Faith Leaders’ Appeal for an International Treaty to Ban Cluster Munitions

17 April 2008

As people of faith, we raise our voices for the protection of life and promotion of peace by calling on all governments to end the production, transfer, stockpiling, and use of cluster bombs.

For more than 40 years, cluster bombs have killed and wounded innocent people, causing untold suffering, loss and hardship for thousands in more than 20 countries across the planet. These weapons cause death and injury to civilians during attacks and for years afterwards because of the lethal contamination that they cause. Cluster bombs hamper post-conflict rebuilding and rehabilitation and the dangerous work of cluster bomb clearance absorbs funds that could be spent on other urgent humanitarian needs. Without determined action, the civilian harm caused by these weapons both during and after conflict will continue to grow.

The voices of those whose lives have already been shattered by cluster munitions call us to take meaningful and courageous action. Our faith traditions call us to stand with those who have suffered, and to work for the well-being of the human family through relationships of respect, justice, and peace.

We are speaking out today on the Global Day of Action to Ban Cluster Bombs where people across all continents, cultures and faiths are taking action and calling for a ban on cluster bombs.

A comprehensive ban on cluster bombs can and must be negotiated one month from now in Dublin, Ireland, in May 2008. We urge governments to take up this heavy responsibility by seizing this opportunity to take concrete action for the protection of the vulnerable and for the promotion of peace.

Sincerely,

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Anglican Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town

Dr. Christoph Cardinal Schönborn
Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna, Catholic Church of Austria

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Archbishop of the Abuja Diocese of the Catholic Church and President of the Christian Association of Nigeria

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Sheik Abu-Bakarr Tejan-Jalloh
Chief Imam of Freetown Central Mosque, Sierra Leone

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Bishop of Auckland, Catholic Church of New Zealand

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