Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We appreciate the discussions that you have led this week and the efforts to bring more substance to the debate and to identify points of convergence.

We believe, however, that the agenda for this afternoon raises a procedural concern. Discussing the guiding principles instead of the range of proposals for the way ahead has the potential to prejudice the debate. In our view, there is no consensus that the guiding principles are the best path forward.

With regard to substance, the principles are an inadequate response to the dangers presented by the prospect of weapons systems that could select and engage targets without meaningful human control. They are inadequate for many reasons, including the following:

- Principles on the applicability of international humanitarian law (IHL) (Principle 1) and weapons reviews (Principle 4) simply restate international law.
- Other principles restate uncontroversial points that this body has agreed on—for example, that policy measures should not interfere with peaceful uses of technology (Principle 8) and that the use of emerging technologies should comply with IHL (Principle 7).
- The lack of clarity and precision in the language will confuse the issue and muddy accepted understandings of international law. For example, responsibility is used sometime to refer to legal responsibility (Principle 3) and sometimes to what has widely been referred to in this room as human control (Principle 2).
- The principles implicitly acknowledge that there are risks to lethal autonomous weapons systems. For example, they reference “risk assessments” (Principle 6), the need to ensure legal responsibility (Principle 3), and certain security and technical concerns (Principle 5). But the list of concerns is neither complete nor clearly articulated.
- Most important, the principles mention “crafting potential policy measures” but they do not themselves represent policy measures that would address any of these concerns. There is nothing in the guiding principles that indicates that a potential goal is a legally
binding instrument, despite the fact that the majority of states in the room have called for one.

- Principle 10 notes that “CCW is an appropriate framework for dealing with the issue.” If that is the case, we believe it should deal with the issue in the way CCW was designed to operate—that is, through a new protocol that addresses the humanitarian concerns presented by certain weapons systems.

Thank you.