Statement by H.E. Ambassador KIM Young-moo of the Republic of Korea
At the 2015 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW

Geneva, 12 November 2015

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Thank you, Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your election as president. I have full confidence that under your leadership this conference will indeed be a success. To this end, I assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation.

The Republic of Korea believes that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons stands as a key example of an instrument that has been able to accommodate and adapt to the continuous evolution and changing dynamics in the field of conventional weapons. Over the course of the thirty year history of the CCW, it has maintained its effectiveness and relevance by taking into account both the guiding frameworks of international humanitarian law and the legitimate security concerns of the states parties. As the ATT, which is designed to curb the illicit transfer of conventional weapons, recently entered into force, we would also highlight that the CCW could be further enhanced with the formation of increased synergy between the two conventions.

Mr. President,

Despite the unique and delicate security situation in the region, the Republic
of Korea, as a State Party to the CCW, has worked hard to implement the Convention and the Protocol and has taken an active role towards both broadening and strengthening the CCW regime. Unfortunately, it is clear that our complex security environment in Korea has prevented us from acceding to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Recognizing, however, the nature and impact of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions, the Republic of Korea has been strongly committed to limiting the effects and widespread use of these conventional weapons. Beyond these controls and restrictions, the Republic of Korea has demonstrated its wider bilateral and multilateral commitment to work done in the area of mine action and the assistance of victims across the globe.

Mr. President,

Looking more closely at the next steps for the CCW, the Republic of Korea fully supports the imperative of universalization as one of our top priorities within the agenda, calling on states which are not party to the Convention, especially Asian countries, to consider and work diligently towards joining the CCW. Against this backdrop, the Republic of Korea is considering participation in the sponsorship program to support the involvement of developing countries in relevant meetings and activities associated with the Convention.

It is also noteworthy that an in-depth and extensive discussion on the issue of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWs) has been made within the framework of the CCW. With regard to the extension of the mandate for
addressing the issue of LAWs, we are in favor of continuous efforts to clarify and better understand the technology and relevant implications. Therefore, we fully support an extended mandate for an expert meeting on this topic, and look forward to continuing to seek common ground for further substantive discussions.

The Republic of Korea has diligently engaged in discussion on the implementation of international humanitarian law with regard to mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM). My delegation is aware of and concerned with the grave humanitarian and developmental impact of the uncontrolled usage of MOTAPM. We take note that this is also a critical area that we must examine together and commit to close collaboration in addressing the challenges.

Given the fast pace of technological development, it is crucial that we commit to flexible, but realistic approaches to conventional arms control within the context of the CCW framework. This Meeting of the High contracting parties to the CCW will serve as a very important time to set preparation for the Fifth Review Conference in 2016. Clearly the Review conference will play an essential role in working towards what will be needed to maintain the strength and relevancy of the CCW as it relates to future challenges. In this regard, my delegation reaffirms our commitment to ensuring the success of the next Review conference as well as this meeting.

In conclusion, we would like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to all of the efforts put forward by the Implementation Support Unit this year. I thank you, Mr. President. /End/