



Preparatory Committee of the Fifth CCW Review Conference

Geneva, 31 August – 2 September 2016

Statement by H.E. Amb. Vinicio Mati Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament

Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as the President-designate of the Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Italy aligns itself with the statement by the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Madam President,

Italy has always valued the CCW and its Annexed Protocols as essential instruments for the protection and promotion of International Humanitarian Law. Its unique composition, which includes diplomatic, legal, and military expertise, as well as its openness to the contributions of civil society, make it a unique forum to address current and emerging issues relating to weapons development and use.

We are deeply convinced that universal membership in the Convention and its Protocols is a key goal that should continue to be strongly supported. We note with great satisfaction the new accessions to the Convention and its Protocols since the fourth review conference of 2011, and continue to call upon all States not yet party to ratify or accede to them as soon as possible.

Italy also places particular importance on transparency and confidence building measures, such as the timely submission of compliance reports, and the effective implementation of the Convention's provisions, including through the provision of technical and financial assistance. Since 2001, Italy has devoted close to 50m EUR to assistance programmes relating in particular to the clearance and destruction of Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs), as well as landmines and cluster munitions, to assistance to victims, risk education and awareness-raising programmes.

Madam President,

The upcoming Review Conference will be an important opportunity to take stock of the developments in our work during the past five years and set a clear roadmap for our engagement in the next review cycle. We share your decisions concerning the structure of our work for the next three days. We believe that it will allow us to prepare effectively towards the Review Conference and advance significantly towards a successful review outcome.

Among the many issues addressed in the framework of the CCW, Italy places particular importance on the question of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). We share the international community's serious concern with the growing political and humanitarian impacts of IED use in international and non-international conflicts, as well as in non-conflict settings. We, therefore, welcome the work conducted in the framework of Amended Protocol II in this regard and support continuation of this engagement on the basis of the decisions adopted by the APII Annual Conference that took place yesterday. We welcome in particular the adoption of the political Declaration on IEDs for its submission to the Review Conference.

Madam President,

We have often underlined that, due to its inclusive composition, the CCW is the natural forum to explore the features and implications of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. The informal meetings of experts held on this issue since 2014 have been very productive in this regard. They set the framework of the debate, identifying the multiple aspects involved in this complex issue, and allowed us to engage in in-depth and productive exchanges of views.

With a view to the upcoming Review Conference, Italy supports the substantive recommendations adopted by consensus by the informal group of experts last April. We are convinced that we need to continue discussions in order to further enhance our common understanding of the LAWS issue and its multiple technical, legal, ethical, and military aspects.

Thank you, Madam President