STATEMENT
By the Representative of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the 19th Annual Conference of the States Parties to Amended Protocol II
(Geneva, 21 November 2017)

Madam President,
At the outset, let me congratulate you on the election to this position and assure of our delegation’s complete readiness for the most constructive cooperation. Russia views Amended Protocol II as an important component of the CCW. We believe that the universalization of the Protocol as well as strict and full implementation of its provisions at the national level are the essential conditions for fulfilling its potential.

As for the implementation of the provisions of the Protocol, yesterday our delegation presented updated information on the operations conducted by the Russian Engineering Troops, inter alia, in the Syrian Arab Republic, in the cities of Palmyra, Aleppo and Deir-ez-Zor. Without doubt, our country’s efforts contributed to the implementation of Amended Protocol II.

Moreover, during the last reporting period, the Russian Armed Forces continued to take steps to comply with the technical requirements for land mines, including anti-personnel and other mines, and to develop more effective means for detecting and defusing mines. We still consider this work as a critical prerequisite for reducing the risks of mines to civilian population and servicemen. Land-based mines supplied today under the national defense procurement programme meet the requirements of AP II and its Technical Annex. This also refers to clusters of anti-personnel mines KPOM-3, remotely-delivered mines which have been put into service early this year and fully comply with the requirements of Amended Protocol II.

The moratorium on transfer of non-detectable anti-personnel mines and mines not equipped with a self-destruction mechanism has been in place since 1994. Upon the consideration of humanitarian aspects of the mine issue, since 1998, we have completely stopped the production of anti-personnel blast mines which are a source of civilian casualties. In 2001, the Defense Ministry of Russia issued a manual on international humanitarian law for the Russian Armed Forces identifying the basic requirements for using anti-personnel mines under AP II.

Let me also share some of our considerations regarding improvised explosive devices.

The Russian Federation fully supports further discussion within the framework of CCW AP II of IEDs representing one of the most serious humanitarian threats in the modern world. This fact is vividly demonstrated by the efforts of the Russian Engineering Troops in Syria. One third of all explosive devices defused by Russian demining experts in this country are IEDs. The experience acquired by Russian deminers in defusing IEDs during their operation in Syria was summarized and presented in detail at the Second International Conference held by the International
Anti-Mine Center of the Russian Armed Forces in October and attended by key international actors, including such organizations as the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the ICRC and the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). We plan to hold yet another such event next year.

We advocate that this issue be further considered in the effective format of the Group of Experts within the framework of AP II, including through the coordination of efforts with other international initiatives in this field. This approach is enshrined in the relevant UN General Assembly resolution. It is also required due to the multi-faceted nature of the IED issue. Therefore, we would also like to commend the work of the UN Mine Action Service aimed at developing international demining standards for the purposes of UN operations. Russian experts took an active part in the mentioned work.

We assume that further work on IEDs within the framework of the CCW should, above all, correspond to the subject and purposes of our Convention.

Thank you