Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

Statement by Finland
21 November 2013

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to make some additional remarks in a national capacity in addition to the statement delivered by the European Union.

Finland stresses the importance of the CCW, and we continue to support the Convention and its Protocols in words and deeds. On Monday, the Permanent Representative of Finland, Ambassador Terhi Hakala, was nominated as President-designate of Protocol V next year. We will do our utmost to further strengthen the implementation of this Protocol and we count on the cooperation and constructive ideas of all High Contracting Parties to Protocol V.

Conventions such as the CCW were not created for the sake of creating Conventions: the CCW was created to save lives. We must continue to implement and promote its obligations. In this vein, we thank Secretary-General Guterres for his Agenda for Disarmament and see it as a much-needed tool to unite us all for action, also in the CCW context. By implementing the CCW effectively, states can also advance their obligations under the Sustainable Development Goals.

The CCW contributes to the prevention and the reduction of casualties around the world, especially those caused by landmines, improvised explosive devices and other explosive weapons. Humanitarian aspects and the protection of civilian populations should always be the underlying principles in all our efforts, both in conventional weapons control, and in addressing new technologies.

Finland recognizes that by using explosive weapons in densely populated areas against IHL causes devastating impacts on civilians. We note with interest the working paper submitted by Germany on "Mitigating the civilian harm from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas" and we support continued discussions on this topic in a more structured way in the CCW.

We remain concerned over the continuation of non-compliance by some High Contracting Parties regarding their financial obligations. Annual contributions under the Convention are mandatory and we once again urge countries to pay their contributions in full and on time and to settle any possible arrears without delay.
Mr. Chairperson,

In addition to our long-standing support to Humanitarian Mine Action, I am pleased to announce that Finland will be making a voluntary contribution of 10,000 Euros to the CCW Sponsorship Programme. The Programme strengthens implementation of the Convention and its Protocols; supports universalization and enhances cooperation and information exchange among High Contracting Parties. We call on all States, in a position to do so, to support this important voluntary tool.

Finally, we thank UNODA’s Geneva branch for their hard work in assisting the Convention under exceptional circumstances this year and we welcome the beneficial contribution of non-governmental organizations, civil society and academia into the work of the CCW.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.