Mr. Chair,

Please allow me to address this forum on behalf of High Contracting Parties working together in the framework of the Alliance for Multilateralism, namely Bulgaria, Ireland, France, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Austria, Portugal, Malta, Belgium, Sweden, Montenegro, Italy, Netherlands, Germany and Finland.

The Alliance is a flexible network of states which are led by a firm belief in the unique power of multilateralism to find effective and sustainable solutions to the global policy challenges of our times. The alliance strives to strengthen existing multilateral institutions and processes by forming cross-regional groups of states in support of advancing action on key agenda items of the multilateral agenda.

At the recent high level meeting of the Alliance for Multilateralism in New York on 26 September, his Excellency Pekka Haavisto, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland, called for redoubled efforts to advance the negotiations on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems inside the CCW.

Taking up this call here at the Meeting of High Contracting Parties, we wish to express our full endorsement for the eleven guiding principles on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems as elaborated by the Group of Governmental experts over the past two years. These principles express the clear commitment
of CCW High Contracting Parties to uphold international law, human responsibility and human accountability to highlight just a few of the key elements. The guiding principles are a first important milestone of the CCW-negotiations on LAWS. They will offer guidance for policy-making, scientific research and military practitioners alike.

On behalf of States working together in the Alliance for Multilateralism I would also like to stress our determination to contribute constructively to the next phase of the CCW negotiations on LAWS and to advance the clarification and development of an effective and comprehensive normative and operational framework for consideration by High Contracting Parties at their Annual Meeting in 2021. We trust that such a framework will be able to effectively address the multiple questions raised by emerging technologies in the area of LAWS.