CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement by

Mr. Hani Stolina

at the Thematic Discussion on Conventional Weapons

of the First Committee of the 74th Session

of the General Assembly of the United Nations

New York, 23 October 2019
Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic would like to reiterate its strong support for the goals of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The Czech Republic has been supporting mine action for instance in Afghanistan, Jordan, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia or Ukraine. We recognize good progress achieved so far and support redoubling the efforts of the international community in the areas of victim assistance, risk education, stockpile destruction and mines, explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions clearance. The implementation of the EU Council Conclusions from June 2019 on strengthening the ban against anti-personnel mines and of the Dubrovnik Action Plan will contribute to advancing the work in these important areas.

The Fifth Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty held last August confirmed that the Treaty had attracted more attention, which resulted in an increase of the number of its States Parties. Nevertheless, some of the important arms producers still remain outside the ATT. Our common goal is to achieve greater responsibility and transparency in the international arms trade. Such transparency can be achieved by strengthening of reporting capabilities of the States Parties. However, we are concerned that the reporting rate remains low and has not improved over time. If we want to possess a strong and efficient arms control tool, it is indispensable for each State Party to comply with its reporting obligations.

The Czech Republic reiterates its strong support for the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW). International endeavours must continue to address the impact of conventional weapons and ammunitions. Therefore, we support the efforts to promote the universalisation of the Convention. It is also important to maintain the Convention responsive to new developments. We welcome the work on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). In our view, it is indispensable for the CCW High Contacting Parties to have sufficient guidance on how to ensure that any new weapon, means or methods of warfare are in compliance with the International Humanitarian Law, which is our main objective.

Many people around the globe suffer each year from the effects of the illicit trafficking in firearms. The Czech Republic believes that the strong regulations covering conventional weapons including small arms and light weapons, their ammunition, parts and components, should be supported. The Czech Republic has developed an effective system of export control
of arms as well as dual-use goods and continues to enhance its preventive mechanisms in accordance with international standards. Our country fully meets all its international commitments in the field of arms control and remains adherent to this policy. The Czech Republic welcomes outcomes of the UNPoA SALW including the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), requiring states to ensure that weapons are properly marked and their records kept, as well as recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on arms brokering.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.