Mr. Chairman,
The relentless pace of emergence of new weapons, driven by a never-ending strategic competition, constantly facilitated by new scientific innovations, carries serious implications. The rapid development of new weapon systems and enabling technologies poses a threat to peace, security and stability at the regional and global levels. Governing and regulating the development and use of such weapons under International Law is proving to be a major challenge.

Mr. Chairman,

The development of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems or LAWS, has emerged as a major concern. LAWS are rightly being described as the next revolution in military affairs that would fundamentally change the nature of war. Their introduction will lower the threshold of armed conflicts and would affect progress on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Any weapon system that delegates life and death decisions to machines is by nature unethical and cannot fully comply with IHL. The issue of LAWS does not only have legal, ethical and technical dimensions, but also carries serious implications for regional and global security. The developments in the field of AI need to be appropriately regulated in all its dimensions. They should not outpace the evolution of regulations governing them. Pakistan, therefore, supports the development of an international legally binding instrument stipulating appropriate prohibitions and regulations on LAWS.

The process launched six years ago within the CCW framework can only be sustained if it yields concrete results, heeding the concerns of all States. Besides the CCW, the international security dimensions of LAWS should be comprehensively addressed by the UN Disarmament Machinery, including by the CD.

Mr. Chairman,

Cyber warfare is another area requiring immediate attention. The First substantive session of the OEWG on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security that convened in September this year, provided member states a good opportunity to identify commonalities and divisions. Among other things, it became clear that everyone agreed that cyberspace was not an unregulated space for States. The existence of varying levels of capacity, security and vulnerability among and between States underscores the need for having common but differentiated responsibilities in making the global ICT network safe and secure.

We hope that the coming sessions of the OEWG will help in developing a common understanding for further normative efforts to preserve cyberspace from becoming the next theatre of conflict.
Given the unique attributes of ICTs, additional norms need to be developed in a universal setting. The CD remains an appropriate venue for further multilateral work on this topic. Our delegation recognizes the need for maintaining coordination and complementarity between the OEWG and the parallel process being undertaken in a separate, limited-membership GGE. We, however, underscore the importance attached by the broader UN membership to the OEWG as an inclusive and universal mechanism.

Mr. Chairman,

The revolutionary pace of advancements, be it emergence of new weapon systems, or in the field of ICTs, has created vast opportunities for growth as well as serious risks for international peace and security. We firmly believe that the United Nations has a central role in promoting dialogue among Member States for developing common understandings on key aspects of these issues. Arriving at a common understanding requires constructive and sustained engagement by Member States. Pakistan remains ever ready to be part of this endeavour.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.