STATEMENT

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AT THE MEETING OF HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL
WEAPONS

Geneva, 12 November 2015
Dear Mr. Chairman,

First of all let me congratulate you on the election to this demanding post and wish you successful work.

I would also like to welcome new States Parties who have joined the Convention this year. This fact shows that the Accelerated Plan of Action on universalization of the Convention is being successfully implemented and the importance of the CCW keeps growing.

The Russian Federation continues to contribute by all means to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention and its Protocols as well as to the realization of disarmament potential stipulated by these documents in full compliance with the recommendations adopted by the Forth Review Conference in 2011.

Next year we are to conduct a review of the implementation of the Convention. In the wake of this landmark event let me bring out the Russian stance on some items of the agenda.

The Russian Federation supports the activities conducted in the framework of the Amended Protocol II in the field of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that, to our mind, pose one of the major humanitarian threats in the modern world. This year we have participated in a voluntary questionnaire regarding this issue on the margin of the Convention. We look forward to its results. We are very interested in the discussion regarding future possible IEDs efforts.

However, we would also like to emphasize a rather limited mandate of our Convention on this issue. Therefore, Russia would be ready to support primarily those proposals regarding future efforts in this sphere that fully comply with the subject and objectives of the Convention.

We closely study the situation with the appeals by a number of non-governmental organizations to expand the scope of Protocol III. We firmly believe that the solution to the issues of the use of incendiary weapons depends on faithful observation of current principles and norms of the international humanitarian law.
We believe that revisiting Protocol III at this stage would be counterproductive and could even weaken the compliance with the Convention itself. Therefore, we consider the attempts to initiate any additional activities in the framework of our Convention regarding the review of the mandate of this Protocol to be unjustified.

As for the land mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPMs) our position remains unchanged. We still believe that the so-called humanitarian issue of the use of these weapons is irrelevant and prejudged. We do not share the argument of "the growing humanitarian danger" of such mines. Taking into account the existing long-term and rather contradictable experience of the work held in this sphere, we consider new attempts to return to the elaboration of additional restrictions regarding MOTAPMs in the framework of the Convention to be counterproductive. We think that the faithful compliance with the Amended Protocol II would neutralize potential humanitarian threats that could be posed by the use of MOTAPMs.

Let me also touch upon another issue of still growing international interest, as it was demonstrated at the second meeting of experts in April, that is - lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS). We would like to thank our German friends and the Implementation Support Unit for good organization of the April event, which, in particular, reaffirmed the importance of upholding meaningful human control over such systems.

However, we still very cautiously consider the prospects of future development of the LAWS issue that is raw and rather controversial. It would be premature to step up the mandate and to discuss this issue in an official format because for the time being we deal with virtual technology that does not have any operating models.

In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention once more to the fact that the unique nature and strength of the Convention consists in the inviolable balance between legal defense interests of the States and international humanitarian concerns. While studying any new proposals we will fully rely on such balance that is a solid foundation for comprehensive compliance with and strengthening of the Convention.

Thank you for attention.