



Permanent Mission of Italy to
the Conference on Disarmament

**Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on
Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS)**

1-5 September 2025

Section I

Chair,

At the outset, allow me to thank you and your team for the tireless work you have done over these months. Many sensitivities are present in this conference room and through your efforts our differences have been narrowed down to the current rolling text where we see many areas of possible convergence.

The task of our Group is “to further consider and formulate, by consensus, a set of elements of an instrument”. For us this instrument should try to adopt a functional approach focused more on the scope of application rather than physical characteristics.

Looking at Section I, we would like to present the following comments. We support the introduction of the language “within the scope of the application of the CCW” as it clearly defines the scope of application of the future instrument.

First of all, we intend to support regulation of LAWS that, in general terms, maintain a higher level of autonomy across all critical functions. In our view, a lethal autonomous weapons system is a system that, once activated, can identify, select and engage targets without further human intervention, implying therefore the use of artificial intelligence for all the three phases of the process. For this reason, we

have expressed preference for mentioning all the three phases “identify, select and engage” with the addition of “without further intervention by a human user in the execution of these tasks”. Having said that, we appreciate the detailed expert work contained in your “Background paper on context-appropriate human judgement and control and the critical functions of LAWS”. During the last session of the GGE LAWS, it appeared that delegations may attribute different meanings to the critical functions, especially to the selection phase, and we are ready to work towards a common understanding that brings us closer to a consensus definition for the future instrument.

Now looking at para 2, the definition of lethality formulated in this paragraph, clearly focusing on the capacity to cause “death” in the first part and maintaining a more generic formulation in the second part ("may be used in circumstances that do not result in death..."), seems to us a good compromise following the discussion we had in March. The suitability of LAWS to cause death appears to be the necessary requirement for the characterization; if, then, the system is used to cause damage or injury, this does not preclude it from still being considered a lethal autonomous weapon system for the purpose of the CCW. We think the current text is a very good basis for further discussion and we are open to consider other possible language alternatives that could accommodate different sensitivities on this matter. In our view though, in order to resolve any interpretative doubts regarding the possible inclusion in the category of LAWS of automatic defensive systems that function on missiles and drones, it would add more clarity to remove from the sentence “to damage or destroy objects”.

Thank you, Chair.