



**CCW Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems
Geneva (9 – 13 April 2018)**

**Statement by Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

Next Steps

Mr. Chairman,

Let me congratulate you for the very constructive way in which you are steering our discussion. Under your able leadership, we have had an extremely interesting debate.

While a lack of common understanding remains on many relevant issues, we are pleased to note that – building on the work done last year – some areas of convergence, if not yet of consensus, are gradually emerging.

We hope that we will be able to build on them, during the second week of this GGE meeting, at the end of August.

Mr. Chairman,

As for the possible options for addressing the humanitarian and international security challenges of LAWS, I believe that the starting point should remain a common, shared recognition that our engagement towards the full implementation of, and respect for, the rules and principles of IHL must stand firm independently of the specificity of any weapons system. I am referring not only to the rules on the conduct of hostilities but also to the obligation to conduct legal reviews of weapons, means and methods of warfare, in accordance with art. 36 of the Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

In this regard, we encourage all States that have not yet done so, to set up formal procedures of art. 36 reviews, to be performed before the beginning of any weapons research, development or procurement process, as a key step to ensure the compatibility of all weapon systems, including emerging ones, with IHL.

Since reviewing the legality of weapons with automated or autonomous features could present some technical and financial challenges, we would support efforts aimed at creating the conditions for more widespread compliance with the requirement of Article 36 of Additional Protocol I, with specific reference to the systems we are considering. This could be done through increased transparency on the processes and mechanisms in place for the review, and the development of best practices and guidelines.

Also, we believe that our discussion could benefit from further exchanges of experience with the civilian sector and the industry, considering that a number of issues that are central to discussions on LAWS have already been, or are currently being, actively addressed within the civilian sphere.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, while not wanting to prejudge the result of our next round of discussions, in terms of the possible outcomes for the GGE, Italy shares the views expressed in the Working Paper 4 jointly presented last year by France and Germany.

In particular, we agree that the GGE could usefully pave the way for a draft political declaration setting basic agreed principles and lay the ground for further work on the issue

In order to advance in this direction, we are ready to fully cooperate with you, Mr. Chairman, and work constructively with the other delegations.

Thank you.