Statement by Sweden at the 2014 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW

Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your appointment as President of our Meeting and by pledging our full cooperation and support. Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union. I will therefore limit myself to some additional points in a national capacity.

Mr. President,

Sweden believes in an approach to disarmament and international security that puts human beings in the centre of policy. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is a good example and expression of such an approach. Sweden remains firmly committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its protocols. Sweden took an active part to put in place both the Amended Protocol II on the Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices and the Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, and has had the honour of chairing the work of Protocol V for the past year. We believe that the CCW and its instruments are also an effective means to respond in a flexible way to future developments in the field of weapons technology, in particular as it represents an essential part of International Humanitarian Law which contributes to both preventing and reducing the suffering of civilians and combatants. In this respect we also look forward to continue working closely with the ICRC. Let me also add that civil society has many valuable contributions to make to our work, and that Sweden attaches great importance to NGO participation in the CCW meetings.

Mr. President,

With regard to Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM) and the protection of civilians, we take special note of the recent study by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and the Stockholm International Peace research Institute (Sipri) on "The Humanitarian and Developmental Impact of Anti-Vehicle Mines". In the report, figures provided by affected states and news media reports make it clear that AVMs represent a significant and continuing humanitarian problem. While acknowledging that AVMs are legitimate weapons, we believe that further discussions on MOTAPM in the framework of the CCW could be valuable.

Mr. President,

Sweden very much appreciated the opportunity at the Expert Meeting in May this year to take a first look at the questions around lethal autonomous weapon systems, LAWS. As a starting point, Sweden believes that humans should not delegate to machines the power to make life-and-death decisions on the battlefield. As States we have an obligation to assess the legality of new weapons, and we would therefore welcome also a continued discussion of this issue within the framework of CCW. Sweden fully supports the idea to convene in 2015 a second informal Meeting of Experts
to discuss the questions related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems, and look forward to High Contracting Parties taking such a decision during this meeting.

Thank you Mr. President.