



**Opening remarks by Mr. Michael Møller
United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Acting Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva
“Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) –
Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems”**

**Palais des Nations, Room XIX
Tuesday, 13 May 2014 at 10:00**

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I have the pleasure of welcoming you to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and to the United Nations in the city of Geneva.

I congratulate CCW States Parties and Ambassador Simon-Michel for taking on the emerging and important issue of lethal autonomous weapons systems.

One of the strengths of the CCW is its framework that allows for both discussing and negotiating on emerging challenges in the areas of conventional weapons and armed conflict. Without such an open framework, the opportunity for experts to meet and examine all aspects of

autonomous weapons would no doubt have taken much longer.

I particularly appreciate the CCW's open rules that allow for participation by United Nations organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, non-governmental organisations, experts and academics. With such open participation, there can be no better forum for addressing autonomous weapons.

It would be remiss of me to not acknowledge the crucial work that has been carried out by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots in bringing lethal autonomous weapons to the attention of States and into the United Nations. Within the Campaign, I wish to acknowledge the leadership of former Under-Secretary General for Disarmament, Dr. Jayantha Dhanapala, and Nobel Laureate, Ms. Jody Williams.

This Meeting of Experts is only a first step towards addressing lethal autonomous weapons. In doing so, I urge delegates to take bold action. All too often international law only responds to atrocities and suffering once it has

happened. You have the opportunity to take pre-emptive action and ensure that the ultimate decision to end life remains firmly under human control.

In this regard, Protocol IV to the CCW prohibited the use of blinding laser weapons before they were ever deployed on the battlefield. Clearly, Protocol IV serves as an example to be followed again.

Geneva has a historical record that is second to none for achieving results in disarmament and international humanitarian law negotiations. Testimony to this are the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions, the CCW and its Protocols, to name but a few examples. Geneva remains the home of disarmament and international humanitarian law and I look forward to CCW States Parties adding to this proud tradition.

Thank you very much.