Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to speak to your question about precedent for the relationship between human control and international humanitarian law.

Disarmament law and international humanitarian law have a history of banning weapons over which there is no human control. A 1907 Hague Convention banning sea mines covered all sea mines unless they “become harmless one hour . . . after person who laid them cease to control them.” This exception suggested that sea mines are unacceptably dangerous without human control.

The more recent Mine Ban Treaty follows a similar pattern. It bans antipersonnel mines that are victim-activated and excludes command-detonated ones, i.e., those triggered by a human operator. Victim-activated landmines pose a greater threat because a human operator does not have the control over when they detonate and whom they kill.

International bans on biological and chemical weapons were in large part motivated by the fact that the weapons’ effects are uncontrollable. Humans can determine the target and timing of an initial attack, but once the substance is released, it can spread beyond human control.

This precedent provides an excellent model for dealing with LAWS. LAWS would select and engage targets without human control. For similar reasons as the international community banned antipersonnel landmines, chemical weapons, and biological weapons, it should ban future weapons that lack meaningful human control over the use of force.

Thank you.