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Statement by

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Singh-Gill, upon the manner you have been conducting our deliberations, as well to thank your team, and to thank the High Contracting Parties for their important contributions.

Like many others, we agree with the view that the CCW continues to be the appropriate forum to discuss this subject. In this regard, it is important to remain within the agreed mandate for discussion and stick to the objectives and purposes of the CCW.

The experts' meetings thus far have helped to promote a greater understanding on the issue of LAWS. We note that there seems to be wide agreement on certain notions, such as that IHL applies to the development and use of LAWS; that humans will always be responsible for the employment of LAWS and should be held accountable for IHL violations in accordance with international law; and that the discussions should not hamper progress in civilian research, development and use of autonomous technologies.

At the same time, as we've heard this week, there are issues in which there are still differences of opinion. One of them is the definition or characterization of LAWS. Another issue is the appropriate type and level of human judgment throughout the various phases of the weapon's life cycle, as well as the suitable terminology in this regard. This stems, inter alia, from the futuristic nature of the subject and its broad scope. Indeed, some may say it is similar to trying to discuss the internet in the 1980s – at this stage, more is unknown than known, and a prudent approach is necessary.

We should also be aware of the military and humanitarian advantages that may be associated with LAWS, both from operational as well as legal and ethical aspects. These may include better precision of targeting which would minimize collateral damage and reduce risk to combatants and non-combatants.

Specifically with regards to the issue of human-machine interaction –

In our perspective, human judgment will always be an integral part of any process regarding LAWS, and will be applied throughout their life-cycle. LAWS will operate as designed and programmed by humans. The purpose of LAWS, accurately described in the working paper submitted by the U.S., is *to help effectuate the intention of commanders and the operators of weapons systems over the use of force.*

The GGE meeting in April this year allowed us to reach a better understanding of the concept of human-machine interaction. In particular, the introduction of the 'sunrise' diagram by the Chair has been useful and assisted in structuring our discussions. Like other delegations, we found the suggested additions in the UK working paper to be helpful, as well as the Swiss suggestion to add the touchpoint of training. The diagram

illustrates that it is important to look at the weapon's life cycle as a whole, in order to reflect a broader and more accurate picture on the use of force – rather than focusing only on a limited slice of the process.

It seems that one subject that attracted considerable interest by States is weapon reviews – a touchpoint mentioned in the diagram, that reflects a critical avenue of human input, and directly concerns compliance of the weapon with international law. Israel has shared its own domestic process for legal review of new weapons in a previous meeting, and joins other delegations who view the benefits of elaborating more on this issue.

To conclude, although we've made important progress in April and during this week, it seems clear that further in-depth discussions are required, specifically on the various phases of human-machine interaction. In this regard, States could share opinions as well as national practices with regard to the various touchpoints. We look forward to continuing the conversation on this issue.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.