



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA  
GENEVA

---

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)  
Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems  
General Debate  
Geneva, Monday, 13 April 2015

**Statement by Ambassador AHN Youngjip**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by joining other delegations to express my sincere appreciation to you for chairing the 2015 CCW Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. I would also like to thank your team and the CCW Secretariat for their work and dedication in preparing this meeting. Personally, I am pleased to serve as the Friend of the Chair.

Mr. Chairman,

The 2014 CCW Meeting of Experts on LAWS contributed to facilitating common understanding concerning main elements of LAWS among the CCW High Contracting Parties. Their efforts have led to a broad consensus on the importance of 'meaningful human control' over the critical functions of selecting and engaging targets. In this regard, I once again express my appreciation to Ambassador Simon-Michel for his hard work as the Chairman of the 2014 Expert Meeting.

Despite such notable progress, however, there still remains room for attaining a more clear understanding of several key issues. In particular, we need to further clarify the concept and scope of autonomy as well as the legality regarding the use of autonomous weapons systems. We need to closely examine LAWS, not in isolation but in conjunction with the tasks it performs, the types of targets it engages and the contexts in which it is employed. In this regard, we expect the 2015 Expert Meeting to enable the CCW High Contracting Parties to deepen their understanding of LAWS technology and its related implications.

Mr. Chairman,

We are of the view that the programme of work of the 2015 Expert Meeting seems quite balanced. As this meeting takes place within the framework of the CCW, it would be appropriate for the meeting to focus on aspects of international humanitarian law and military security, while touching upon the issues related to ethics and human rights. Regarding the definition of LAWS, we support your bottom-up approach that begins with a deliberation on its characteristics. We feel that this approach can eventually lead to a tangible formation of its concepts.

As was pointed out at the 2014 Expert Meeting, identical technology is used for LAWS and civilian robots. In our view, the discussions on LAWS should not be carried out in a way that can hamper research and development of robotic technology for civilian use. In this regard, we note the advantages of looking into the dual-use characteristics of LAWS technology under a separate and dedicated session.

Robotic technology promises to bring increasing benefits to our lives. The Republic of Korea is determined to enhance the peaceful application of robotic technology in various civilian areas. However, we are wary of fully autonomous weapons systems that remove meaningful human control from the operation loop, due to the risk of malfunctioning, potential accountability gap and ethical concerns.

Mr. Chairman,

Autonomous technology is an emerging area and we are still at the initial stages of addressing the issue of LAWS. Therefore, it is necessary for us to base our discussions on accurate and objective review of the technology. It is also important that we seek a common understanding of the relevant terminology.

I am confident that this meeting will provide an opportunity for comprehensive and in-depth review of the key aspects of LAWS. Moreover, it is crucial that our discussions can lay the groundwork for any decisions on the next steps at the Meeting of States Parties in November, as well as at the 2016 Review Conference. I look forward to a constructive and fruitful meeting this week, and assure you of my delegation's full participation and engagement.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

/End/