European Union
Statement by

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Meeting of Experts of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II
To the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

Geneva, 9 April 2015

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
I am taking the floor on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The following countries align themselves with this statement: Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia.

We are concerned at the world-wide indiscriminate use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and their effects particularly on human security at national and regional level, including on civilian populations. The number of IED victims has come to an unprecedented level in recent years. We believe that it is in our common interest to seek effective responses to the increasing use of IEDs.

We highly value the discussion and the substantive exchange of views on IEDs during the meeting of High Contracting Parties in November 2014, as well as the work done by the informal Group of Experts since 2009. These discussions contributed to increasing awareness of the IED threat.

We took note of the national efforts by High Contracting Parties of Amended Protocol II to combat the spread of IEDs and to clear IEDs as well as the progress made in this field. We warmly thank the Coordinators, France and Moldova, for their valuable work. We look forward to further discussions on the draft questionnaire presented by the Coordinators to improve international cooperation in counter-IED efforts, as well as on the idea of a database, portal or platform to enhance information exchange on this issue. We also thank the Coordinators for their food for thought paper underlining the work done in the context of the CCW and highlighting several options High Contracting Parties could consider as a response of the international community to this threat, also in the lead up to the Review Conference of the Convention in 2016.

We welcome the Compilation of existing guidelines, best practices, and other recommendations aimed at addressing the diversion or illicit use of materials which can be used for IEDs, which is available on the CCW Implementation Support Unit’s website. In this regard, we underline the importance of information sharing. We also agree that developing best practices aiming at addressing the diversion of materials that could be used for the manufacture of IEDs, as well as best practices aiming at countering the use of IEDs could be a significant contribution to counter-IED efforts. We finally recall the interest to continue discussions promoting victim assistance and keeping record of the victims.

The European Union, with a view to respond to the IED threat, has adopted measures aimed at enhancing the security of explosives for civil uses, in line with the EU Internal Security and Counter-Terrorism Strategies. In this respect, the EU Action Plan on Enhancing the Security
of Explosives contains a number of prevention, detection and response measures, as well as horizontal measures, such as the development of information sharing mechanisms and research. The actions are implemented through a joint effort of the European Union, its Member States, Europol, research institutions as well as private sector stakeholders.

Another example is the EU legislation on the Marketing and Use of Explosives Precursors which aims at restricting access to dangerous precursors to the general public, and ensuring the appropriate reporting of suspicious transactions throughout the supply chain.

The European Union has also complemented its internal actions by adopting extensive legislation regarding explosives for civil uses. This legislation ensures harmonisation of the laws of EU Member States relating to the making available on the market and supervision of explosives for civil uses. It also foresees the setting up of a system for the identification and traceability of explosives for civil uses, the establishment of a single market in the EU, the harmonisation of safety requirements for civil explosives at a high level of protection and the setting up of information exchange networks.

We would also like to mention as a practical counter-IED measure the *EU Multinational Theatre Exploitation Laboratory* which collected, recorded and analysed information related to IEDs in its deployment in Afghanistan from 2011 until 2014. It has proved to be an effective tool in the fight against IEDs. Building on the experiences in Afghanistan, a similar Laboratory, the *Joint Deployable Exploitation and Analysis Laboratory*, which is based in the Netherlands, will continue to support counter-IED efforts.

Thank you