IRELAND

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First Committee

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Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons

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1. Ireland aligns itself with the Statement by the European Union. I will add the following in our national capacity.

Chair,

2. The interrelationship between disarmament, peace, security and sustainable development is clear. Ireland welcomes that this interrelationship forms a central thread of the U.N. Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament, and Ireland is pleased to champion three Agenda actions, two of which focus on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and the impact of arms control in conflict prevention and management.

Chair,

3. As we look towards the Fourth Review Conference of the APLC later this year, it will be crucial to situate our mine action efforts within an integrated approach, informed by the objectives of broader humanitarian, developmental, and peace and security agendas. In order to achieve the goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines by 2025, States Parties must redouble their mine clearance efforts. Ireland looks forward to supporting Norway in developing an ambitious and measurable mine action plan for the critical years to come.

4. Ireland was pleased to have served as a Vice-President of Fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty under the Presidency of Latvia. We welcomed the decision to select gender and Gender Based Violence as a thematic priority and we believe that the Decisions adopted at the CSP5 form a strong basis for future work to strengthen implementation of the ATT’s GBV provision.
Chair,

5. We remain gravely concerned at the humanitarian harm caused during active hostilities in populated areas and in particular by the use of explosive ordnance and other explosive weapons, the effects of which extend beyond the immediate area of a military objective located within or close to concentrations of civilians. We must act to enhance compliance with international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of civilians during armed conflict.

6. We reiterate support for relevant initiatives designed to address the humanitarian impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, including regional conferences in Maputo in 2017 and Santiago last year. We are encouraged by the level of cross-regional engagement in the conference on the Protection of Civilians in Urban Warfare that took place in Vienna earlier this month, and we commend Austria for their leadership on this issue. Ireland looks forward to advancing international efforts towards a political declaration in 2020.

Chair,

7. We are encouraged that the GGE on LAWS agreed to recommend an extended list of Guiding Principles to the 2019 Meeting of High Contracting Parties. It is our firm belief that such weapons must always remain under human control, and that only human accountability can ensure full compliance with IHL. The fast pace of technological developments presents a compelling incentive for us to accelerate our efforts and agree tangible outcome.

Chair,

8. A longer version of this statement will made available be on Papersmart in which we elaborate further on the key priorities for Ireland with respect to conventional arms.

Thank you