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# Belgium becoming the first country in the world to ban uranium weapons

- Homepage - News - News Articles -

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They were first with land mines, first with cluster bombs - now Belgium has become the first country in the world to ban uranium weapons. Although the Belgian army does not currently use uranium weapons, the ban will affect US shipments of uranium ammunition and armour plate via the port of Antwerp.

The Belgian Chamber Commission on National Defence voted unanimously in favour of banning the use of depleted uranium "inert ammunitions and armour plates on Belgian territory."

Acknowledging the Precautionary Principle, the deputies agreed that the manufacture, use, storage, sale, acquisition, supply and transit of these conventional weapon systems should be prohibited. At the last moment the term "weapon" was deleted to make sure that the law proposal would not put a ban on the thermonuclear bombs that are stored on the Air Force base of Kleine Brogel.

In a few weeks, the Commission's decision will be discussed in the full Parliament and the Senate. This will be only a question of formality. The ruling has made Belgium the first country in the world to ban ammunitions and armour that contain depleted uranium or any other industrially manufactured uranium. Because it was purported that the government needs time to promote such a ban outside Belgium, and because the Dutch speaking liberal-democrat party wants to know if other countries would be willing to follow the Belgian example, it is now stipulated in the accepted text that the law will get into force two years after publication in the Belgian Statute Book.

The vote was a result of intense lobbying by the Belgian Coalition 'Stop Uranium Weapons!' The coalition is a member of the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW), an umbrella group of 85 members from 22 countries who are seeking to promote an independent treaty to ban the manufacture, use, transfer, stockpiling and sale of uranium weapons.

The Belgian Coalition: [Stop Uranium weapons!](#)  
is a co-operation of the following NGO's:

Association Médicale pour la Prévention de la Guerre Nucléaire - Groupe Liégeois pour l'Economie Distributive - CSOTAN - Pax Christi Leuven - Bond Beter Leefmilieu - Vakbondsmensen In Verzet tegen Oorlog - Oxfam-Solidariteit - Artsen voor Vrede - Netwerk-Vlaanderen - Mouvement Chrétien pour la Paix - International Action for Liberation - Stop United States of Aggression - Jeugdbond voor Natuur en Milieu - Links Ecologisch Forum - Forum voor Vredesactie - ACV-Brussel - Friends of the Earth Vlaanderen en Brussel - Greenpeace - Vlaams Overleg Duurzame Ontwikkeling - Pax Christi Vlaanderen - Coördination Nationale d'Action pour la Paix et la Démocratie - Vrede - SOS Irak - Verbond VOS - Mouvement Ouvrier Chrétien Liège-Huy-Waremme

From [ICBUW](#) (International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons)