



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

## Meeting of Experts on LAWS

11-15 April, 2016

Address by Finland

Thank you Mr. President,

Let me start by thanking you Mr. President and your team for all the hard and excellent work you have put in to preparing this meeting.

The issue of LAWS is complex, timely and highly relevant and something we believe is important to discuss further here within the framework of the CCW. Let me assure you, Mr. President of our delegations full support during these deliberations.

We are happy to note, that based on the excellent, more scientific approach, during the last two meetings we are now moving towards a more political discussion. We greatly appreciate the papers presented by Switzerland, Canada, Japan, France and the Holy See, which we have read with great interest. We are sure that these papers will help to inspire a vivid debate also between states, which is the key in taking the issue forward.

Mr. President,

Finland highlights the importance of adhering to the rule of international humanitarian law in all situations. In our opinion IHL is fully applicable also in a situation where LAWS would be used as a means of warfare on the battleground.

We further underline, that each and every state has the ultimate responsibility in every situation where norms of international humanitarian or human rights law are breached. This includes of course the provisions in the Geneva conventions first additional protocol on the review of the legality of new weapons systems. Finland will, for our part, review the national implementation of article 36 during this year and we are also open to the idea of creating international standards for the implementation of this norm.

Mr. President,

We are looking forward to a vivid and fruitful exchange during the upcoming week. We believe that the framework of the CCW is the right place to continue the discussions also in the future.

We greatly appreciate and support the chairman's effort to steer these discussions towards finding a common working definition of LAWS, as we believe that this is the key to deepening our deliberations.

We see that this work would merit from continued discussions within the framework of a Governmental Group of Experts and we thus support that the establishment of a GGE would be one of the recommendations coming out of this meeting.

Thank you Mr. President.