



Statement by Mr. UMETSU Shigeru
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on
Disarmament
Plenary of the Conference on Disarmament
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Mr. President,

I would like to convey our appreciation for your initiative to take up the military domain of AI in the CD Plenary and also thank UNIDIR for its informative presentation on this topic.

With the accelerating developments of emerging technologies, the international community's interest in the military use of AI and other emerging technologies and their impact continues to grow. With this background, there are currently multiple relevant initiatives that deal with military use of AI; such as the “Responsible AI in the Military domain Summit” (REAIM) jointly hosted by the Netherlands and Republic of Korea, and the “Latin American and the Caribbean Conference of Social and Humanitarian Impact of Autonomous Weapons” hosted by Costa Rica, both of which took place in last February.

The Security Council recently held for the first time the meeting on AI and International Peace and Security under the UK Presidency on 18 July. Japan is pleased that the CD is now taking up this topic in a very timely manner.

Mr. President,

State Minister TAKEI Shunsuke strongly emphasized at the meeting of the Security Council, the use of AI in the military domain should be responsible, transparent and based on international law under the concept of “human-centric and trustworthy AI”. In this regard, the discussion on LAWS is becoming increasingly important, and it is truly significant that the Group of Governmental Experts adopted, thanks to the able Chairpersonship of Ambassador Damico of Brazil, a report containing substantive progress last May, in accordance with its mandate.

The GGE decided to leave the deliberation on the next mandate to the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW to be held at the end of this year. Japan subscribes to an incremental approach and strongly hopes that the Meeting could adopt an adequate new mandate so that the GGE can build upon this year’s valuable progress next year.

We believe that the GGE will continue to be the most pertinent venue for fostering international rule-making on LAWS. Japan will continue to contribute to the international rule-making process on LAWS in the CCW.

Mr. President,

As Ambassador OGASAWARA Ichiro stated at a plenary meeting in May, newly emerging technologies, including AI, are bringing about both benefits and risks at the same time. Military application of these emerging technologies may lead to a new dimension within multilateral arms control efforts. We consider that we are facing the following three challenges that are prevalent across such emerging technologies, which may eventually require fresh thinking beyond the traditional approach of arms control.

First, engaging various stakeholders matters. Developments of new technologies,

such as those related to AI, outer space, and cyberspace, are mainly driven by the private sector. On the other hand, those technologies tend to have dual-use nature, which poses potential security concerns. Therefore, it is imperative to engage the industrial sector actors creating these technologies in discussions on how to deal with security concerns arising from them.

Second, while rapid technological progress, particularly in the area of AI, have huge impacts on our societies and economies, the international governance of new technologies has not necessarily kept pace. In order to agilely fill these gaps, it will be more effective, in the majority of cases, to first address these newly emerging issues by forging political arrangements or commitments, as they tend to be more flexible and more adaptable to changing circumstances than legally binding instruments. As history shows, such efforts will eventually constitute a useful basis for forging legally binding instruments on the issues concerned. At the same time, since existing international law continues to provide us with good guidance even in the new circumstances created by the emerging technologies, we should also continue to rely upon and be bound by them as far as applicable.

Third, the impact of newly emerging technologies, like AI, is profoundly far-reaching across a wide range of areas and activities of our societies. With this in mind, responses by the international community to concerns posed by emerging technologies tend to be multi-faceted and engender several parallel tracks driven by different points of view, including that of arms control. In order to retain consistency among these simultaneous efforts, it is of great value to share overarching guidance and mutually reinforcing architecture.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your kind attention.