



Psychologists for Peace

An Interest Group of the
Australian Psychological Society

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AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT MUST SUPPORT BILL TO BAN CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Australian Psychological Society Interest Group, Psychologists for Peace (PFP) expresses its support for Senator Lyn Allison's proposed bill prohibiting the use of cluster munitions by members of the Australian Defence Force.

PFP National Convenor Dr Susie Burke says psychologists are all too aware of the short and long-term trauma caused by war for civilians and military personnel.

"The use of cluster munitions has a devastating impact on civilians," says Dr Burke. "These weapons are imprecise, and send out highly explosive sub munitions that can scatter over a much wider area of land than conventional weapons. Many of these sub munitions fail to explode on impact, leaving lethal debris in the land that leads to countless deaths in the weeks, months and even years following the conflict. Some communities are still being devastated by explosions decades after the weapons were used."

"Cluster munitions are also particularly harrowing for military personnel. The use of indiscriminate weapons adds to the already shocking trauma of using force to destroy human lives."

"It's hard to think of anything more likely to perpetuate cycles of violence, breed long-term bitterness and hatred in war torn regions, and nurture the next generation of enemy combatants," said Dr. Burke.

"We support the prohibition of these indiscriminate weapons of war that injure and kill so many innocent civilians every day," says Dr Burke. "We hope that the Australian Government will demonstrate a commitment to human rights by supporting this bill and take a leading role in protecting innocent people."

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