

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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October 13, 2011

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani
Prime Minister's Secretariat
Constitution Avenue
Islamabad
Pakistan

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to urge Pakistan's adherence with the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions. A total of 111 governments have signed or acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, adopted 30 May 2008, but not Pakistan.

As an interim step towards acceding to this important humanitarian convention, Human Rights Watch urges Pakistan to abide by the spirit and intent of its provisions, including by instituting a prohibition on the transfer of cluster munitions manufactured by Pakistan Ordnance Factory and any other Pakistani entities.

Recent events underscore the need for Pakistan to address its policy and practice on the transfer of cluster munitions, weapons that are banned by the Convention on Cluster Munitions. On 15 September 2011, the London-based arms expo Defence & Security Equipment international (DSEi) permanently closed the Pakistan Ordnance Factory stand and Pakistan's Defence Export Promotion Organisation pavilion after promotional materials were found on both containing references to equipment found to breach UK Government Export Controls and DSEi's contractual requirements.

The closure came after a British Member of Parliament found the companies were distributing brochures listing cluster munitions available for sale, including the 155mm Base Bleed Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munition containing 45 submunitions and the 155mm M483A1 cluster munition containing 88 submunitions, both manufactured by the government-owned company Pakistan Ordnance Factory. Similar concerns were raised during the 2009 DSEi arms fair, when Pakistan Ordnance Factory was found to be advertising the 155mm Base Bleed DPICM cluster munition.

An export ban would be consistent with Pakistan's long-standing export moratorium on antipersonnel landmines, which are prohibited by the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, another crucial agreement that Pakistan has not joined. Pakistan announced a comprehensive moratorium of unlimited duration on the export of antipersonnel landmines in March 1997 and strengthened it after the

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adoption of the Mine Ban Treaty with a February 1999 regulation that makes the export of antipersonnel mines illegal. We understand that Pakistan has been complying with this regulation although no data is available on persons arrested or charged under this law.

Several states that have not joined the Convention on Cluster Munitions are nonetheless taking action to adhere to its provisions. For example, the US and Singapore have each enacted an export moratorium on cluster munitions.

A total of 40 non-signatories to the Convention on Cluster Munitions participated as observers in the Convention's Second Meeting of States Parties in Beirut, Lebanon in September 2011. Many indicated their presence was due to concern over the humanitarian impact of cluster munition use. Pakistan has never attended a diplomatic meeting relating to the convention, even as an observer. We urge Pakistan to reconsider its stance on joining the Convention on Cluster Munitions and, as an interim measure, participate in a meeting of the convention.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the Convention on Cluster Munitions further with you.

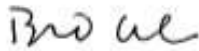
Sincerely,



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