



Statement of the Netherlands

delivered by

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at

Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS

**Agenda item 5(d): Characterization of the systems under
consideration in order to promote a common
understanding on concepts and characteristics relevant to
the objectives and purposes of the Convention**

Geneva, 25 April 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU and would like to make some remarks in its national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

My country has proposed in 2017 a working definition for an autonomous weapons system that reads: *"A weapon that, without human intervention, selects and engages targets matching certain predefined criteria, following a human decision to deploy the weapon on the understanding that an attack, once launched, cannot be stopped by human intervention."* This definition is included in our 2017 working paper, which remains valid.

Working definitions such as these or the characterization of LAWS can indeed be useful to minimize differences in interpretation and to facilitate debate, but disagreement on them should not prevent us from making progress within this GGE. Nor should working definitions or the characterization of LAWS prejudge the course or the outcome of current or future discussions.

Reflecting on our discussions over the past two years and taking into account the quick pace of technological developments, we do not believe that a detailed characterization or definition of LAWS based on purely technological characteristics would help our discussions.

Instead, we suggest to focus our deliberations on how systems that can select and engage targets autonomously can remain under human control. We will address this, as well as the specific questions under the current agenda item, in more detail on Tuesday, under agenda item 5b. Thank you.