The Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW, 13-15 November 2019

Agenda item 8, Consideration of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS, Statement of Sweden

Mr Chair,

Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union. We would like to make a few points in a national capacity.

Mr Chair,

The Report of the GGE is a positive and a valuable achievement and we strongly support its endorsement. The Guiding Principles, including the eleventh one added this year, contain a great deal of highly relevant substance. They will be an important part of, and a basis for, the group’s further work. As the principles state, IHL applies fully to all weapons systems, including LAWS, and human responsibility for decisions to use weapons systems must be retained.

The GGE Report’s recommendations for the continued work of the group are sound. It is indeed the legal, technological and military aspects that need to be further explored and considered together as a whole. It is equally welcome that the objective of the GGE’s continued work, and its timeline, are quite clearly indicated.

The conclusions of the GGE Report also contain a wealth of substantial issues covered - and some that are identified for further work.

The amount of work that still needs to be done, and the degree of complexity of the issues at hand, mean that it is of the essence to allocate sufficient time for the GGE sessions. The 2019 sessions were held in a very limited number of working days. More time is certainly needed in 2020 and 2021. Sweden supports 30 working days for this period.

Mr Chair,

Sweden is pleased to have co-sponsored several independent expert studies on autonomy and related subjects. A current such study is being conducted by SIPRI and the ICRC on the elements of human control – a key concept in the LAWS discussion. We look forward to its conclusions, which will be shared by these experts in advance of next year’s GGE meetings.

Sweden stands ready to contribute further to the continued work in this important matter.
Thank you, Mr Chair.