

Cluster bombs: Biden considers sending banned weapons to Ukraine

written by Gary Wilson
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South Korean Air Force personnel prepare to load U.S.-made and supplied cluster bombs — internationally banned weapons — during an exercise in 2017 at an air base in Suwon, South Korea. Photo: New York Times

[CNN reports](#) that the Biden administration is considering adding cluster bombs to the mass of weapons it is pouring into Ukraine. The production and use of cluster bombs is prohibited under international law.

The \$858-billion National Defense Authorization Act passed by the House of Representatives includes billions for weapons for Ukraine and Taiwan, reports Defense News. “The U.S. Army is seeking a ‘dramatic’ ramp up in monthly production of weapons and munitions for Ukraine,” [another report](#) adds.

According to CNN, “Ukrainian officials and lawmakers have in recent months urged the Biden administration and members of Congress to provide the Ukrainian military with cluster munition warheads ...

“Top U.S. officials have publicly stated that they plan to give the Ukrainians as much support as they need to give them an upper hand at the negotiating table with Russia, should it come to that. But Western military equipment is not infinite, and as stockpiles of warheads dwindle, the Ukrainians have made plain to the U.S. that it could use the cluster munitions currently gathering dust in storage.

“For Ukraine, cluster munitions could address two major issues: the need for more ammunition for the artillery and rocket systems the U.S. and others have provided, and a way of closing Russia’s numerical superiority in artillery. The Biden administration has not taken the option off the table.”

In a report on “[9 weapons banned from modern warfare](#),” Blake Stilwell says: “A cluster bomb releases a number of projectiles on impact to injure or damage personnel and vehicles. The 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions banned these for

two reasons. First, they have wide area effects and are unable to distinguish between civilians and combatants. Second, cluster munitions leave behind large numbers of dangerous unexploded ordnance.”

