

Consideration of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (agenda item 8).

Chair

1. Ireland aligns itself with Statement made by the EU and would like to add the following intervention in a national capacity.
2. My Delegation was encouraged by the progress made during the 2018 meetings of the Group of Government Experts (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons (LAWs). We welcome the agreed Guiding Principles, including the reaffirmation that international law applies to autonomous weapon systems and that any future weapons must remain under human control. The agreed Guiding Principles offer a useful basis to support the continuation of work in 2019.
3. In turning more specifically to the content of report of the GGE, while we acknowledge the difficulties in reaching agreement on a working definition or common understanding of LAWs, we welcome the agreement that a reference to technical attributes alone is not sufficient in defining LAWS. While my delegation sees merit in reaching a common understanding on a working definition relating to LAWS, we also welcome the recognition that the inability to converge on an agreed legal definition should not hamper efforts to address the challenges posed by LAWS.

Chair,

4. Ireland has remained consistent in our position on the need for human control in the use of force. We were pleased to note the recognition that human responsibility for decisions on the use of weapons systems must be retained since accountability cannot be transferred to machines and that this should be considered across the entire life cycle of the weapons system.
5. It is our view that we should now focus our discussions on the type and degree of human involvement required to ensure that possible emerging weapons systems, with an increasing level of autonomous functions, are compatible with the requirements of international law, in particular IHL. My delegation welcomes the explicit recognition in the GGE report that human responsibility for the use of force must be retained and that this could extend to intervention in the operation of a weapon, if necessary, to ensure compliance with IHL.

Chair

6. Ireland supports the continuation of the GGE's work in 2019 with the aim to achieve further substantive progress. Ireland supports a meeting of the GGE on LAWS for a total duration of 10 days in 2019. This duration is needed to continue our work in a meaningful way in 2019. We view the costs associated with holding a meeting of the GGE for 10 days as set out in document ([CCW/MSP/2018/6](#)) to be reasonable and appropriate.
7. In considering the options presented in the report of the GGE to address the potential risks and challenges of LAWS, my delegation sees scope for regulation of weapon systems that incorporate emerging technologies with increasingly autonomous functions to ensure compliance with International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law and other provisions of international law. We also see some merit in agreeing a political declaration within CCW in order to provide a firm collective basis for future work towards addressing this constantly evolving issue.

Chair

8. While Ireland remains open to suggestions on the wording of a mandate for our future work; we also believe our current mandate is sufficiently flexible to enable our discussions to continue to move forward. However, we are also conscious that the fast-pace of current technological developments present a compelling incentive for us to accelerate our efforts next year.

Thank You