities to be easily carried out when appropriate. Dates around which such activities could be organised are: anniversaries of the Entry into Force of the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions, the International Day of Peace, or World Refugee Day. In some states, local groups, such as the SA State group, hold regular meetings.

Additionally, or alternatively, committee members may also act as liaison points with the international campaign.

With the change to our constitution coming into effect this year, the way is opened for more flexible working for the ANBLC Committee. Any members wishing to become part of the National Committee are encouraged to suggest alternative ways in which they may actively work within the campaign.

All members are entitled to seek nomination for a committee position and are eligible to vote at our AGM.

The Office Bearers of the Network, National Coordinator, Treasurer, Secretary and Public Officer are elected by the National Committee. At present the positions of Secretary and Public Officer are held by the same person, which is quite acceptable, even usual.

An application form for committee membership also appears in this edition of the newsletter.

Nomination by a committee member is necessary for application. If you have queries or would like to seek nomination but do not personally know a member to nominate you, please contact Jennie Price via email at jenniep123@yahoo.com.au.

Hard copies of the completed application forms must be returned to the National Coordinator, Lorel Thomas by Friday September 28.
PO Box 445, Walkerville SA 5081



NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 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.....