



Statement by the Netherlands

2018 Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS

Characterization

Thank you Mr. Chair.

As mentioned in our working paper from October 2017, the Netherlands believes, that the establishment of working definitions is needed to reduce the confusion through differences in interpretation. The Netherlands has the following working definition for an autonomous weapons system: *"A weapon that, without human intervention, selects and engages targets matching certain predefined criteria, following a human decision to deploy the weapon on the understanding that an attack, once launched, cannot be stopped by human intervention."*

The Netherlands would like to stress however, that neither these working definitions nor the characterization of LAWS should prejudice the outcome of the discussions nor the extent of the (future) discussions.

The Netherlands also welcomes therefore the discussion about characterization of LAWS. We do not believe however that a detailed characterization or definition of LAWS based on technological characteristics would help our discussions, as the technological development progresses quickly and it will be difficult to have fruitful discussions on that level of technical details.

Instead, as the core theme of the debate is that all weapons, including autonomous weapons, should remain under meaningful human control, it would be better to focus our deliberations on how systems, that can select

and engage targets autonomously, remain under human control. In our view we should discuss what elements are relevant to maintain meaningful human control within the full targeting process. We will discuss this on Wednesday in more detail.

Thank you Mr. Chair.