

Lima Conference on Cluster Munitions, Peru, 23-25 May 2007

The Lima Conference on Cluster Munitions, held on 23-25 May 2007, was the second step in an international process that envisages leading to an international ban on cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians.

A total of **68 states participated in the Lima conference**, which included 28 additional states not present at the first Conference on Cluster Munitions held in Oslo, Norway, on 22-23 February 2007 (see list of countries). The gathered momentum and increased participation came from Africa with 14 countries (cf. 3 in Oslo), the Americas, 14 countries (cf. 9 in Oslo) and Asia-Pacific with 8 countries (cf. 3 in Oslo). In Oslo, 46 states committed to conclude, by 2008, a legally binding international instrument that will: (i) prohibit the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, and (ii) establish a framework for cooperation and assistance that ensures adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk education and destruction of stockpiles of prohibited cluster munitions.

The UN has, on numerous occasions, appealed to the international community and the member states of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) to address the inhumane effects of cluster munitions. On 4th April 2007, announced by the General Assembly as the International Landmine Awareness Day, **UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon called on the international community to address immediately the horrendous humanitarian effects of cluster munitions**, and to encourage all endeavours to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, the impact of cluster munitions on civilians.

UNDP has through its global presence first hand experience in countries affected by cluster munitions and has witnessed the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions including the immediate threat posed to civilians during cluster munitions strikes as well as the devastating consequences of cluster munitions that fail to explode as per design, leaving behind large numbers of unexploded and unstable ordnance that continue to cause death and injury long after conflicts have ended, as well as preventing the productive use of contaminated lands. In Lebanon, for example, as a result of last year's conflict, some 200 civilians have been injured or killed by cluster munitions since the conflict ended. The harvest season in South Lebanon was also devastated by the cluster munitions contamination of olive groves, banana plantations and citrus farms affecting livelihoods and productivity for large numbers of the returning population.

Affected areas and countries also face longer term impact of cluster munitions on development, such as food security being undermined through land denial and loss of livestock, and health and hygiene problems as a result of a lack of access to shelter, water and sanitation. Therefore, beyond humanitarian impact, cluster munitions as other explosive remnants of war, have the potential to exacerbate poverty and to block local and national economic recovery and long-term development, thereby impeding states' abilities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The conference agenda was structured around the main elements of a new treaty including obligations to provide assistance to victims, clear contaminated land, destroy stockpiles and provide international cooperation and assistance. The most contentious issue concerned the scope of the treaty and definitions of cluster munitions, i.e. which sub-munitions that will be prohibited. Other outcomes of the Lima meeting were that the Government of Peru together with Costa Rica announced their intention to establish a Latin America 'cluster-munitions free-zone.' Also, **follow-up international meetings** have been confirmed in **Vienna, Austria (Dec. 07)**, **Wellington, New Zealand (Feb. 08)** and **Dublin, Ireland (May 08)**. In addition regional meetings have been announced in **San Jose, Costa Rica** and **Belgrade, Serbia** in August 2007.

At the Lima conference, the **UNDP country office in Peru, together with the Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery, and with the support of the Norwegian government's sponsorship programme, successfully organized the participation of 40 government representatives** from affected countries and also assisted the Government of Peru in the organization of the conference itself.

The UN was represented by ODA, OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP and UNMAS. Seven interventions were made by the UN team.

In addition, prior to the Lima Conference, the Cluster Munitions Coalition (see www.stopclustermunitions.org) organized a civil society workshop. BCPR/UNDP gave a presentation on the impact of cluster munitions on development.

Cluster munitions consists of containers (bomb, rocket, shell, dispenser), which can be both air-dropped and land-launched, and which contains from a few to several hundred sub-munitions, or bomblets. The container is designed to open in midair and disperses or releases the sub-munitions over a wide area. The sub munitions are then designed to detonate, most commonly upon impact. Cluster munitions have been used by States and a limited number of non-state actors in at least 23 countries. Globally, 34 States are known to have produced more than 200 different types of cluster munitions. Over 70 States stockpile millions of cluster munitions, containing sub-munitions that number in the billions worldwide, a number far exceeding that of the norm that today bans the global stocks of anti-personnel landmines.