

## Press Release

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### A Guide to Cluster Munitions

The current debate on a ban or prohibition of cluster munitions which cause unacceptable harm to civilians is moving very quickly. As a means of providing those engaged in this debate with a useful overview on the topic of cluster munitions, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining has produced a first edition of *A Guide to Cluster Munitions*.

The Guide supports, from a neutral and technical perspective, the current discussions on this important topic. It is a detailed information source, which also considers the impact of cluster munitions – human, social and economic. Safe clearance and disposal methods, in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), are presented, taking into account the lessons learned in recent clearance operations.

The Guide's intended readers are States and their armed forces, as well as international and non-governmental organisations involved in clearance of cluster munitions or providing assistance to the victims. It is a useful resource for civil society and those involved in addressing the consequences of these weapons, as well as journalists, academics and newcomers to the issue.

The GICHD does not have a policy or advocacy role on the issue of cluster munitions. However, the Centre's mandate and strategy covers not only anti-personnel mines, but all landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), including cluster munitions. The GICHD technical inputs supports the work within both the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and also the "Oslo Process" started by several States, international and non-governmental organizations in February 2007. The Centre's objective is to contribute to the conclusion of an international legally binding instrument on cluster munitions.

In order to reflect the pace of change in this field, the Centre is already planning an updated and revised edition, scheduled for release by early 2009.

We are grateful to the Governments of Lithuania and the United Kingdom for their funding and support of this publication.

Free copies of the Guide can be ordered via: <http://www.gichd.org/publications>

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