



Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.

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21 October 2010

The Hon. Stephen Smith MP,
Minister for Defence,
Parliament House,
Canberra,
ACT 2600

Dear Mr. Smith,

Re The Convention on Cluster Munitions

I write on behalf of the Australian Federation of Graduate Women to express our pleasure at your recent signing of the Treaty to Ban the use of Cluster Bombs on behalf of Australia.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions has been a key concern for the International Federation of University Women to which we are affiliated and the following resolution was passed unanimously at the recent Triennial Conference in Mexico City:

IFUW and its National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to ratify and take concrete action to implement the Convention on Cluster Munitions (Dublin Convention) (August 2010)

We in Australia have been anxious about the ratification of this Convention and are delighted to be able to report your action back to Geneva. However we express concern that Australia may be implicated in the use of these weapons in joint actions with other countries or parties who, like the US, have not signed this Treaty. We therefore seek reassurance through you about the Australian Government's position in regard to this type of situation.

We also wish to enquire about any measures Australia is taking and planning to take to provide rehabilitation and assistance to Iraqi civilians already injured and incapacitated by earlier use of these bombs, especially given that many of the casualties were and often are children.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Jane Baker
President AFGW Inc