EOV on L.8: “Anti-Personnel Land Mines Convention”:

I am taking the floor to explain Egypt’s vote on L.8. Egypt abstained on L.8 on the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Landmines due to the particular nature of this instrument which was developed and concluded outside the multilateral context of the United Nations without providing the necessary requirements to ensure neither its potential universality nor its effectiveness.

Egypt acknowledges the humanitarian considerations which the Ottawa Convention attempted to embody and had actually imposed, based on the same considerations, a moratorium on its landmine production and export since the 1980s, long before the conclusion of the Ottawa Convention itself. However, Egypt views this convention as lacking balance between the humanitarian considerations related to APLM and their legitimate military use for border protection.

Most importantly, the convention fails to acknowledge the legal responsibility of States for demining APLM they themselves have laid, in particular in territories of other States, making it almost impossible for affected States to meet alone the Convention’s demining requirements. This is particularly true in the case of Egypt which still has millions of APLMs on its territories, planted by Second World War powers, requiring vast demining resources that go well beyond its existing capabilities in this field, even with the current cooperation frameworks in this field which we positively note.

The mentioned weaknesses are only complemented by the weak international cooperation system of the Convention which remains limited in its effect and much dependent on the will of donor States. The mentioned weaknesses of Ottawa convention have kept the largest world producers and some of the world’s most heavily affected States outside its regime, making the potential for its universality questionable and reminding us all of the value of concluding arms-control and disarmament agreements in the context of United Nations and not outside it framework.