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STATEMENT
by the delegation of Ukraine at the Main Committee II
of the Fourth CCW Review Conference
(Geneva, 14-25 November 2011)

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me congratulate you, Ambassador Danon, on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Main Committee II and assure of the strong support of my delegation in all your endeavors in overcoming the longstanding divide in forging compromise on the draft Protocol VI on cluster munitions.

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

Ukraine shares the mindset that over the past four years the Group of Governmental Experts has done a tremendous work in accommodating diverging interests of the CCW States Parties in developing a draft Protocol on cluster munitions. We strongly believe that numerous concessions made on all sides create a sound foundation for fixing mutually beneficial compromise which will bring a tangible humanitarian effect.

However we must acknowledge the fact that the achieved balance in the Chairs draft is still shaky, as some States are trying to perform a zero-sum game in a rather sensitive situation.

Given the significant indiscriminate effect of some technologically outdated cluster munitions and our common aspirations to considerably minimize adverse humanitarian consequences, there is a real need of striking a delicate yet responsible balance between humanitarian concerns and legitimate national security interests of states.

Many states, including Ukraine which inherited a tremendous and in fact very costly heritage of the post-Soviet arsenals, consider cluster munitions to be legal weapon which remain an important component of present security doctrines and defense capabilities.

As of today, Ukraine possesses around 700 000 tons of cluster munitions. With an average annual elimination of some 20 thousand tons of the ordnance, the estimated time period for their total destruction could make up to 50 years.

The immediate impact for Ukraine of the adoption of the draft Protocol VI will constitute the ban of more than 60% of the existing cluster munitions.

At the same time Ukraine will encounter an inherited and very costly and time-consuming problem with the clearance of more than 200 000 hectares of territories of former Soviet military training grounds, polluted with cluster munitions remnants. Under actual dynamics this process will take up to 60 years.

Furthermore, one of the most pressing challenges for Ukraine is elimination of the redundant post-Soviet military burden, including:

- 5 000 tons of SS-24 IBM solid rocket propellant (requires up to 20 mln. USD);

- around 9 000 tons of liquid rocket propellant surplus of "mélange" type (requires up to 18 mln. USD for removal and reclamation of land for agricultural use);

- approximately 6 mln. of landmines (still requires up to 6 mln. euro) pending destruction under the Ottawa Convention;

- elimination of about 1,2 mln. tons of ammunition;

- clearance of more than 150 000 ha, polluted with explosive remnants on former military ranges under CCW Protocol V.

All of these projects require considerable financial, technical and organization efforts, as well as coherent and credible international assistance mechanisms.

Hence, taking further obligations prompts us to advocate the effective mechanism of cooperation and assistance under the draft Protocol VI, providing, inter alia, proper budgeting and possibilities of efficient exchange of information and technologies for cluster munitions destruction.

Another crucial point, stemming from abovementioned reality on the ground, – is the preservation of the long debated and subtly agreed deferral period and its extended term based on the objective needs to manage cluster munitions which do not meet the standards set in the draft Protocol VI.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is confident that international community should take the last and decisive step to capitalize on the outcome of a long negotiation process.

Losing this unique chance would be a serious disappointment not only because of inability to make a considerable step in bringing obvious humanitarian effect but also because of failure to further strengthen the CCW regime.

I thank you.