Mr. Chair,

Israel welcomes the negotiations that have taken place within the CCW on a new protocol addressing the use of cluster munitions. We believe these discussions have been fruitful so far and have the potential to yield an agreed text by the end of this year. This text could be significant to all relevant states, thus providing an effective answer to the humanitarian concerns raised by cluster munitions.

The CCW has consistently and successfully strived to reach the necessary balance between military and humanitarian considerations. By doing so the CCW is recognized as the most appropriate forum to deal with relevant issues in the conventional weapons' sphere.

Mr. Chair,

Israel remains to be convinced as to the actual contribution made by discussing the issue of cluster munitions in other forums. It is our position that independent initiatives, conducted outside the scope of the UN, do not necessarily contribute to the stability and effectiveness of global arms control goals. In fact, such initiatives have the potential to undermine serious negotiations held in forums mandated to do so. Israel trusts and hopes that states that have participated in other negotiations on cluster munitions will do their utmost to bring forward the negotiations held within the CCW so that an agreed text could emerge out of the November negotiations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair