Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The Implementation Support Unit (ISU) was established by the Sixth Review Conference and its mandate further broadened by the subsequent Review Conferences.

The EU recognizes the significant contribution of the ISU to the implementation and universalisation of the BTWC, which we consider a key pillar of the international rules-based system and disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. In this regard, we will continue to support strengthening the ISU’s role.

The assistance the ISU provides to States Parties for the implementation of their obligations under the Convention is invaluable in terms of logistical as well as substantive support. Furthermore, the ISU delivers significant administrative support during the review cycles. Moreover, it supports the preparation and submission of confidence-building measures (CBMs), supports universalisation efforts, administers a database system to facilitate requests for and offers of assistance and cooperation among States Parties (Article X database) and a

* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
sponsorship programme, an important tool for awareness raising about the Convention through wider participation of developing States Parties in the annual meetings of States Parties.

The ISU is exclusively funded by States Parties to the Convention as part of the costs for the intersessional programme in line with the decision of 8th Review Conference: “shared by all States Parties to the Convention, based on the United Nations scale of assessment pro-rated to take into account differences in membership between the Convention and the United Nations”. It is therefore essential that all States Parties pay their assessed contributions in full and on time.

Finally, it is of utmost importance that the Meeting of States Parties agrees on an exceptional extension of the ISU’s mandate until the Review Conference adopts its further mandate next year.

The EU supports the immediate extension of the ISU mandate and invites the Meeting of States Parties to take an appropriate decision in this regard. We should take this decision now without further delay.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.