Non-paper by the GGE Chair

As decided by the 2019 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Group of Governmental Experts related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems in the context of the objectives and purposes of the Convention is to:

- Explore and agree on possible recommendations on options related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems, in the context of the objectives and purposes of the Convention, taking into account all proposals (past, present and future) and the agenda items as reflected in paragraph 11 and annex I of the Report. In its discussions under each agenda item the Group shall consider the legal, technological and military aspects and the interaction between them, and bearing in mind ethical considerations. Delegations are encouraged to include legal, technological and military experts.

- Consider: the guiding principles, which it may further develop and elaborate; the work on the legal, technological and military aspects; the conclusions of the Group, as reflected in its reports of 2017, 2018 and 2019 and use them as a basis for its consensus recommendations in relation to the clarification, consideration and development of aspects of the normative and operational framework on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems, in accordance with Decision 1 of the Fifth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention (CCW/CONF.V/10), consistent with CCW/CONF.V/2. The Group’s recommendations will be reported, as appropriate, for consideration at the 2020 Meeting of High Contracting Parties and 2021 Sixth Review Conference.

The draft agenda was prepared on the basis of this decision and the two items contained in the two bullets above are reflected in items 5 and 6 respectively.

The mandate of the Group extends over two years. Therefore, it would be natural to seek complementarity of the GGE’s work across 2020 and 2021. With that in mind, the Chair proposes to start working on the Group’s draft Final Report already and attach it to the 2020 Report of the Group as a basis for the Group’s further work in 2021.

The 2019 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties endorsed the guiding principles affirmed by the Group in 2018 and 2019. By itself, this constituted an important advancement in the work of the Group. It may appear, however, that High Contracting Parties have different interpretations of these guiding principles. In order to facilitate common understanding on the matter, the Chair will seek commentaries by the High Contracting Parties on operationalizing all eleven guiding principles at a national level. It is the hope of the Chair that these commentaries, to be provided on a voluntary basis, will aid the development of consensus recommendations that could be further discussed by the Group at its August 2020 session. Agreed commonalities on the operationalization of guiding principles may contribute to their further development and elaboration and provide useful

\( ^1 \) CCW/GGE.1/2019/3
background for discussion on “… aspects of the normative and operational framework on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems”.

The draft programme of work is set up in way so as to enable the Group to build up the work undertaken in previous years while making optimal use of the time available and taking into account the close timing between the two sessions.

Under each of the five areas of focus mandated to the Group (Item 5), it is proposed to dedicate meeting time to those aspects that may benefit from additional clarification or review, as identified in CCW/GGE.1/2019/3. Delegations are kindly requested to focus their interventions on those aspects, which are indicated in the draft programme. As specified in the above decision, the Group is also mandated under each of these items to consider the legal, technological and military aspects and the interaction between them, and bearing in mind ethical considerations. All delegations will be invited to propose the names of experts relevant to each item, who could be invited by the Chair to make a brief presentation at the start of the Group’s consideration of that item in order to help initiate the discussion.

The draft programme provides time for an initial exchange on recommendations in relation to the clarification, consideration and development of aspects of the normative and operational framework on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems (Item 6). It is the intention of the Chair to dedicate the majority of the time of the August session to consideration of this item, which should provide for, inter alia, the operationalization of the guiding principles adopted in 2019.

In order facilitate the initial exchange on Item 6, all delegations will be invited to submit commentaries on the operationalization of the guiding principles at the national level. Delegations are kindly requested to limit their submissions to no longer than four single-spaced pages (or 2,150 words) and to submit their national commentaries to the Secretariat of the Group (ccw@un.org) by 15 June 2020. These submissions will be included in a compilation which will be issued prior to the commencement of the first session of the Group.

Toward ensuring that the work of the Group can benefit from the fullest range of perspectives, the Chair intends to dedicate one meeting to a multi-stakeholder dialogue on this item.

On the basis of the discussion at the first session, the Chair will seek to produce a commonalities paper, based on commentaries on operationalization of the guiding principles, which will be extensively discussed during the August session of the Group.

It is intention of the Chair prior the August session to propose an initial draft of the Final Report which will draw upon the guiding principles, including any commonalities identified in their operationalization at a national level; additional progress achieved in June on the legal, technological and military aspects; and the conclusions reflected in the reports of the Group in 2017, 2018 and 2019. This initial draft Final Report will be the subject of discussion during the August meeting.

Should the approach outlined above be accepted by the Delegations during the March informal consultations, the Chair would issue a formal communication inviting the High Contracting Parties to submit commentaries on the operationalization of the guiding principles.