Mr. President

I take the floor on behalf of Sweden and my own country Switzerland to explain our vote on draft resolution L.63 entitled “Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium”. Our countries voted in favour of this resolution.

Our countries are concerned with the persisting uncertainties regarding the long-term environmental impact of depleted uranium, particularly with respect to the potential groundwater contamination. We also understand the concerns of affected communities as stressed in PP11 and that they should be appropriately addressed.

Our countries however would like to note that the relevant UNEP Report from 2010, which was financially and technically supported by our countries, is quoted in a selective way in L.63. This UNEP Report clearly states that “even in areas with widespread depleted uranium contamination, the overall levels of radioactivity were low and within acceptable international standards, with no immediate dangers from either particle-based or waterborne toxicity.”

Our countries further note that the potential harmful effects of the use of depleted uranium munitions on human health and environment mentioned in the resolution are not substantiated by conclusive scientific evidence. Our countries have supported relevant research in this field and we would have preferred a more balanced reflection of this body of research.

We therefore support further research in this area and appreciate this issue being further discussed in appropriate fora both within and beyond the United Nations and support the call for appropriate precautionary measures. Awareness raising among affected communities should also count among the measures to be taken.

I thank you