Statement by Sweden at the 2016 Prep Comm Meeting of the CCW

Madam President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your appointment as President of our Meeting and by pledging our full cooperation and support. Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union. I will therefore limit myself to some additional points in a national capacity.

Madam President,

Sweden believes in an approach to disarmament and international security that puts human beings at the centre of policy. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is an expression of such an approach. Sweden remains firmly committed to the CCW and its protocols. Sweden took an active part to put in place Amended Protocol II on the Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, Protocol IV on Blinding laser weapons, and Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, and has had the honour of chairing the work in the Convention on a few occasions, including during the First Review Conference and, more recently, as chair of Protocol V.

Let me underline that we also look forward to continue working closely with the ICRC, as well as with civil society. Sweden attaches great importance to their participation in the CCW meetings and to their valuable contributions to our work.

Madam President,

We believe that the CCW and its protocols are also an effective and flexible means to respond to future weapons technology developments. Sweden very much appreciated the opportunity at the Expert Meeting in April this year to continue discussions on lethal autonomous weapon systems, LAWS. In our view, humans should always be ultimately responsible when it comes to questions of life and death. We welcome a continued discussion of LAWS within the framework of the CCW. As States we have an obligation in accordance with IHL to assess the legality of new weapons, including for example through weapons review systems. Sweden fully supports the idea to continue in 2017 discussions on the questions related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems, and we will support a decision to create, at the Review Conference in December, a Governmental Group of Experts to further examine this issue.

Thank you Madam President.