Mr. President,

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate you upon the assumption of the Presidency of the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW and express our delegation's full cooperation and support in the fulfillment of your duties. We are confident that you will steer our deliberations to a successful outcome.

Mr. President,

Israel considers the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) a paramount instrument and forum to deliberate, and potentially regulate, the use of certain conventional weapons, while striking the necessary balance between military necessity and humanitarian considerations. This forum is uniquely positioned to bring together all relevant players, including users and producers of munitions. Thus, decisions undertaken in this forum have the distinct benefit of yielding a real and significant impact on the ground, which actually enables prevention or mitigation of unnecessary suffering during armed conflict.
Mr. President,

Israel attaches great importance to promoting universality of the CCW. With 118 Member states, we must exact greater efforts at increasing the CCW's membership. In some areas of the world, the lack of membership is more apparent than in others, and requires the direction of our focused efforts. Such is the case of the Middle East, our own region, where very few states have expressed their consent to be bound by the CCW. We take this opportunity to congratulate Iraq on its accession to the CCW.

Mr. President,

Israel regrets that the intensive efforts undertaken in the context of the negotiations of a sixth Protocol on Cluster Munitions did not come to fruition. The work that the CCW undertook in that context was important and could have yielded significant humanitarian benefits on the ground and to initiate a modernization process amongst users and producers.

On the issue of MOTAPM, Israel had participated actively in the negotiations which took place between 2002 and 2006 and associated itself with the declaration made on behalf of a group of states, at the end of the Third Review Conference of the CCW in 2006, announcing, inter alia, that these states, as a matter of national policy, would be taking certain practices limiting the use and transfer of MOTAPM. Israel views these measures especially in the context of transfer to terrorists and terror sponsoring states. Israel would like to see the issue of MOTAPM discussed further in the CCW, also in the contexts of the ongoing turbulence in the Middle East that poses great challenges, which should
prompt the international community to work together to prevent illicit trafficking and terrorism.

Mr. President,

The threat of MANPADS, short range rockets, mortars and surface-to-air missiles has been clearly demonstrated in recent years, in the Middle East and in other areas around the world. These cases serve as imperative reminders as to why these weapons should not reach the hands of terrorists and non-state actors and why they should only be in the hands of responsible sovereign states under appropriate stockpile management arrangements. The transfer of such weapons to non-state actors has the potential to cause grave tragedies with harsh consequences mainly, but not limited to, the civilian population. It is crucial that every effort is taken in order to prevent any illicit use or transfer of these weapons before any reprehensible and avoidable tragedies occur. The international community must allocate the necessary resources to address this grave danger effectively.

Mr. President,

Israel welcomes the work undertaken this year in the CCW on the issue of future Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) by the informal meeting of experts. The CCW is an IHL-focused framework, which provides the appropriate forum to discuss an IHL issue such as Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (or LAWS) and their possible use during an armed conflict. Indeed, we believe that the issue of LAWs merits further study under this framework. My delegation will elaborate more on this topic in the designated section later today.
Mr. President,

Israel also welcomes the continued work on IEDs. Finding the best way to advance forward this issue, is one of the important issues that needs to be considered under the CCW framework. The IEDs is a problem plaguing many regions of the world, and the preferred weapon of choice of terrorists. My delegation trusts and hopes that this issue which is vital, not only for armed forces but also for State's Parties whose forces engaged in Peace Keeping missions, and for humanitarian workers, could be further advanced in a very concrete way in near future.

Mr. President,

Israel regrets the exploitation of this distinguished forum by some speakers for political purposes. Clearly, these speakers might not be familiar, or don't care, about the dominant professional and non-political nature of this forum. Baseless claims are easy to present; Contributing substantively to the CCW work is much more difficult, but much more advantageous for this forum.

Thank you, Mr. President.