

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ANUPAM RAY AT THE GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IN THE AREA OF LETHAL AUTONOMOUS WEAPONS SYSTEMS – AGENDA ITEM 5- CHARACTERIZATION OF LAWS – DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE – GENEVA, March 7, 2023

My delegation believes that the work of definitions and characterisations should be accorded priority. We also believe that it should build on past work.

My delegation reiterates that the priority should be to build common understandings and their interpretation and also identify points of difference.

We have listened carefully to your remarks and to the very substantive interventions by various delegations. There are convergences and divergences in the wide range of views presented today. There is also an evolution of views in some cases. This is to be expected given the great complexity and changing contours of the technologies that we are discussing.

To develop understanding, we would like to request you, Mr. Chairman, to prepare a list of definitions or working definitions that have been proposed by various High Contracting Parties. You could, perhaps, consider taking the assistance of UNIDIR in preparing such a compilation.

There are also High Contracting Parties that have proposed elements of definitions. Some have proposed both definitions and elements of definitions.

We would like to request you to Mr. Chairman, if my delegation may make such a request, to also prepare a compilation of the elements of definitions.

We would like to suggest the same approach towards work of this Group on possible characterizations. As the agreed documents of this Group indicate, there are a number of ways that can be used to characterize emerging technologies in lethal autonomous weapons systems. They also record that there are several approaches.

We believe that at this stage this could help us in identifying areas of agreement.

It would help us develop a lexicon of relevant terms. We believe that an agreement on a lexicon is essential to take forward the work of this group.

These steps are in the view of my delegation, the next logical next step in the work of the group.

The chances of arriving at a consensus on definitions and characterisations, we believe, will improve if the proposals and approaches focus on real life situations and are able to take into account the evolving nature of technology.

We are, of course, open to proposals by the Chairman.