Thank you Mr/Madam President.

The Mine Ban Treaty is one of the most universally accepted international legal instruments. To the few states who are still not on board the treaty, we say: please reconsider your position this year. The vast majority of the states in this room are already parties to the treaty. Please talk to them -- see how they overcame any reticence, hear about how they protect their borders, notice how states facing all sorts of regional or local security concerns are able to handle these situations without resorting to antipersonnel mines. Civil society representatives are also here and available for discussion and to provide you with documents and answers that can help you make a case back in capital.

Dear delegates – the use of improvised mines by non-state armed groups, in the Middle East and elsewhere, is a major concern for many of us here at First Committee. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines reminds you that any explosive device that can be activated by the proximity, presence or contact of a person is an antipersonnel mine and is fully covered by the scope of the Mine Ban Treaty. Improvised landmines fall within the framework of this instrument and are covered by its clearance obligations, its international cooperation and assistance framework, and its transparency reporting measures. States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, United Nations agencies, and other actors should avoid using the term “improvised explosive devices” when referring to improvised mines, because this denies the existence of a legal framework that encompasses these weapons.

In closing, Mr/Madam President, we are heartened that mine clearance activities are underway in the demilitarized zone between the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. We trust that this relatively modest demining endeavor will conclude positively at the end of November and could be expanded in the near future as a confidence-building measure. A Korean Peninsula in peace is one without landmines.

Thank you.