



**Statement by Mr. UMETSU Shigeru, Deputy Permanent Representative
of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
Conference on Disarmament Plenary, 11 June 2024
Thematic discussion on
“Challenges of new and emerging threats: Assessing the impact of
emerging technology on international security and arms control efforts”**

Mr. President,

With the accelerating development of emerging technologies, the international community's interest in the military use of AI and other emerging technologies, including lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), continues to grow. We have recently embarked upon new discussions about the impact of emerging technologies across many initiatives and fora. Japan welcomes the US initiative for a “Political Declaration on Responsible Military Use of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy”, as well as the joint initiative by the Netherlands and the Republic of Korea on the “Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain” (REAIM) Summit. Japan also welcomes active discussions among the Group of Governmental Experts related to emerging technologies in the area of LAWS (LAWS GGE) held under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), thanks to the constructive leadership of Ambassador in den Bosch of the Netherlands. Japan also attended and made a statement at the Vienna Conference on Autonomous Weapons Systems at the end of April, hosted by Austria.

Japan emphasizes that we should also rely on and be bound by applicable international law with respect to emerging technologies. Furthermore, we support efforts toward deepening common understandings of emerging technologies in the context of international security, in order to increase trust and prevent

misunderstandings and miscalculations. We therefore welcome further discussions here in the CD, which would contribute to deepening our understanding and promoting responsible behavior in this area.

Mr. President,

New and emerging technologies are generating both benefits and risks simultaneously. We are facing the following three challenges that need to be considered in the context of military applications of AI.

The first is to engage a wider variety of stakeholders. Developments in new technologies such as those related to AI are mainly driven by the private sector. At the same time, those technologies tend to have a dual-use nature, which poses potential security concerns. Therefore, it is imperative to engage the industrial sector capable of creating these technologies in discussions on how to deal with security concerns.

The second is to enhance awareness and implement effective risk management. In this light, accurately grasping the characteristics of AI and exercising necessary control in the process of advances in autonomy are crucial. States should consider appropriate mechanisms to identify, assess, prevent and, where feasible, mitigate risks across the life cycle of weapons systems. Furthermore, providing education and training to individuals using or overseeing AI is essential to ensure its proper utilization.

And finally, the impact of AI related technologies will be felt in a wide

range of areas and activities in society. Therefore, responses by the international community to concerns posed by these technologies tend to be multi-faceted and engender several parallel tracks driven by different points of view, including that of arms-control. We should strive to maintain consistency among these simultaneous efforts and avoid duplication of discussions.

Many of the points discussed above will also need to be considered in the context of efforts related to other emerging technologies and new areas such as space and cyber.

Mr. President,

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly reiterate Japan's basic position on LAWS.

As stated in the working paper on LAWS submitted in May to contribute to the United Nations Secretary General's Report, Japan believes that military use of emerging technologies should be examined in a comprehensive manner, with a sufficient understanding of their risks and benefits. Both security and humanitarian considerations should be taken into account. Japan places importance on conducting the military use of emerging technologies in a responsible manner, maintaining the "human-centric" principle and ensuring reliability and predictability. Japan also supports the view that existing obligations under applicable international law, including International Humanitarian Law (IHL) apply to all weapons systems, including LAWS. Weapons systems must not be used if they are incapable of being used in compliance with IHL. Japan recognizes that, in the use of weapons systems, human responsibility cannot be

transferred to machines. We must ensure that they are operated under a responsible chain of human command and control, in a manner consistent with the obligations of states under IHL.

Forming rules by consensus within the CCW, a disarmament framework involving 127 countries, including major stakeholders, is the best way to ensure the effectiveness of the rules. From this perspective, Japan strongly supports the continuation of the discussions under the CCW.

Japan will continue to participate actively in discussions about the impact of emerging technologies, including LAWS, across different initiatives.

I thank you, Mr. President.

(End)