

**USCMA Resolution on
Banning Cluster Munitions
2008 Annual Meeting
Baltimore, MD**

"It is necessary to remedy the errors of the past and avoid their repetition in the future,"

Benedict XVI on backing the international call to ban cluster bombs

Let it be resolved that:

As people of faith and missionaries working all over the world, we, USCMA members, join the Holy Father, the US Bishops and Faith leaders from all over the world in raising our voices for the protection of life and promotion of peace by calling on all governments to end the production, transfer, stockpiling, and use of cluster bombs.

Rationale:

“For more than 40 years, cluster bombs have killed and wounded innocent people, causing untold suffering, loss and hardship for thousands in more than 20 countries across the planet. These weapons cause death and injury to civilians during attacks and for years afterwards because of the lethal contamination that they cause. Cluster bombs hamper post-conflict rebuilding and rehabilitation and the dangerous work of cluster bomb clearance absorbs funds that could be spent on other urgent humanitarian needs. Without determined action, the civilian harm caused by these weapons both during and after conflict will continue to grow.

The voices of those whose lives have already been shattered by cluster munitions call us to take meaningful and courageous action. Our faith traditions call us to stand with those who have suffered, and to work for the well-being of the human family through relationships of respect, justice, and peace.” *(Faith Leaders’ Appeal for an International Treaty to Ban Cluster Munitions, April 17, 2008)*

As USCMA members, we join Pope Benedict XVI, the US Catholic Bishops and other Faith leaders who have been vocal supporters of efforts to reduce and ultimately ban the use of landmines, and the indiscriminate nature of failed cluster bomb “duds” which makes them akin to landmines. Catholic moral teaching on just war insists that noncombatant immunity be respected and that the use of force be discriminate.

Our commitment flows from the Church’s teaching on the protection of human life and dignity. In June 2006, the Holy See declared, “The disastrous humanitarian impact of cluster bombs needs no further demonstration. ... Their victims can be counted by the millions, the regions affected continue to be prohibited to displaced persons for years after the end of wars, nor can they be used by the inhabitants.”

Suggested Actions

- Write and/or call your representatives to support the passage of the Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act of 2007 (formerly S. 594 / HR 1755) introduced by Senator Dianne Feinstein and Representative James McGovern addressing the restrictions on the use or export of existing, inaccurate stockpiles of cluster munitions and restricting the use of these weapons in civilian areas.
- Spread the word and sign the Cluster Bomb Petition (www.banminesusa.org)

Resources:

- <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/May22007Landmines.pdf>
- http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/landmine/faith_leaders_signatures.pdf
- www.banclusterbomb.org or contact Lora Lumpe, Legislative Representative, Friends Committee on National Legislation Coordinator, US Campaign to Ban Landmines. Tel: 202-903-2522
- <http://www.banminesusa.org/>