

Article36

Article 36 remarks
CCW meeting of experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems
Wednesday, 15 April

Remarks to session on 'Characteristics of LAWS'

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

I just wanted to make some brief remarks about meaningful human control, which, as others have noted, does seem to have some currency in the CCW debate on autonomous weapons.

We think about meaningful human control as a way of structuring debate around the problems that we see with the potential development of autonomous weapons.

We certainly do not see it as a framework for developing fully autonomous weapons.

On the contrary we think it will be very difficult to show that meaningful human control can be ensured over the use of fully autonomous systems.

Our starting point would be that if we cannot demonstrate meaningful human control over a weapon system then we should not develop or use it.

On that basis, the concept is likely to be quite helpful for developing normative guidance, as some of the presenters said yesterday, or as we would see it, an international prohibition on fully autonomous weapons.

So the question of whether you see meaningful human control as a useful concept probably depends on whether you want to develop fully autonomous weapons or not.

In that regard, we welcome the UK and France saying yesterday that they do not intend to acquire fully autonomous weapons / autonomous weapons that deploy fire.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.