Statement by Ambassador Jan Knutsson
Permanent Representative of Sweden to the CD
First Committee: Thematic discussion on Conventional Weapons,
19 October, 2010

Mr Chairperson,

Sweden has the honour to present the draft resolution L.44 on the
"Convention on Prohibitions and Restrictions on the Use of Certain
Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively
Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects". I do so together with
Senegal, as Chairman of the Meeting of States Parties; Latvia, as
President of the Eleventh Conference of Contracting Parties to Amended
Protocol II; and India, as President of the Third Conference of
Contracting Parties to Protocol V, all in 2009. I would like to take this
opportunity to extend our thanks to these three Ambassadors, who have
generously given their time and valuable experience to serve as officials
of these meetings.

The purpose of the CCW is to ban or restrict the use of certain specific
types of weapons that cause excessive injury or unnecessary suffering to
combatants or affect civilians indiscriminately. The Convention forms an
essential and integral part of international law applicable to armed
conflict. It is designed to provide a framework within which humanitarian
concerns regarding conventional weapons can be dealt with. We need the
CCW to be a dynamic instrument responding to urgent humanitarian
challenges before us. With the adoption and entry into force of Protocol
V on Explosive Remnants of War in November 2006, the CCW showed
that it is a living and important instrument of international law.

Adherence to the Convention and its Protocols has steadily increased
since the 2009 Meeting of States Parties, and today the CCW has some
113 States Parties. However, the number of States Parties to the
Convention still falls short of universal membership. Let me take this opportunity to express my hope that the countries that have not yet joined the Convention will find it in their interest to do so, and become parties to the Convention and its Protocols, including the important amendment that extends the scope of the Convention to include situations of non-internal conflict.

Speaking on universalization, I also especially would like to welcome the recent decision by the African Union on accession of African countries to the CCW, adopted by the Assembly of the Union in July of this year.

Mr Chairperson,

The purpose of the resolution which I introduce today, is to continue to express support for the CCW, with particular focus on the universalization of the Convention and its Protocols. The text of the resolution also reflects the ongoing work within the framework of the Convention since the adoption of last year’s resolution. It is an expression of support for the CCW as an important international humanitarian law instrument. However, the resolution does not pronounce itself on the substance of issues being discussed in the various expert groups, and it does not prejudge the outcomes of any future discussions among States Parties. The specific substantive issues will, of course, have to be addressed by the States Parties at their forthcoming meeting, including at the Meeting of States Parties in November this year.

In conclusion, I wish to express our sincere hope that the draft resolution, as in previous years, can be adopted without a vote.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.