It is a challenge to adhere to a 5 minute time limit, Mr Chair, when considering the horror being visited upon civilians and their communities by the use of certain conventional weapons in a range of current conflicts. New Zealand, like so many others here, is outraged at the violation of international humanitarian law – at the use both of illegal weapons, as well as the illegal use of others including through the targeting of civilians, of humanitarian and relief workers, and of medical staff and related facilities.

Our outrage at these breaches of IHL provides an additional catalyst for moving forward on the items on this Committee’s agenda.

New Zealand negotiated, agreed and joined the Arms Trade Treaty as a means of achieving the many security and humanitarian benefits of better regulated trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons. We are pleased to have served as a Vice-President of the second Conference of States Parties to the ATT under the Presidency of Nigeria, and will continue to work with the new President, Finland, and the rest of the ATT family to ensure that the infrastructure we have now put in place delivers on the Treaty’s promise. We will continue to play our part, including through our membership of the Selection Committee of the ATT’s Voluntary Trust Fund, and through our funding of universalisation and implementation projects in the Pacific and in Africa. We warmly welcome the new appointments to the Secretariat under the able leadership of Dumisani Dladla.
We remain committed to building on the success of the **Convention on Cluster Munitions** and consolidating its norm against the use of these inhumane weapons. New Zealand condemns any use of cluster munitions by any actor - and calls on all States to join and implement the Convention as soon as possible. In our role as Coordinator for National Implementation Measures under the CCM, we will continue to work with States Parties and Signatories to promote its effective implementation and universalisation. We are grateful for the leadership shown by the Netherlands on this issue and look forward to working with the new President of the Convention, Germany.

Mr Chair, New Zealand is unwavering also in its commitment to the CCM’s sister treaty, the **Anti-Personnel Mine Ban (Ottawa) Convention**, and to its vision for a mine-free world. We were pleased to make a modest contribution to the APMBC Implementation Support Unit this year, alongside our ongoing support for mine clearance activities around the world. With our eyes firmly on the 2025 target set in the Maputo Declaration, we look forward to working with all States and with our valued civil society partners to finish what we have started.

Following on from the Ottawa Convention’s Meeting of States Parties in Santiago, the international community will turn its attention later in December to the five-yearly Review Conference of the **Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons** (CCW).

It is true that the CCW process has not always been able to deliver an appropriately humanitarian, IHL-focused outcome on a number of topics of great concern. We believe our response in going outside the CCW – when this has been necessary to secure an outcome with an appropriate emphasis on the protection of civilians – has had nothing but positive results.

That said, New Zealand retains its support, in principle, for the framework approach of the CCW. We would particularly hope that the outcome of this year’s Review Conference will position the Convention to remain relevant and responsive to contemporary concerns, including on the issues of **incendiary weapons; Mines Other than Anti-Personnel Mines**; and **Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems** (LAWS). With respect to
LAWS in particular we must not allow protracted discussions about the modalities of the process to dictate or limit the substantive progress that is necessary bearing in mind the legal, technical and moral challenges posed by these weapons.

Finally, Mr Chair, I wish to register New Zealand’s support for the development of a political declaration as part of an international effort to address the immediate and long-term harm being caused to civilians by the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in densely populated areas. We look forward to working with all interested parties to ensure that such a declaration is meaningful and effective, and that it complements the important civilian protections promised – but, regrettably, often violated – under international humanitarian law.

Thank you Mr Chair.