

6 March 2023

Statement

**by Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands,
Norway, Spain, and Sweden**

Meeting of the CCW Group of Governmental Experts

**on “Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems”
(LAWS)**

Geneva, 6 to 10 March 2023

Mr Chair,

Excellencies, colleagues,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Germany.

We highly appreciate the efforts undertaken by you, Mr Chair, and your team in order to prepare the meetings of the group of governmental experts this year. The opportunity to continue the substantial discussions on issues related to LAWS is highly valuable to us.

We also welcome that international discussion on issues related to LAWS have intensified, including at the conferences in The Hague and Costa Rica, and we look forward to further meaningful debates in Luxembourg.

This GGE has shown in previous years that it is capable of making meaningful progress in the discussion on important questions of substance.

We wish to continue discussions in a constructive spirit, and we strongly call upon all GGE members to do so keeping our aim at sight: to consent at the end of our second session an outcome document that truly reflects the quality of our discussions.

Taking into account the numerous and very substantial proposals that were submitted by the members of the GGE in previous meetings and the discussions that followed, our impression has solidified: there is more common ground on the basis of the “two-tier approach”. It continues to gain traction, and we are very happy to welcome Bulgaria and Denmark to our group.

The joint working paper that was submitted by this group in July 2022 is still valid:

High Contracting parties should acknowledge that firstly, lethal autonomous weapons systems that cannot comply with IHL are ipso facto prohibited and

should be outlawed and not be developed or used, while regulating any other lethal weapons systems featuring autonomy in order to ensure compliance with the rules and principles of international humanitarian law, by preserving human responsibility and accountability, ensuring appropriate human control, and implementing risk mitigation measures.

We remain committed to our discussions in the framework in the GGE as it provides an inclusive forum that brings together all the relevant stakeholders.

It is in our view indispensable to finally achieve a substantial outcome this year.

Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Germany will keep their constructive spirit and call upon all members of the GGE to work towards this end.