Mr. President,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your appointment as the President of this Meeting and thank you and your team, notably the Secretariat and the CCW ISU, for the preparation of this event. The delegation of Croatia wishes to assure you of our full cooperation and support to your work.

Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in the course of this week, let me also offer our deepest condolences for the people of Philippines who have suffered and are still suffering from devastating consequences of the typhoon Haiyan.

Croatia, of course, aligns itself with the EU statement made earlier, but would also like to make a brief intervention from the national position.

Mr. President,

As we all know, the adoption of the CCW was based on a desire to enhance the actual protection against the effects caused by certain specific weapons. This remains the aim and purpose of the CCW to this day. Croatia was always firmly committed to the CCW and all its Protocols, which we see as an essential instrument of the international humanitarian law. We therefore invite all High Contracting Parties to the CCW to remain committed to the implementation of this Convention and its Protocols. We believe that our focus should stay on the compliance with the obligations we have agreed to take upon us.

CCW was always seen as a forum for open-minded discussions and exchange of views on conventional weapons at the multilateral level. Since we all agree that human suffering resulting from an armed conflict cannot and must not leave the international community indifferent, we would like to use this opportunity to condemn repeated use of incendiary weapons against civilian targets over the past year in Syria. We believe that weapons that have a significant humanitarian impact, such as incendiary, should be of a direct concern to CCW State Parties.

To conclude Mr. President, our community should ensure that CCW will continue to demonstrate its relevance as a key instrument of international humanitarian law. Notwithstanding the importance of deliberations on IEDs, MOTAPMs and emerging technologies, such as lethal autonomous weapon systems, Croatia encourages all State Parties to further explore the issue of incendiary weapons within the scope of CCW, thus leading to strengthening and universalizing of Protocol III.

Thank you Mr. President.