Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

Meeting of High Contracting Parties

12 – 13 November 2015

Statement by Australia

Mr Chairman

Through the CCW, States are able to work together to ensure that military uses of new technologies are consistent with our obligations to refrain from using weapons or means and methods of warfare that are excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects.

Australia has a firm and long-standing commitment to the effective implementation of the Convention, in all its parts. Australia supports all five Protocols to the Convention.

Australia welcomes the accession of new high contracting parties to the CCW. This demonstrates clear progress towards universalisation, which is key to ensuring the maximum effect of the Convention.

Australia has been a committed supporter of the CCW’s programme of sponsorship, enabling developing States to participate in meetings which is a key contribution towards universalisation of the CCW. Since 2010 we have contributed AUD120,000 dollars to the program through AUD20,000 instalments every year.
This is in addition to our major contribution to humanitarian de-mining through our aid program, as well as clearance of ERW and capacity building through our Defence Operation Render Safe and Defence Cooperation Program.

Australia welcomes the initiative of UNMAS, GICHD and UNODA in hosting their 6 November meeting on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines, or MOTAPM. Australia was pleased to participate in the meeting and contribute to the discussions through the presentation on military doctrine on the use of MOTAPM given by Brigadier William Sowry. The 6 November meeting provided an important opportunity to review options for better limiting the humanitarian and developmental impact of these weapons. Australia supports continued discussion of MOTAPM within the CCW framework.

Mr Chairman,

Australia was pleased to participate in the informal experts’ meeting on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) held in May 2015 and was satisfied with its outcomes. Australia supports further informal exploratory discussion on LAWS in 2016 under the CCW framework to allow States Parties to develop a deeper and more informed understanding on the possible technical, military utility, legal and ethical considerations associated with the development and use of LAWS.
Parties to the CCW must continue to work to ensure that the Convention fulfils its mandate and maintains its relevance to actual weapons development and use, and the effects they have on human beings and communities. We must rise to the challenge of ensuring that the Convention remains a relevant and effective instrument for improving the conduct of those engaged in armed conflict, now and into the future.

Thank you Mr Chairman.