



Cluster Munitions in Africa

Prepared by Human Rights Watch

Globally, 34 countries are known to have produced over 210 different types of air-dropped and surface-launched cluster munitions including projectiles, bombs, rockets, missiles, and dispensers. Existing stockpiled cluster munitions contain billions of individual submunitions. Cluster munitions are stockpiled by at least 76 states and have been used in at least 30 countries or disputed territories. According to available information, at least 13 countries have transferred over 50 types of cluster munitions to at least 60 other countries.

In Africa, two countries have produced cluster munitions and at least 14 countries stockpile cluster munitions; 13 of the 14 countries that stockpile have imported the weapon and both producers on the continent have exported. A total of ten countries have used cluster munitions in Africa and nine countries are contaminated to some degree with cluster munition remnants.

Cluster Munition Use in Africa

Nearly one-third of the locations where cluster munitions have been used are in Africa and the majority of this use has occurred in the past decade. The cluster munitions used on the continent originated in the former USSR, US, UK, France, Greece, and Chile. Reports of cluster munitions use in Africa include:

- Deminers have found dud Soviet-made PTAB submunitions in various locations in **Angola**.
- French aircraft dropped cluster bombs on a Libyan airfield at Wadi Doum in **Chad**. Libyan forces also used AO-1SCh and PTAB-2.5 submunitions at various locations in 1986-1987.
- Deminers have found BL-755 bombs and dud submunitions in the villages of Kasu, Katelwa, and Est Agrico in Kabalo territory in **DR Congo**.
- **Eritrea** and **Ethiopia** exchanged cluster munition strikes in 1998. Ethiopia attacked the Asmara airport and Eritrea attacked the Mekele airport; both used air-dropped

cluster bombs. Ethiopia also dropped BL-755 bombs in Gash-Barka province of western Eritrea. A UN explosive ordnance disposal team in the area of Melhadega, Eritrea identified and destroyed a dud M20G DPICM submunition of Greek origin in October 2004.

- Nigerian peacekeepers dropped BLG-66 Beluga bombs on the eastern town of Kenema in **Sierra Leone** in 1997.
- Sudanese government forces used air-dropped cluster munitions in southern **Sudan**, including Chilean made PM-1 submunitions between 1996 and 1999.
- Deminers in the northern district of Gulu in **Uganda** have found RBK-250/275 bombs and AO-1SCh submunitions.
- Moroccan forces used both air-dropped and artillery-delivered cluster munitions against a non-state armed group in **Western Sahara** at various times between 1975 and 1988.

Regional Overview of Cluster Munition Production, Stockpiling, Use, and Transfer

A total of 14 states in Africa are known to stockpile cluster munitions. This number has grown as more states became engaged in the Oslo Process and new information has become available. African countries that stockpile cluster munitions include:

| Country | Type Stockpiled |
|---------------|---|
| Algeria | KMG-U dispenser |
| Angola | KMG-U dispenser RBK bomb |
| Egypt | CBU-87 bomb M26 rocket M26A1 rocket M42 projectile Rockeye bomb SAKR-18 rocket SAKR-36 rocket |
| Eritrea | CB-500 bomb |
| Ethiopia | BL-755 bomb CB-500 bomb |
| Guinea | 9M55K rocket |
| Guinea-Bissau | RBK bomb |

| Country | Type Stockpiled |
|--------------|---|
| Libya | KMG-U dispenser RBK bomb |
| Morocco | CBU-52 bomb CBU-58 bomb M483A1 projectile Rockeye bomb |
| Nigeria | BL-755 bomb |
| South Africa | CB-470 bomb M2001 projectile TIEKIE bomb |
| Sudan | KMG-U dispenser RBK bomb |
| Uganda | RBK bomb |
| Zimbabwe | CB-470 bomb |

On a positive note, during the Belgrade Conference of Countries Affected by Cluster Munitions in October 2007, **Uganda** pledged to destroy its stockpile.

Several states inherited stockpiles of cluster munitions as the result of the break up of other states or as part of arms sales. Other states had cluster munitions provided to them at little or no cost by allies and may not realize that these cluster munitions are known to have high dud rates. In other cases, states are not always aware that they possess a residual stockpile of cluster munitions. Some concrete examples from Africa include:

- Deminers operating in **Angola** have documented the presence of casings of RBK 250/275 cluster bombs among abandoned ammunition stocks; it is unclear which belligerent party controlled these stocks during the decades of conflict in Angola.
- Moldova reported in its submission to the UN Register of Conventional Arms for Calendar Year 2000 the transfer of 860 9M55K missiles for the 220mm *Uragan* multiple launch rocket system (each containing 30 high-explosive submunitions) to **Guinea**.¹
- The British NGO Landmine Action documented the presence of PTAB 2.5 bomblets and RBK series air-dropped cluster munitions in **Guinea-Bissau**; the munitions were ejected by an explosion at an ammunition storage facility in Bra Barrio, located in the outskirts of Bissau City, sometime in 2000.

Egypt and **South Africa** are the only two countries on the continent known to have produced cluster munitions and both countries have exported in the past. Jane's Information Group reports that the Alpha bomblet developed for the South African CB-470 cluster bomb was produced by the predecessor of **Zimbabwe**, Rhodesia, and that "Zimbabwe may have quantities of the Alpha bomblet."²

The Helipolis Company for Chemical Industries in **Egypt** produces projectiles for 122mm, 130mm, and 152mm caliber artillery pieces which contain M42D DPICM submunitions. The SAKR Factory for Developed Industries produced 122mm surface-launched rockets containing 72 submunitions, some of which were exported to Iraq. Egypt is also a significant recipient of exports of cluster munitions, primarily from the United States, which include artillery projectiles, aircraft bombs, and surface-fired multiple launch rockets. **Morocco** is the other biggest recipient of US exports of cluster munitions in Africa.

According to the Foreign Ministry of **South Africa**, “the South African Defence Force has manufactured and used submunitions in the past, which have been phased out, and is in the process of developing newer generations of submunitions.”³ South Africa has established a reliability requirement for cluster munitions; they “function as intended at a reliability rate better than 98% and at a confidence level of better than 95%.”⁴ The company Denel produces the M2001 155mm DPICM artillery projectile and at one time also produced the CB-470 cluster bomb (containing 40 Alpha bomblets) although it is thought that this was produced for export purposes only. Iraq is reported to have bought the CB-470 in the late 1980s.

Africa and the Oslo Process

The growing number of countries from Africa in the Oslo Process is an encouraging development. This support for action on cluster munitions has historical precedent. Algeria, Egypt, Mali, Mauritania, and Sudan were among a group of countries that proposed a ban on anti-personnel cluster munitions at the 1976 conference that preceded the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Countries from Africa participating in the Oslo, Lima, Vienna, and Wellington conferences are detailed below.

Angola, Egypt, Mozambique, and South Africa joined the declaration made at the Oslo Conference on Cluster Munitions on 22-23 February 2007, which committed them to “Conclude by 2008 a legally binding international instrument that prohibits the use and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians and secure adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and clearance of contaminated areas.”

14 countries participated in the Lima Conference on Cluster Munitions in May 2007: Angola, Burundi, Chad, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

38 countries participated in the Vienna Conference on Cluster Munitions in December 2007: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Congo (Rep. of), Congo (DR), Cote d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco,

Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia.

30 countries from Africa have subscribed so far to the Wellington Declaration (as of 29 April 2008): Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo (Rep. of), Cote d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Subscribing to the Wellington Declaration affirms the country's "objective of concluding the negotiation of such an instrument prohibiting cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians in Dublin in May 2008."

**Countries from Africa that have not subscribed to the Wellington Declaration
(as of 29 April 2008)**

Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Rep., Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Libya, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Seychelles, Somalia, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Zimbabwe

¹ Submission by the Republic of Moldova, UN Register of Conventional Arms, Report for Calendar Year 2000, 30 May 2001.

² *Jane's Air Launched Weapons*, Robert Hewson, ed. (Surrey, UK: Jane's Information Group Limited, 2004), p. 440.

³ Communication from the South African Delegation to the Conference on Disarmament, to the Pax Christi Netherlands, 19 January 2005.

⁴ Ibid.