STATEMENT OF SLOVENIA
Mr Boštjan Jerman, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons UNGA First Committee
(New York, 28 October 2013)

Thank you Mr Chairman,

I would like to introduce to the Committee the draft resolution titled Implementation of the Convention on the prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction (A/C.1/68/L.3). Slovenia introduces draft resolution in its capacity of the chair of the Twelfth Meeting of States Parties of the Convention that took place from 3 to 7 December 2012 in Geneva. Today, we jointly present this resolution with distinguished delegations of Cambodia that chaired Eleventh Meeting of States Parties back in December 2011 and of Algeria that will chair Thirteen Meeting of States Parties, which is going to take place from 2 to 5 December this year in Geneva.

Mr Chairman,

This is a traditional resolution on the Convention on Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines, being introduced annually, since 1997. The purpose of this resolution is to continue to gather political support to universal ban of the anti-personnel mines, briefly, to pave the way to a world free of antipersonnel-mines. Many things have changed since 1997: the Convention has now 161 States parties and one signatory. I would like to welcome Poland which became 161st State Party of the Convention. In Geneva, we have a smoothly functioning secretariat, so called "Implementation Support Unit," ably headed by Mr Kerry Brinkert. There are many things going on on the ground, mainly in mine-affected countries. Many mined areas are being cleared and many lives are being saved. We would like to thank all donors that contribute to effective and systematic mine-action activities all around the world. We invite them to continue with their noble endeavours and to provide even more assistance to mine-affected countries.

Yet, the key challenges remain: firstly, occasionally non-state actors still use mines, secondly, there are still mined areas to be cleared, thirdly, there are still many stocks of mines to be destroyed, and fourthly, there are still states out of the Convention. I would like to invite states, being not Parties to join States Parties as soon of possible. Until then, we invite them to support mine-action activities and express political support to humanitarian goals of the Convention. We particularly welcome those states not being the States Parties that regularly attend meetings of States Parties.

The text of the resolution that we present today is based on previous texts. However, there is one issue that needs to be underlined. The resolution is paving the way to the Third Review Conference that will take place next autumn in Maputo, Mozambique. There, we will take stock and review implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan that we adopted back in 2009 in Cartagena, Colombia. We see the Third Conference as a new opportunity to steer our joint efforts and define guidance for our work for the next five years.

Slovenia invites all member states to support and vote in favour of the resolution, thus supporting our joint vision of the world free of antipersonnel mines.
Mr Chairman,

Allow me to continue to speak on behalf of my delegation only on other issues related to the thematic debate on Conventional Weapons.

At this point, I would like to align our statement to the statement of the European Union (EU).

Mr Chairman,

First of all, allow me to say a few words on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Slovenia is pleased that the ATT was finally adopted by the General Assembly on 2nd April this year and opened for signature. With the ATT the international community got robust and effective common international standards for regulating international trade in conventional arms. Slovenia was among first states that signed the Treaty on the first day, on 3rd June this year. We praise the eight countries that already ratified the Treaty. Ratification of the Treaty is well underway in Slovenia. We expect to conclude this process by mid-December and present instrument of ratification to the UN Secretary-General soon after. Of course, signatures and ratifications are important, but implementation is even more. We hope that all international community, states, the United Nations, regional organisations, donor and NGO community will join their forces and work seriously on the implementation of the Treaty.

In the context of Arms Trade Treaty, allow me to state how transparency in armament matters to us. That is why we support, from the very beginning the UN Register of Conventional Arms and relevant First Committee resolution proposed by the Netherlands. We regret the fact that the number of national reports transferred to the Register is insufficient. According to the report of the UN Secretary General and its addendum it was until early October this year less than third of the UN member states (61) that provided their national reports. That is a better score than in previous years, but for us, this is not enough. We should all do more in this regard in the future. Slovenia would also reiterate its longstanding position that the scope of the Register should be widened by including new categories of conventional arms, such as small arms and light weapons.

We also note with regret that in recent years the level of national reporting in the framework of conventions and agreements in the field of conventional weapons has been decreasing. The lack of consistent reporting of the member states is undermining the credibility of the Treaty system. We have to reverse this trend. We are convinced that this is possible. We therefore appeal to all UN member states to improve our joint record in this field.

Lastly, I would like to say few words on Convention on Cluster Munitions that is also very important to us. We welcome successful Fourth Meeting of States Parties that took place in September this year in Lusaka. Slovenia congratulates Zambia for good organization of the meeting. In Zambia, we learned of many positive developments regarding the implementation of the Convention. The number of States Parties is gradually increasing. There are now 84 States Parties of the Convention. We shouldn’t stop there. We hope that Parties will attract more countries, major manufacturers and possessors of the cluster munitions to join the Convention thus continuing our way forward towards the world free of cluster munition.

I thank you Mr Chairman.