Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

Geneva, 12-16 December 2016

General Exchange of Views - Statement by Montenegro

Ambassador Milorad Šćepanović, Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva

Thank you Madam President.

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your tremendous efforts throughout a successful preparatory process of the Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. My delegation is grateful for your determination to find a best possible model for holding the conference, despite financial challenges the Convention is facing. We extend our gratitude to the Implementation Support Unit for their continuous support to Member States in the implementation of the CCW and its protocols. Let me assure you of my delegation’s full cooperation and active engagement.

Montenegro fully aligns itself with the EU statement. In addition, I would like to highlight certain points of particular importance for my country.

The CCW and its Protocols are among essential instruments in international efforts towards achieving and maintaining international peace and security. Adopted with the aim to minimize threat and suffering these weapons pose to civilians and combatants, they represent an important component of international humanitarian law. My Government remains committed to universalisation of the Convention and strives for the widest possible adherence to the CCW and its Protocols.

Being fully committed to a thorough implementation of obligations arising from the CCW and its protocols, our efforts to develop a solid legislative framework along with improving institutional capacities, have constantly been advanced, including through fulfilling criteria for membership in the EU.

We are convinced that the Amended Protocol II represents a valuable tool for reducing the potential harms caused by mines, booby-traps and other harmful devices. We welcome the last year’s General Assembly resolution on Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and strive for its full implementation. We support the Political Declaration on IEDs to be adopted at this Review Conference. Allow me to remind you that, in Montenegro, these devices are not in use. We have also taken measures concerning safe storage, transfer and destruction of devices that do not meet the highest standards.

Unbearable suffering for civilian populations caused by incendiary weapons, is unacceptable. In that vein, let me reiterate importance of a full implementation of the CCW Protocol III by all the State Parties of the Convention.
My Government remains concerned about humanitarian impacts of explosive remnants of war and explosive devices with indiscriminate effects. We are proud of having cleared on our territory explosive remnants of war in our region following the break-up of the former Yugoslavia and secured stockpiles of munitions, despite limited resources. In that regard, it is my pleasure to remind you that this year, on 20 May 2016, Montenegro joined the CCW Protocol V. We are committed to a full implementation of this valuable instrument of international humanitarian law when it comes to addressing post-conflict remedial measures of a generic nature in order to minimise the occurrence, effects and the risk of explosive remnants of war. We look favourably on the proposal to be considered at this Conference, to establish a mechanism within Protocol V with a view to ensure better quality of national reporting and improve transparency and confidence among State Parties.

My Government supports recommendations of the Group of Experts to establish a Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons System, as a part of international efforts to provide for any new weapons to comply with the provisions of international law. We are also looking forward to a fruitful discussion on the possibilities Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM) to be used as legitimate weapons, while ensuring full protection of civilians under the international humanitarian law as a highest priority.

Mr. President,

Allow me to reiterate my Government’s firm support to the CCW. My Government stands ready to contribute to its further strengthening.

Let me wish to all of us a productive and consensual outcome of the Conference.

Thank you.