Intervention by Norway

Conventional Weapons Cluster, Friday 13 October 2006

Madam Chair,

Conventional weapons have a legitimate role in strategies to defend states. They also have a heavy impact on individuals’ humanitarian situation and human rights. Some weapons have humanitarian consequences that are not acceptable, or not in conformity with International Humanitarian Law. A constant flow of illicit weapons has become an often seen feature of conflicts – regardless of whether sanctions are in place or not.

This constitutes a major challenge to both security and development. We must address these problems by focusing also on how to enhance security for individual women, men and children and their communities – not only states.

These are chief concerns for Norway. This Committee must seize the opportunities before it to take crucial action that will make a real difference for people.

- **Firstly**, Norway is in favour of this Committee to take decisive first steps towards an Arms Trade Treaty. In our view, the need for such a treaty has been firmly established. Although this delegation is ready to start negotiations now, we realise that several preparatory steps are required. We are happy to co-sponsor and support the resolution proposed by Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Kenya and the UK; and hope concrete work on an Arms Trade Treaty can start soon.

- **Secondly**, Norway places great emphasis on implementing the UN Programme of Action against the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. Norway strongly favours biannual meetings of States under the Programme of Action; as well as activities to oversee implementation of the international instrument on marking and tracing. We consider the omnibus resolution presented by South Africa, Colombia and Japan as the prime vehicle for taking concrete steps in this regard. Furthermore, we hope for a strong outcome of the Group of Governmental Experts on illicit brokering.

- **Thirdly**, measures to regulate the flow of conventional weapons must include ammunition to have real impact. To amend these shortcomings in existing instruments, Norway favours a separate process to address the issue of conventional ammunition in a comprehensive manner. We also endorse the draft resolution of France and Germany on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

- **Fourthly**, we must address certain cluster munitions and other types of ammunition that cause a humanitarian problem for the civilian population during;
and after conflict. It is imperative to start working, without further delay, towards an international ban on the types of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable humanitarian problems. We will support necessary steps to be taken to this end, including a decision by the States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons on a clear negotiation mandate at the coming Review Conference. Norway supports Sweden’s draft resolution on the CCW.

- **Fifthly**, Norway is a staunch supporter of the Mine Ban Convention. Although this Committee does not address the substance in the treaty, it makes decisions that provide support for statutory meetings. We commend Australia for biannualising the Mine Ban Convention resolution, and reiterate that biannualisation does not diminish the importance of a resolution.

I thank you Madam Chair.