



## OPENING STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

### CCW Informal Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems

Geneva, 13 April 2015

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to begin by commending you for convening this important Meeting and to thank you and your team, notably the Secretariat and the CCW ISU, for the excellent preparation of this event. The delegation of Croatia wishes to assure you of our full cooperation and support in your work.

Croatia naturally aligns itself with the EU statement.

Building on the debate of the first informal meeting of experts in May 2014, under the able leadership of France, we are of the view that it is vital for the High Contracting Parties to pursue a common position on various aspects of technology, ethics, sociology, human rights, law and military issues that constitute LAWS as such.

Thus, we see particular importance of this forum for continued international debate over fully autonomous weapons - a debate which should be conducted in the good spirit of open discussions and multilateral as well as multidisciplinary approach.

Undoubtedly, it is indeed necessary to keep an open mind when reflecting on the use of emerging technologies, particularly given the fact of the dual-use nature of robotic technologies. However, while acknowledging the importance of these technologies in many areas of everyday life (disaster recovery, health, industry, to name just a few) as well as the need to maintain the freedom of scientific research, we urge caution when it comes to robotized weapons.

Croatia is of the view that we as the mankind are ethically obliged to ensure meaningful human control with regard to the use of lethal force. It is not acceptable that fundamental moral judgments over life and death fall into hands of automated technical systems because such scenario would mark the end of humanity as such. Let us not forget that even though humans have proved to be capable of doing the worst things to each other, especially in times of war, it is our inherent nature that allows us to evolve both morally and ethically in a way machines will never be able.

Having said all that Mr. Chairperson, we feel that even the idea of developing an international prohibition of weapon systems operating without meaningful human control should not be something unthinkable, particularly given the calls for a moratorium on the development of such weapons.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.