Thank you Madame President,

Let me start by thanking you and the delegation of Costa Rica for presiding over this first preparatory meeting for the First CCM Review Conference and compliment you both with the excellent work done so far. Let me assure to you that we look forward to our upcoming meeting in Dubrovnik and that you can count on the full support of my delegation in preparing for it.

Madame President,

As I am planning to take the floor only once this morning, please allow me to address several items at once.

The Netherlands considers the Cluster Munition Convention to be one of the success stories in the disarmament world. In five years’ time much has been reached. A firm norm has been established on the non-use of cluster munitions. Many countries have destroyed their Cluster munitions stockpiles or are in the process of doing so. Clearance of cluster munitions is either well underway in countries or has already finished.

However, more needs to be done – especially with regard to universalization of the treaty, the strengthening of the norm of non-use of cluster munitions and on cooperation and assistance. We think civil society can play an important role in identifying possible solutions for these issues.

On universalization the treaty now has 90 States Parties. We are convinced that in Dubrovnik we can reach 100. In this regard we comment the activities of the Presidency and the co-coordinators for Universalization Norway and Ecuador. We can also do more ourselves by raising the issue in bilateral meetings with states not party to this treaty. The Netherlands systematically includes
membership of CCM and other disarmament treaties in bilateral meetings with states not yet party.

On the road to Dubrovnik we need to think about how we can further strengthen the norm of non-use of cluster munitions.

Unfortunately over the last years several instances of use of cluster munitions have been reported. Most recent is a report by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SSM) of 3 February on the alleged use of cluster munitions in Luhansk. We are deeply concerned about this report. We call upon all governments to refrain from the use of cluster munitions and to take any necessary measures to protect its citizens from cluster munitions.

On cooperation and assistance we should assess in Dubrovnik what is needed by affected states and where we can improve assistance.

Regarding the programme of meetings and machinery the Netherlands is of the opinion that the CCM machinery is already ‘lean and mean’. Having said this we are always prepared to look at proposals that can further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of this machinery.

On the programme of meetings we are flexible. As I have stated before, we think the Convention is in good shape and we could therefore consider to reduce our meetings to for example one MSP every two years – like the Small Arms Model and an expert meeting in the year no MSP takes place. But as I stated before, we would be flexible on this one.

Lastly, Madame President, on the financial model for the ISU. We sincerely hope we can find a compromise solution soon as possible as to allow for a good start of the permanent ISU at the Dubrovnik conference. We would therefore like to appeal to all
delegations to be flexible and to work constructively towards a solution that we can all live with.

Thank you.