

November 26, 2008

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P./C.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Governments from around the world will be gathering in Oslo on December 3, 2008, to sign a treaty banning cluster munitions. We urge you to ensure that Canada is represented and takes a lead role on the cluster munitions issue as it did with the treaty banning landmines eleven years ago.

We also urge the Government of Canada to provide financial, medical and rehabilitation relief for those civilians and communities affected by cluster munitions. Cluster munitions kill and injure civilians as they scatter explosives over wide areas and many of the bomblets or submunitions fail to explode on impact, killing and injuring civilians long after conflict, similar to land mines.

Cluster munitions kill indiscriminately and are stockpiled in the billions by 75 countries. The Lebanon conflict of 2006 demonstrated that non-State armed groups now have access to cluster munitions and that the problem can rapidly become far worse if urgent steps are not taken. It has been reported that cluster bombs were used in the Russia-Georgia conflict.

Sincerely,

Karen Dempsey

Karen Dempsey
President,
National Council of Women of Canada
205 - 251 Bank Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 1X3
ncwc@magma.ca

cc: Hon. Jack Layton
Hon. Stéphane Dion
Mr. Gilles Duceppe