



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 782 Vienna, 11 March 2015

EU Statement on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome today's speakers Mr Thomas Göbel from the Federal Foreign Ministry of Germany and Dr Niklas Schörnig from the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt and thank them for their enlightening presentations on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS). We are also grateful to the Mongolian Chairmanship for having brought once again the issue of new technologies to the FSC agenda.

Discussions like this are useful indeed as they help reach a better understanding of an issue of great complexity, including of its politico-military, legal, ethical and humanitarian aspects. Important questions, though, still remain. For instance, alongside their comparative military advantages LAWS raise numerous questions such as their compatibility with international human rights law and humanitarian law as well as their possible impact on arms control regimes.

We welcome therefore discussions in the framework of the UN Certain Conventional Weapons Convention and look forward to the Informal Meeting of Experts on LAWS in April in Geneva with a view to further enhancing our common understanding of this important issue.

Coming back to the FSC day-to-day work, we are of the opinion that MC decision 10/14 provides a good basis for boosting relevant OSCE norms and activities, including in the field of SALW and conventional arms control, through improved implementation and increased coherence and complementarity with commitments related to the UN framework.

In this respect, the European Union recalls that the Arms Trade Treaty, which entered into force on 24 December 2014, is a landmark in the international security agenda and needs to gain universality and full implementation. We see an important role for the OSCE to this end on the basis of the provisions of MC decision 10/14.

In conclusion, we would like to once again express our gratitude to today's speakers for their contribution to achieving a harmonised approach to an important matter.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO and ALBANIA, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.