Mr Chairman,

This delegation associates itself with the statement made by the European Union.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this meeting. Please be assured of our full cooperation in your efforts to achieve a successful outcome. Let me also thank you for the Food-for-thought paper you provided for the delegations. It is a good basis and guide for our work in our discussions in the next few days.

Mr Chairman,

The Fourth Review Conference decided to organize an Expert Meeting to consider further the implementation of international humanitarian law with regard to mines other than anti-personnel mines. It is an important issue and we wish that this meeting ends up with useful results. We do not need to start from scratch. The issue was thoroughly discussed by CCW High Contracting Parties in the early years of this century, though no consensus was achieved. But there was a serious try and, in our view, it is fair to say that discussions on mines other than anti-personnel mines during those years were exhaustive.

Mr Chairman,

In the coming days we will have an opportunity to take up this issue again. It is the view of this delegation that the relevance of the CCW to international humanitarian law should be enhanced. In addition, we want to underline that it is important to acknowledge a balance between humanitarian and military aspects in this issue. And, we want also to underline that it is important to acknowledge that mines other than anti-personnel mines are considered legitimate weapons and can be used as such.
Mr Chairman,

We are looking forward to these discussions, exchange of views and possible new ideas about this issue.

Thank you.