- 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

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Candidate Countries North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

Over the last year, the absence of an agreed working definition on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) did not prevent the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) from making progress on other issues on the agenda. Considerable progress was made on developing possible guiding principles. These guiding principles can provide a useful shared reference point to support efforts towards substantive progress this year. The emergence of a focus on human control as a core concept in our discussions could serve to advance our work in a meaningful way.

While mindful of the fast-paced development of emerging technologies, further work on concepts and characteristics of LAWS could bring helpful clarity to our discussions. We believe we should focus on the issue of compliance with international law, in particular IHL. This will

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
involve developing a deeper understanding of the necessary extent and type of human control in various phases of the life cycle of the weapons system to ensure compliance with international law. The two agenda items – the legal compliance and normative framing of LAWS and a further characterisation of the systems under consideration – are intrinsically linked as we pursue our efforts further.

We reiterate our position that non-autonomous systems such as automated, remotely operated, and teleoperated systems are not LAWS.

Thank you, Mr. Chair