

## **Land Mines and Cluster bombs:**

“Land-mines represent "an insidious and persistent danger" to children affected by war, says a new United Nations report on the impact of armed conflict on children, by Graça Machel, the UN Secretary-General's Expert on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children.

Picture at right: ***An elephant in Sri Lanka with part of its front right leg amputated from a land mine***



“Children are particularly vulnerable to land-mines in a number of ways. If they are too young to read or are illiterate, signs posted to warn them of the presence of mines are useless. Also, children are far more likely to die from their mine injuries than are adults. Of those maimed children who survive, few will receive prostheses that keep up with the continued growth of their stunted limbs.”

<http://www.unicef.org/graca/mines1.htm>

“US efforts to avoid landmine use

“US law has prohibited all antipersonnel mine exports since October 1992 and in December

2007, the export moratorium was extended until 2014.

“Furthermore, the US has not used antipersonnel mines since 1991, nor produced them since 1997.

“The ICBL (the International Campaign to Ban Landmines) also reports that the United States has contributed at least \$796.8 million in support of mine action between 1999 and 2008.”

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/79/landmines>

## **Cluster bombs**

(many consider this as another form of land mine): Although one website is indicated for quotes, there are a number, including wikipedia, that offer similar information.

***Pic at right: A US B-1 Lancer dropping cluster bombs***



“Cluster bombs open in mid-air and spew hundreds of small bomblets about the size of a D-cell battery or a soda can over a wide area. Each of these sub-munitions is supposed to detonate when it hits the ground, sending out deadly shrapnel. A typical cluster bomb, which contains between dozens and hundreds of bomblets, can kill or injure anyone in an area the size of one or two football fields. These weapons are designed to be used on a battlefield, against concentrations of soldiers or armored vehicles, but are often used in civilian-populated areas instead. In addition, many of the bomblets — between 5 to 25 percent or more — do not explode as intended, becoming de facto landmines for many years to come (picture at left). The vast majority of cluster bomb casualties are civilians, many of them children.”



“Although intended to explode on contact, significant numbers fail to do so. Cluster munitions thus endanger civilians long after a conflict is over because the high number of unexploded bomblets become de facto landmines that can indiscriminately kill and injure for years.

“The United States currently produces, stockpiles, trades, and uses cluster bombs. We urge the U.S. to heed the call of the growing number of organizations calling for a ban on the use of these unreliable, inaccurate, and inhumane weapons.”

<http://www.clusterbombs.us/>

“3 December 2008, Cluster Bomb Ban Treaty Signed in Oslo:

“The Convention on Cluster Munitions was signed today on 3 December in the presence of 50 ministers in Oslo. More than one hundred states are attending the conference. For Handicap International, which has been campaigning for five years for the ban on cluster munitions, this convention represents an unprecedented step forward in international humanitarian law. In the future, no country will be able to use cluster munitions with impunity and the rights of victims will at last be recognized.”

“In December 2008, 95 countries - including our major NATO allies—signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Oslo, Norway. The U.S. did not participate in this treaty negotiation, and it has not signed the treaty.”

“US Cluster Bomb Exports Banned, 11/03/2009:

“President Obama signed into law today a permanent ban on nearly all cluster bomb **exports** from the United States. Congress included the export ban in an omnibus budget bill that passed the Senate last night. This provision will move the U.S. one step closer to the position of the nearly 100 nations--including our closest NATO allies--that signed a treaty banning cluster munitions in December.

“The legislation states that cluster munitions can only be exported if they leave behind less than one percent of their submunitions as duds, and if the receiving country agrees that cluster munitions "will not be used where civilians are known to be present." Only a tiny fraction of the cluster munitions in the U.S. arsenal meet the one percent standard. This export ban was first enacted in a similar budget bill in December 2007, but that law mandated it for only one year.

**“U.S.-exported cluster bombs were most recently used by Israel in Southern Lebanon, where dud rates were reportedly as high as 40 percent; hundreds of civilians and miners have been killed or maimed since the fighting ended in 2006.”**

<http://www.clusterbombs.us/latest-news/#c509>

**Comment: While this ban on exports is a step in the right direction, it has no affect on our own military using these inhumane weapons.**