

November 25, 2008

The Honourable Lawrence Cannon
Minister of Foreign Affairs and
International Trade
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa ON
K1A 0G2

The Honourable Peter Mackay
Minister of Defence
Ministry of National Defence
101 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa ON
K1A 0K2

Re: The Convention on Cluster Munitions

Dear Minister Cannon and Minister Mackay,

Allow us to begin by congratulating you both on your recent re-election to the House of Commons and your appointments to your respective Ministerial responsibilities.

At the Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions on 30 May 2008 Canada indicated its support for the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). We are writing to ask whether or not Canada will be among the first to sign the CCM when it opens for signature in Oslo, Norway on 3 December 2008.

The CCM prohibits the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions and sets groundbreaking humanitarian obligations for victim assistance, clearance of contaminated land and destruction of stockpiles. The signing and implementation of the CCM will have a profound and positive effect on the lives of countless individuals and communities.

The Canadian Council of Churches is the largest ecumenical body in Canada, with 22 members representing the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Evangelical, Protestant and Orthodox churches. As such, we note that there has been a remarkable level of support for the ban on cluster munitions across faith traditions, including statements from the World Council of Churches, Pope Benedict XVI, and a recent letter signed by 160 senior faith leaders representing all of the world's major religions. This is part of the broader movement of governments, individuals and organizations that recognize the need to end the indiscriminate cruelty and suffering caused by the use of cluster munitions.

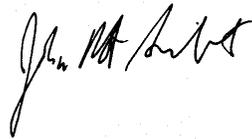
Will you work on behalf of Canada to hold firm to the commitment made in Dublin by signing the Convention on Cluster Munitions in December 2008, and that Canada become a full State Party to the CCM by ratifying it by March 2009?

Consequently, we would like to know whether or not Canada will complete the destruction of cluster munitions in Canadian arsenals, and to enact national legislation making the use, production, stockpiling, investment and transfer of cluster munitions illegal? We commend Canada for its past leadership in banning land mines and encourage you to make the appropriate decisions to keep Canada among the top five donors to mine action.

Sincerely,



The Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton
General Secretary
Canadian Council of Churches



Mr. John Siebert
Executive Director
Project Ploughshares