

May 6, 2009

United States of America  
6930 Carroll Avenue - Suite 240  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Tel.: + 1 301 891 2138  
info@handicap-international.us  
www.handicap-international.us

Belgium  
67 rue de Spa  
1000 Bruxelles  
Tel.: + 32 (0) 2 280 16 01  
headoffice@handicap.be  
www.handicap-international.be

France  
14 avenue Berthelot  
69361 Lyon Cedex 07  
Tel.: + 33 (0) 4 78 69 79 79  
contact@handicap-international.org  
www.handicap-international.fr

104-106 rue Oberkampf  
75011 Paris  
Tel.: + 33 (0) 1 43 14 87 00  
paris@handicap-international.org

Germany  
Ganghofer str. 19  
80339 München  
Tel.: + 49 (0) 89 54 76 06 00  
kontakt@handicap-international.de  
www.handicap-international.de

Canada  
1819 boulevard René-Lévesque Ouest  
Bureau 401  
Montréal (Québec) H3H 2P5  
Tel.: + 1 514 908 2813  
info@handicap-international.ca  
www.handicap-international.ca

Luxembourg  
140 rue Adolphe Fischer  
1521 Luxembourg  
Grand Duché de Luxembourg  
Tel.: + 352 42 80 60  
hilux@pt.lu  
www.handicap-international.lu

United Kingdom  
CAN Mezzanine, 32-36 Loman St.  
London, SE1 0EH, UK  
Tel.: + 44 (0) 870 774 37 37  
hi-uk@hi-uk.org  
www.handicap-international.org.uk

Switzerland  
Avenue de la Paix 11  
1202 Genève  
PC/CCP 12-484-4  
Tel.: + 41 (0) 22 788 70 33  
contact@handicap-international.ch  
www.handicap-international.ch

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States of America  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for stating through your spokeswoman last December that your administration would review the previous government's decision not to participate in the global treaty banning cluster munitions, then being signed by America's closest allies.

Before you begin this review, we would like to request that you meet with three victims of cluster munitions: Lynn Bradach from the United States, Raed Mokaed from Lebanon and Soraj Ghulam Habib from Afghanistan.

May 30, 2009 will mark the one year anniversary of the adoption by more than 100 countries of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which bans production, stockpiling, transfer and use of these weapons. Although the U.S. government did not attend the treaty negotiations last year, victims of these weapons did. They lobbied governments to develop and support a strong treaty, one that seeks to end the use of unguided, inaccurate cluster munitions, which cover a very large area with deadly shrapnel at the time of use and leave behind hundreds to hundreds of thousands of unexploded cluster submunitions that threaten civilians far into the future.

The reason that the world community responded to their call is vividly illustrated by their personal stories.

Soraj Ghulam Habib was 10 years old in December 2001, when he picked up a yellow BLU-97 submunition on the ground of a public park in Herat, Afghanistan, thinking it was a can of food. It exploded, killing two of his cousins and tearing off both of his legs. Raed Mokaed's 5 year old son Ahmad was killed by a decade-old submunition that he found in a park in Nabatiyah, southern Lebanon, on his fifth birthday. Lynn Bradach's son Travis, a U.S. Marine corporal trained in explosives ordnance disposal, was killed in Karbala, Iraq in July 2003 while clearing unexploded U.S. cluster submunitions from a farmer's field.

They—and we—believe that U.S. participation in this treaty would reaffirm and underscore your government's commitment to ensuring that protection of civilians is a top priority in the conduct of foreign affairs, particularly to those regions of the world that have, in recent years, suffered a great deal from this weapon.

They would welcome a chance to discuss this issue with you at your convenience to help your government begin a period of balanced reflection on this issue.

With our highest regards,



Wendy Batson  
Executive Director