21 March, 2014

News from the International Campaign to Ban Landmines - Cluster Munition Coalition

The latest news from ICBL-CMC includes the welcome announcement from Denmark that it has completed destruction of its stockpiled cluster munitions well ahead of the mandated treaty deadline, as well as disturbing reports of recent use of landmines in Crimea and cluster bombs in South Sudan. Also included is ICBL’s challenge to states to finish the job as the Mine Ban Treaty turns 15, a spotlight on mine ban advocacy and action in Turkey, and lots more.

Denmark destroys its stockpile of cluster munitions strengthening the global ban.
Denmark made a strong start to 2014 by announcing it has completed the destruction of its stockpile of cluster munitions, in line with its obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Denmark finishes its stockpile destruction 4.5 years in advance of the eight-year deadline set by the convention. The Cluster Munition Coalition warmly
congratulates Denmark for this great achievement.

**Reports of Russian landmine use in Crimea requires immediate response**
The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) is deeply concerned by reports of Russian use of landmines in Crimea, Ukraine. It calls on Russia to confirm or deny the landmine use allegations and, if confirmed, halt any use of antipersonnel mines immediately, explain the steps that it has taken to inform and protect the local civilian population and remove any antipersonnel mines that may have been laid.

**Disturbing reports of new cluster munitions use in South Sudan**
The Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) condemns the use of cluster munitions in South Sudan following reports that the UN Mine Action Service has found new cluster munition contamination near the town of Bor on the road to Juba, capital of South Sudan.

**ICBL challenges world to finish the job as Mine Ban Treaty turns 15**
March 1, 2014 marked exactly 15 years since the Mine Ban Treaty entered into force and began making a difference in mine-affected communities globally – saving lives by ensuring the removal and destruction of landmines, as well as providing assistance to mine victims. Since then, the Mine Ban Treaty has been recognized as a model for humanitarian disarmament, citizen diplomacy, and multilateralism at work.

**Spotlight on Turkey**
In this first spotlight focus, we are presenting Turkey’s landmine problem and efforts to address it to date. This year, 2014, marks ten years since Turkey became a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty and the anniversary offers a special opportunity for Turkey to commit to complete its outstanding obligations.
New and more powerful cluster munitions used in latest attack on civilians in Syria
Syrian government forces are using new and more powerful cluster munitions not seen before in the conflict, adding to the civilian death toll and leaving a deadly legacy of unexploded ordnance according to a new report by Cluster Munition Coalition member, Human Rights Watch.
HRW reports that government forces used rockets containing explosive submunitions in attacks on Keferzita, in northern Syria, on February 12 and 13, 2014. These are the largest type of cluster munition rockets yet identified in Syria, more powerful and deadly than those previously used.

Survivor Leaders at Key ICRC African Union Meeting
Two survivor leaders speak out at the workshop on victim assistance at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 4–6 March.