



**GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES
IN THE AREA OF LETHAL AUTONOMOUS WEAPONS SYSTEMS OF THE
CONVENTION ON PROHIBITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF CERTAIN
CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS WHICH MAY BE DEEMED TO BE EXCESSIVELY
INJURIOUS OR TO HAVE INDISCRIMINATE EFFECTS**

Geneva, 25 March 2019

**Statement by Germany – On Agenda Item 5(d) Characterization of the systems under
consideration in order to promote a common understanding on concepts and
characteristics relevant to the objective and purpose of the Convention**

1. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Germany fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the EU and would like to add some observations in its national capacity on the matter of characterization: Autonomy is an operational mode of technical systems. It can be related to whole weapon systems, or more likely, to individual functionalities of weapon systems.
2. An understanding of autonomy for the working purposes of the GGE on LAWS can be built by referring to autonomy as
 - a. the capacity to perceive (sense and interpret) an environment,
 - b. evaluate the circumstances of a changing situation without reference to a set of pre-defined goals,
 - c. reason and decide on the most suited approach towards their realization,
 - d. initiate actions based on these conclusions,
 - e. all of the above being executed without any human involvement once the system has been operationalized.

3. Having attempted a characterization based on these very few elements, the German delegation agrees with the observation made by some delegations that having an exact joint definition of the systems under consideration is not a necessary prerequisite for moving the work of this group forward.
4. Technology will continue evolving at high speed and so will possibilities for military applications. The interplay of AI with other emerging technologies would open additional new sets of options. So any definition based purely on technological features could be overtaken by developments in science and technology.
5. In our view, if we have not achieved a joint definition, we have built a sufficient joint understanding of the systems under consideration to now make progress towards an outcome document. The “possible guiding principles” which we agreed on last year could provide us with a good basis to build on.