



International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Canada

We are committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons, the prevention of war, the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution and social justice in a sustainable world.

August 1 2023

For immediate release,

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Canada Respond to the United States' Plans to transfer banned cluster munitions to Ukraine

As physicians we are appalled by the United States' plans to transfer banned cluster munitions to Ukraine, The transfer of the weapon, prohibited under the [2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions](#), follows repeated requests by Ukrainian officials for cluster munitions to counter the Russian invasion.

Russia has used cluster munitions extensively, causing civilian harm, damaging civilian infrastructure, and contaminating agricultural land. Ukrainian forces have used cluster munitions on several occasions in the war according to the [United Nations](#), [Human Rights Watch](#). Russia, Ukraine and the United States remain outside of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Canada does not. It is a State Party to this important Convention.

This requires Canada to oppose every use of these weapons.

Cluster munitions are delivered by artillery, rockets, missiles, and aircraft. They open in mid-air and disperse dozens or hundreds of submunitions, also called bomblets, over a wide area. Cluster munitions not only kill at time of impact, they also leave a lethal trail of unexploded ordnance threatening lives for years to come.

While often lethal, these weapons are designed to maim. As physicians, we are acutely aware of our limited ability to repair the injuries caused and the impact of resultant disabilities. This poses a demand that health care systems have great difficulty meeting.

The experience of the use of these weapons in Laos warns us of their fearsome ongoing impact. Decades after being dropped by the USA in the Vietnam war, one third of Laos is unsafe. It is estimated that it will take another 50 years to safely remove these munitions which daily threaten the lives of Laotian families, particularly children.

It is unthinkable that a similar fate awaits Ukraine.

We urge Canada to call for an immediate halt to transfers of these internationally banned weapons.

We ask that Canada make all efforts to persuade the United States, Russia and Ukraine to join the Cluster Munition Convention as soon as possible to guarantee protection of civilians and respect for international humanitarian law.

Signed,

Dr. John Guilfoyle

On behalf of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Canada



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About IPPNW Canada:

IPPNWC is the Canadian affiliate of IPPNW (Nobel prize 1985), established in 1980 through a dialogue between Soviet and US physicians. Our mission since 1981 has been to build a peaceful world. We are committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons, the prevention of war, the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution and social justice in a sustainable world. As physicians, we are concerned with the health-related impacts of nuclear weapons, their use, and affects. As there is no meaningful medical response to the trauma involved in a nuclear weapons catastrophe, our aim is to prevent such an ultimate public disaster.

Find more information on our website <https://www.ippnwcanada.ca>

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