UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND

STATEMENT

to the

CCW Meeting
of the
High Contracting Parties

13-14\textsuperscript{th} November 2014

Please check against delivery
Mr President,

1. Firstly please allow me to congratulate Poland on assuming the presidency of the CCW. We wish you every success in your leadership of the convention and look forward to working with you over the year ahead.

2. The United Kingdom attaches importance to the work of the CCW. We view it as a very useful forum which recognises both humanitarian and security concerns, and which draws together unparalleled military and diplomatic expertise. We particularly value its flexibility in addressing different categories of weapons systems.

3. This leads to the topic of Autonomous Weapons Systems. On this topic, please allow me to express the gratitude of the United Kingdom to the Republic of France for the excellent work they have done in facilitating our discussions on Autonomous Weapons Systems so far. The report France has produced is a clear and helpful summary of the discussions that we held in May of this year.

4. As the discussions showed, autonomous weapons systems are an important issue, and it is right that we have been giving the matter our serious attention. The discussions we held in May of this year demonstrated that this issue falls within the remit of the CCW, as what we are discussing is conventional weapons use. We also note that we are not speaking here about existing weapons systems.

5. We are mindful also of the applicability of International Humanitarian Law to the assessment and use of all weapons systems. This includes a Legal Weapons Review process before the adoption of any weapons system, as directed by Article 36 of Additional Protocol I. We would encourage all states to engage in a Legal Weapons Review process before adopting any weapons system for use by their armed forces. IHL also regulates the use of any weapon in armed conflict.

Mr President,

6. The United Kingdom supports a continuation of the CCW’s mandate for discussion of LAWS next year at the same level of Informal Meetings of Experts. Should the mandate be agreed, we look forward to contributing to those discussions, as well as to the rest of the work of the CCW.

Thank you