

U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines & Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Possible Transfer of Cluster Munitions to Ukraine

June 2, 2023

Following multiple requests from [members of Congress](#) and Ukrainian leaders for the United States to transfer cluster munitions to Ukraine, the U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munition Coalition reiterates its condemnation of the use of internationally outlawed cluster munitions and firm opposition to transfers of these weapons by any party. Cluster munitions are among the most harmful weapons to civilians, as they are designed to disperse indiscriminately across a wide area and also often fail to explode on initial use, littering communities with unstable unexploded ordnance and causing devastating harm to civilians, and especially children, years after a conflict ends.

Cluster munitions have been used repeatedly by the Russian military since its invasion in February of 2022, causing hundreds of civilian casualties and damaging civilian objects, including homes, hospitals, and schools, [according to Human Rights Watch](#). The Ukrainian military has also used cluster munitions on [multiple occasions](#). We strongly condemn the use of cluster munitions by all parties in the war in Ukraine and call for the immediate end to the use of these horrific weapons.

There is a global consensus against the use of cluster munitions. They have a persistent track record of high failure rates and have caused thousands of civilian casualties in numerous wars since their widespread use in Southeast Asia. 111 countries, including the vast majority of U.S. NATO allies, are states parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which bans the use, production, transfer, and stockpiling of these deadly weapons. Unfortunately, the United States, Ukraine, and Russia are currently outliers and are not party to this treaty.

We recognize and applaud President Biden's firm stance in not sending cluster munitions to Ukraine. This should continue as it works to prevent further injury and death of civilians and is consistent with other U.S. efforts to protect civilians in conflict, including the United States' endorsement of the political declaration on the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas ([EWIPA](#)).

Cluster munitions—of any kind—are [not the “winning weapon”](#) in this conflict. Their use will only cause greater suffering, today and for years to come.

The United States must not be complicit in the use of these devastating and indiscriminate weapons. We reiterate our call on the United States to demand the immediate halt to all use of cluster munitions, continue to reject any transfer of such weapons, and to swiftly join the Convention on Cluster Munitions. In particular we call upon the United States to refrain from adding, directly or indirectly, to what is already a massive amount of pollution by explosive devices and remnants of war on the territory of Ukraine.

U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines-U.S. Cluster Munition Coalition

The United States Campaign to Ban Landmines-U.S. Cluster Munition Coalition (USCBL-CMC) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations working to ensure that the U.S. comprehensively prohibits antipersonnel mines and cluster munitions and joins the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions. It is the national affiliate of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC), founded in New York in 1992 and recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate together with former ICBL coordinator Ms. Jody Williams of Vermont. The USCBL-CMC also calls for sustained U.S. government financial support for UXO clearance and victim assistance.