Mr Friend of the Chair,

At the outset, let me congratulate with you on the way you are conducting the meeting.

Italy is pleased to share its view and practice on some of the most sensitive issues concerning anti-vehicle mines.

Firstly, Italy ratified Amended Protocol II in 1999 and, since then, it has been fully committed to the application of all its rules and obligations in order to address the humanitarian concerns raised by anti-vehicle mines.

In such a legal framework, we apply the rule provided by art. 6 par. 3 of the Protocol, which regards the remotely-delivered MOTAPM. According with this rule, the Italian military doctrine does not envisage the remotely delivering of MOTAPM not equipped with self-destruction or self-neutralization mechanisms.

Secondly, the issue of sensitive fusing mechanisms is indirectly overcome by the national legislation. Italy enacted and brought into force a legislation containing an anti-personnel mines definition more stringent than the one included in art. 2 of the Amended Protocol II. According with the Italian legislation, anti-personnel mine is an explosive device designed or adapted - through specific mechanisms - to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person. The world “primarily”, which qualifies the word “designed” in the definition contained in the Amended Protocol II, is not present in our national law. Therefore, anti-vehicle mines equipped with sensitive fusing mechanism are treated as anti-personnel mines and submitted to the restrictions applied to anti-personnel mines. Accordingly, the Italian Military Forces do not detain in their stock any anti-vehicle mines with sensitive fusing mechanisms.

Thirdly, as to detectability, Italy still keeps in its stockpile non-detectable anti-vehicle mines without self-destruction or self-neutralization features. Nevertheless, we are ready to consider the possibility of taking measures to make those weapons detectable.

Finally, let me recall that the Italian Armed Forces operating within international missions keeps on recovering and destroying anti-vehicle mines located in dangerous areas for the civilian population. As an example, throughout the last year, 226 anti-tank mines were destroyed in Afghanistan.

Thank you