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Fourth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to
The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

DRAFT Opening Statement for Main Committee I by
Phillip Spector, Head of U.S. Delegation
November 15, 2011

Thank you, Mr. President.

The United States is a strong supporter of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). As such, we believe that the future work of the Convention rests both in the universalization and the implementation of the existing protocols.

During opening statements, several states proposed reconvening the Group of Government Experts (GGE) on MOTAPM. High Contracting Parties (HCP) will recall that the United States was a leading supporter of the previous MOTAPM negotiations. We fully recognize the humanitarian consequences of the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of all types of mines, and in January 2011, ceased the use of all persistent land mines. All U.S. employed mines, both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle, are detectable and equipped with self-destruct mechanisms. Like many other states, we are concerned about the effective use of HCP resources, and would only consider renewed MOTAPM discussions if it were clear these would have added value. At this time we question whether atmosphere has sufficiently changed to allow for successful negotiation of a new protocol.

As far as discussions related to Protocol III or the use of white phosphorus, we do not believe that it is necessary or appropriate to reopen existing protocols that already have significant humanitarian value.

Thank you, Mr. President.