Statement

by

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FIFTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF 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

General Exchange of Views

Geneva, 12-16 December 2016

Madame President,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I would like to start by congratulating you on your appointment to chair this important conference. Let me assure all parties of the full cooperation of Germany in the run up to the 5th Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

We align ourselves with the statement of the European Union.

The CCW remains highly relevant for us as an important forum to discuss the consequences of the use of certain conventional weapons including the effects of technological developments and humanitarian implications. The discussions on adaptations of the CCW have proven fruitful and dynamic.

That is the reason why Germany is a strong proponent of universalization of the convention and believes that the next review cycle will offer the chance of convincing partners that have not yet joined the convention and its protocols to do so.

In order to keep it short let me just highlight some key issues from a German point of view. We will take the floor with some more detailed interventions later during this conference.
The CCW’s work on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) has been extremely useful over the past three years. We would like to see a continuation of our common effort in this area. Having reached a consensus on a possible mandate during the 2016 Group of Expert’s, we expect that the High Contracting Parties at this Review Conference will adopt a decision to establish a Group of Governmental Experts in 2017.

Germany stands ready to give its full support to this process.

One area where the CCW has substantively contributed to the international community’s response to an increasing threat is its work on Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). We believe the exchange of information and best practices could still be strengthened and synergies between different international fora should be explored. Germany supports the political declaration on IEDs in order to highlight the importance of this issue for the future work of the CCW.

On the issue of Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM) we would encourage further exchange between High Contracting Parties. Two aspects could make a real difference. Those are detectability and lifespan limitations. We are convinced that further progress on this issue is possible and further exchange should be part of High Contracting Parties’ deliberations during the next review cycle.

Last but not least Germany is concerned about the issue of explosive weapons in populated areas. The civil war in Syria amongst others has demonstrated the need to strengthen the compliance with IHL in this regard. We propose to hold an expert meeting within the CCW on this issue to address it in an inclusive and transparent way.

In light of recent financial problems in the run-up to the review conference we feel it is important that all High Contracting Parties pay their contributions in time and in full. In addition it is also important that the rules and regulations of the UN are adaptable to the necessities of the work of the CCW.

Thank you Madame President.