

**Auszüge aus der Eröffnungsrede des norwegischen Außenministers
Jonas Gahr Støre, Streubombenkonferenz Oslo am 22.2.2007**

(...)

Let us cut through the complexities at the outset and agree on our joint purpose: We must bring an end to the unacceptable human suffering caused by the use of cluster munitions. This suffering is not an inevitable and unavoidable consequence of modern war. It is the result of the use of a particular group of weapons, developed for other conflict scenarios than those we are faced with today. These weapons may still be considered useful from a narrow battlefield perspective, although many doubt it. But their humanitarian and political consequences – long after the conflicts have ended – by far outweigh their usefulness.

(...)

Even when our adversaries choose to defy established laws and norms of warfare, for instance by placing their military positions in the middle of civilian areas, we cannot put basic humanitarian principles aside. Our military response must be within established principles of distinction and proportionality. The use of cluster munitions – with unacceptable humanitarian consequences – clearly violates these principles. In the end there are no winners, only losers.

(...)

Children are particularly vulnerable and constitute a disproportionately large group of victims. They are three-fold victims. Unaware of the threat, they are vulnerable as they go about their activities. Dependent of their families, they are vulnerable when their parents become victims. And as young individuals, they are vulnerable to the longer-term psychosocial effects. The psychosocial effects of anti-personnel landmines are well documented. There is little reason to believe that cluster munitions would have any less negative effect on children's health and welfare.

Technical improvements in weapons technology will not be enough to address the complex humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions. They may improve the reliability rates under controlled environments.

But the *actual* reliability of an individual submunition depends on the context in which it is used. This includes factors such as age, storage and handling conditions, user competence, and terrain and weather at time of deployment. In practical terms, it is impossible to create a 100% reliable weapon.

(...)

Political intentions are not enough. We need to add solid and well documented efforts to hone in on what we want to change. And we need the right dose of realism and pragmatism to focus our work and come up with proposals that are implementable. We take this approach with us as we now set a new course: Banning the use of certain types of cluster munitions is a logical extension of these endeavours.