

2018 Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems
Agenda Item 5

9 April, 2018

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Inchul KIM

Republic of Korea

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to thank you, Ambassador Gil, for the preparations for this first meeting of the GGE on LAWS. The Republic of Korea concurs with other delegations that the CCW is the right forum to discuss LAWS and that the discussion we had in the informal meetings in the previous years provides us with useful platform this GGE can build on.

We are, in particular, happy to see the GGE's continued engagement with multi stakeholders including academia, industry and civil society. Different views from different angles as well as rounded expertise will further enrich our collective wisdom in our shared efforts to strike a delicate balance between various important and legitimate needs and concerns such as security, safety and ethical, humanitarian, legal, technical ones.

The active exchange of views in the last informal meetings not only helped understand the complexity of the issue and identify critical subjects but also reminded us how much we diverge on this complicated and ever evolving issue. We must cooperate further to reach a sufficient extent of common understandings on fundamental issues: in particular, characterization of LAWS, human elements in the use of lethal force and military and humanitarian aspects of related technologies.

For one example, it would add more practical value to discuss how we can determine the appropriateness and the level of acceptability of human-machine interaction in LAWS than arguing what the right scope of LAWS should be. Also, we can make more progress by exploring the scope of meaningful human control in the delegation of decisions to intelligent machines instead of what we must regulate on LAWS.

We also need to constantly keep in mind the intrinsic dual use nature of technology during our deliberation on LAWS. We shall not and cannot restrain

civilian spheres from accessing and developing certain technologies only because they have potential to be used as a part of LAWS. The Artificial Intelligence based on machine learning is already being used and also can contribute to distributing resources more effectively helping us achieve the 2030 sustainable development goals.

While we share the imperative that LAWS should not increase international destabilization, we should not be turning a blind eye to the role of defensive autonomous weapons including through raising the threshold of conflicts by deterring possible attacks. In order not to base our propositions on conjectures, we need more research and more information including on the benefits of related technologies. We therefore welcome and support initiatives to introduce examples of military applications in the area of rescue, demining et cetera to our discussion.

With relation to the applicability of IHL, we agree that IHL should apply to the development, deployment, and use of all weapons including LAWS. It will therefore be worth exchanging best practices and policy measures and technical standards in compliance with IHL. Clarifying the ambiguous liability chain in the operation of existing autonomous systems such as autonomous driving cars can also contribute to our work in this regard.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that the GGE can focus more on the substantial and practical issues rather than controversial and political ones, which in our view are unwarranted at this stage. Thank you. /End/