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COMMITTEE: United Nations Security Council

COUNTRY: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

AGENDA: **Addressing the Proliferation and Militarization of Autonomous Weapons Systems and Artificial Intelligence in Armed Conflict**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Autonomous Weapons Systems (AWS) are no longer hypothetical threats; they are reshaping today's battlefields. While these technologies can increase combat precision and protect military personnel, they present severe risks to civilian safety, accountability, and the integrity of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The Security Council cannot allow technological deployment to outpace the legal rules governing the use of force.

As a Permanent Member of this Council, the United Kingdom maintains that technological progress must reinforce, not undermine, the rules-based international order. The UK is clear: the decision to use lethal force cannot be outsourced to algorithms. Human judgment and accountability must remain at the core of warfare.

This principle is operationalized domestically through the UK's Defence Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2022), which mandates human-centricity and reliability in all military AI applications. Furthermore, in line with Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, the UK subjects all new weapons systems to strict Article 36 legal reviews. Core IHL principles—distinction, proportionality, military necessity, and precaution—are non-negotiable and apply to all technologies, no matter how autonomous they become.

The UK's track record demonstrates this commitment to global safety. We supported the 2019 Guiding Principles on LAWS under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), co-sponsored General Assembly Resolution 78/241, and endorsed the Political Declaration on Responsible Military Use of AI and Autonomy. By hosting the Bletchley Park AI Safety Summit, the UK also pioneered the international dialogue needed to manage frontier AI risks.

Addressing the current governance gap requires realism. The UK does not support a blanket ban on autonomous weapons. Unenforceable prohibitions are ineffective and easily ignored by actors who already violate international law. Instead, we need practical, verifiable safeguards. The UK advocates for a politically binding instrument under the CCW framework that guarantees meaningful human control over targeting decisions and explicitly bans AWS applications that violate IHL.

Concurrently, the Council must prevent advanced military AI from falling into the hands of non-state actors and terrorist groups. The UK calls for tightened multilateral export controls and faster information-sharing to block the illicit transfer of sensitive dual-use technologies, utilizing and strengthening existing non-proliferation frameworks rather than creating redundant ones.

Because regulatory and technical capacity varies globally, the UK proposes establishing a UN-administered AI and IHL Capacity Fund. This fund will provide states with the resources to set up national legal reviews, train domestic experts, and build the regulatory infrastructure necessary to prevent global security blind spots.

The United Kingdom urges the Security Council to reaffirm that states bear ultimate responsibility for any weapon deployed under their command. We request the Secretary-General to assemble a group of governmental and technical experts to deliver practical, operational rules for maintaining human oversight in command chains. Military AI should serve to protect civilians and uphold international law, ensuring that human conscience remains the final arbiter in times of conflict.