Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you Ambassador Hwang on your appointment as President of the Sixth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and thanking you for your able stewardship (leadership) and efforts to achieve a substantive outcome of the Conference.

Montenegro aligns itself with the EU statement and, therefore, I would like to highlight a few topical points.

The CCW and its Protocols are a key pillar of international humanitarian law (IHL). In addition to being the unique international forum that brings together diplomatic, legal and military expertise, the specific strength of the Convention rests on its adaptability to respond to humanitarian issues arising from new developments in weapons technology and armed conflict, and to support the implementation of vital IHL tenets. As such, the Convention contributes to preventing and reducing the suffering of both civilians and combatants.

Therefore, we underline the significance of respecting, implementing and fully complying with the provisions of the CCW. And that is why we reverberate the call to each state that has not yet completed the annual compliance report to do so. It remains critical that each state adheres to the CCW and all its Protocols and faithfully implements their provisions. High Contracting Parties have a clear responsibility in this regard.
Mr. President, this Conference is an important opportunity to take stock of what we have already achieved and to assess the challenges ahead, especially in relation to contemporary humanitarian concerns arising from new military weapons technologies and practices, and other relevant normative developments.

In this regard, let me also stress the importance of achieving universalization of the CCW and its Protocols, as well as the transparency and building confidence in the implementation of the CCW.

On the activities of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS), we acknowledge the substantial contribution it has made to common understanding of this complex topic and to finding common ground. My delegation extends support to the mandate of the GGE on LAWS within the CCW framework to allow for progress.

As for the harm caused by mines, booby-traps and other devices, Montenegro highlights the importance of the Amended Protocol II and invites all States who have not yet done so to join this Protocol.

Montenegro also shears concerns about the continued severe global impact of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) attacks and their indiscriminate use and effects, in particular in the perpetration of terrorist acts.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that Montenegro fully respects the provisions of the amended Protocol II and reiterates its commitment to remain a territory free of anti-personnel mines and other prohibited means. Also, the Criminal Code of Montenegro criminalizes the production, possession, import, export, transfer or use of prohibited weapons, while the Law on Foreign Trade in Weapons and Military Equipment and the Law on Control of Dual-Use Goods prevent the trade in any prohibited weapons or dual-use goods.

The issue of Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM) should also remain on the CCW agenda, given the negative humanitarian impact and the heavy consequences of its indiscriminate and disproportionate use.

Mr. President,

Montenegro remains staunch supporter of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control efforts, including
women's meaningful participation in the CCW and other disarmament fora. To that, we advocate the full implementation of Resolution 1325 and all other relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council aimed at advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Finally, we underline the importance of ensuring the financial and institutional robustness of the Convention. To this end, the full and timely payment of annual contributions by the High Contracting Parties remains essential. Montenegro will continue to do so.

In conclusion, Montenegro reiterates its commitment to comply fully with the CCW and its Protocols and to promote their implementation and universalization.

I thank you.