Dear Mr. Chairman,

Since I am taking the floor for the first time let me first of all congratulate you on the re-assumption of your duty. We are grateful for your and your team efforts for advancing and bringing debate on LAWS to another stage. Building common understanding of this phenomenon is a first and foremost task.

Poland aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. Now, let me address the very topic of today’s session as well as some pertinent elements raised so far during the debate.

We see with satisfaction a new quality in our debate. Let me thank for the Chart you have distributed as a helpful tool in gathering all elements.

We share observations of several delegations that lethality as a characteristic of weapons does not bring necessarily an added-value to our discussion. We also support necessity to demystify and to simplify our deliberations. Using an expression fully autonomous would serve, in our view, this purpose very well. In other words, we are in favor of using FAWS instead of LAWS.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that it is important to ground the discussion on AWS in a way to address human control over the critical functions as well as the dual-use nature of such systems and proliferation risks they may pose.

We share more common approach among the States that human control over the critical functions of weapon systems need to be retained. Humans should play a decisive role in deployment, targeting and use of force and there should be no acceptance of fully autonomous weapons systems covering these critical functions.
Mr. Chairman,

We agree that all dimensions of AWS – political, technical, legal and ethical are equally important. Nevertheless, we are leaning to the conviction that the ethical dimension is of a primary character. This is because ethical dimension is unequivocally related to the issue of responsibility. The type and degree of human control needs to be evaluated to establish limits on autonomy in weapons systems. In this process we should take into account that humans should remain fully responsible for decisions to use force. In this context, we would like also to stress the importance of predictability of the operation of the weapons systems as an element of responsibility.

I hope, that we can agree with a general opinion that it is deeply rooted in the human nature to effectively control its environment. It would be, therefore, against human nature to create something which remains beyond our control.

Mr. Chairman,

As we stated in our Working Paper:

From the practical point of view, any perception of AWS as systems that are isolated and independent of human beings is unrealistic. All robotic and weapon systems are made and deployed by humans to a varying degree. We argue here that the debate on AWS should be conducted with humans and not machines at the center in a way it acknowledges the distinctiveness and complexity of human ethics and related human characteristics rather than dismisses or oversimplifies them.

The underlying assumption is that humans are central actors and not mere factors that may or may not be included in the process of the use of AWS. This is due to distinctively human characteristics that AWS do not have, namely the human ability for ethical reasoning and ethical conduct which are inherent to life-and-death decisions.

Mr. Chairman,

Having regard to the ethical dimension in the first place, we also recall that the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack are the fundamental rules and principles of international humanitarian law. They reflect efforts made by the international community to introduce effective legal limits on the conduct of hostilities.
Future autonomous weapons systems would be gradually assigned more complicated tasks and deployed in changing and more complex environment than has been the case until now.

That is why we should work effectively on strengthening existing regulations like article 36 on the requirement to conduct the legal reviews of all new weapons as well as on establishing principles and limits for autonomy in weapons systems because only humans, equipped with ethical reasoning, can be held accountable for decisions to use force.

*I thank you for your kind attention.*