According to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, “cluster munition” means a conventional munition that is designed to disperse or release explosive submunitions each weighing less than 20 kilograms and includes those explosive submunitions.

It does not mean the following:

a. A munition or submunition designed to dispense flares, smoke, pyrotechnics or chaff; or a munition designed exclusively for an air defence role;
b. A munition or submunition designed to produce electrical or electronic effects;
c. A munition that, in order to avoid indiscriminate area effects and the risks posed by unexploded submunitions, has all of the following characteristics:
   i. Each munition contains fewer than ten explosive submunitions;
   ii. Each explosive submunition weighs more than four kilograms;
   iii. Each explosive submunition is designed to detect and engage a single target object;
   iv. Each explosive submunition is equipped with an electronic self-destruction mechanism;
   v. Each explosive submunition is equipped with an electronic self-deactivating feature.

See also Weapons [1]; Indiscriminate attacks [2]
Chapter 9, Cluster munitions

DOCUMENT

Convention on Cluster Munitions

CASES

Cambodia/Thailand, Border Conflict around the Temple of Preah Vihear

The armed conflict in Syria

Syria, the Battle for Aleppo

Libya, Use of cluster bombs

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES


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**Source URL:** https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/cluster-munitions

**Links**

[1] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/weapons
[3] https://casebook.icrc.org/law/conduct-hostilities#iii_2_c_ff