



**Statement delivered by Ambassador Ichiro OGASAWARA,
Permanent Representative of the Delegation of Japan to the
Conference on Disarmament
2023 Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the
Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems: 15 – 19 May
Opening statement**

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to begin by thanking you, Ambassador Flavio Damico, and the CCW ISU, for all the efforts in organizing this meeting. Please be assured of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

Under your able leadership this Group has seen constructive and substantive discussions this year, at both the first session in March and the two subsequent informal consultations. With the accelerating developments of emerging technologies, the LAWS discussion is becoming increasingly important as the international community's interest in the military use of AI and other emerging technologies and their impact continues to grow. Japan will continue to actively and constructively participate in international rule-making and contribute to discussions in order to clarify the normative and operational framework pertaining to LAWS. We reiterate that Japan will spare no effort in the GGE on LAWS to support the Chair in adopting this year's report, toward the formation of specific, universal and substantive rules by consensus.

The discussion on LAWS is complex, involving a wide variety of

issues, but as a result of persistent and sustained discussion by many countries, it is increasingly likely that 2023 will see the adoption of a report that consolidates consensus on substantive elements. With many disarmament and arms control discussions facing difficulties within the context of the currently challenging security environment, it is extremely important for this group to present the results of the 2023 discussions to the rest of the world in the form of a consensus report.

Japan appreciates that this Group has constructively fulfilled its mandate given by the last year's Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW. We are thankful to the High Contracting Parties that presented, nationally or as a group, valuable proposals for our discussions. Thanks to their contributions, this group was able to "intensify the consideration of proposals and elaborate possible measures". On its part, during the previous session in March Japan, together with Australia, Canada, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States, presented a proposal entitled "Draft articles on autonomous weapon systems-prohibitions and other regulatory measures on the basis of international humanitarian law ("IHL")". I would like to welcome Poland for having recently become a co-sponsor of our proposal. Japan believes that our proposal can be used as a springboard for identifying any possible deficiencies in the existing rules and possible means to address such deficiencies through concrete discussions. Thus, we hope that this document could provide a useful basis for the GGE next year to develop a concrete outcome.

We believe the draft report presented by the Chair constitutes a very good basis for our discussion and brought us close to a consensus. In our view, the Chair's draft proposal captured in a balanced manner the

commonalities emerging from different proposals submitted both this year and last year as well as from the discussions at the March session this year. We appreciate that many common understandings have been further fostered on (1) characteristics of LAWS, (2) application of IHL, (3) human-machine interaction, (4) responsibility and accountability, and (5) legal review and risk mitigation, which are all included in this draft report. In preparing the GGE report, it is more important to focus on commonalities in terms of substance rather than on formalities such as whether or not to make the goal legally binding or not. Japan supports the Chair's approach in this regard. Adoption of a report that reflects further substantive progress achieved this year should pave the way toward the development of concrete deliverables at next year's GGE on the normative and operational framework for LAWS.

Forming rules by consensus within the CCW, a disarmament framework involving 126 countries, including major stakeholders, is the best way to ensure the effectiveness of the rules. We strongly hope that constructive discussions will be held at this GGE and that a report reflecting our efforts this year will be adopted by consensus to demonstrate the effectiveness of this Group.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.