

First Committee Approves New Resolution on Lethal Autonomous Weapons, as Speaker Warns ‘An Algorithm Must Not Be in Full Control of Decisions Involving Killing’

Eight Resolutions on Conventional Weapons, Requiring 21 Separate Votes, Forwarded to General Assembly

Even if an algorithm can determine what is legal under international humanitarian law, it can never determine what is ethical, the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) heard today after it approved a new draft resolution on lethal autonomous weapons systems (document [A/C.1/78/L.56](#)).

An algorithm must not be in full control of decisions that involve killing or harming humans, Egypt’s representative said after voting in favour of the resolution. The principle of human responsibility and accountability for any use of lethal force must be preserved, regardless of the type of weapons system involved, he added.

The resolution expresses concern about the possible negative consequences and impact of autonomous weapons systems on global security and regional and international stability, including the risk of an emerging arms race, and lowering the threshold for conflict and proliferation, including to non-State actors.

It would have the General Assembly stress the urgent need for the international community to address the challenges and concerns raised by these weapons systems, as well as to seek the views of Member States and observer States on the systems. The Assembly would also request the Secretary-General to submit a substantive report reflecting the full range of views received and to invite the views of international and regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, civil society, the scientific community and industry.

After 11 separate recorded votes on its provisions, the draft resolution as a whole was approved by a recorded vote of 164 in favour to 5 against (Belarus, India, Mali, Niger, Russian Federation), with 8 abstentions (China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates).

The Committee also approved a wide-ranging draft resolution on through-life conventional ammunition management (document [A/C.1/78/L.41](#)), by a vote of 169 in favour to none against, with 5 abstentions (Belarus, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syria). By the text, the Assembly would decide to adopt the Global Framework for Through-

life Conventional Ammunition Management — a voluntary cooperative framework with political commitments to strengthen existing initiatives and address gaps on the issue.

Also requiring separate recorded votes today were resolutions on implementation of the Cluster Munitions Convention (document [A/C.1/78/L.20](#)), implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Convention (document [A/C.1/78/L.39](#)), the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (document [A/C.1/78/L.40](#)), the Arms Trade Treaty (document [A/C.1/78/L.42](#)) and assistance to States to curb the illicit traffic of these weapons (document [A/C.1/78/L.61](#)).

Acting without a vote, the Committee approved a draft on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (document [A/C.1/78/L.44](#)).

After concluding action on eight drafts on conventional weapons and sending them to the Assembly for adoption, the Committee began hearing general statements on drafts on other disarmament measures and international security.

The First Committee will reconvene at 3 p.m. on Thursday, 2 November, to continue action on the 61 drafts before it.

Action, Conventional Weapons

The representative of the Russian Federation, explaining the delegation's votes on the draft resolution titled "Lethal autonomous weapons systems" (document [A/C.1/78/L.56](#)), said that the text seeks to undermine what was created under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, particularly the specialized Group of Governmental Experts, which is operating successfully. The Group is the sole ideal forum to discuss these weapons systems. Transferring the issue to any other is counterproductive. The Group has brought in key States taking an active role in scientific research and is successfully striking a reasonable balance between humanitarian concerns and countries' legitimate defensive interests.

He said that the draft resolution is unbalanced in discussing only risks and challenges, even though these weapons can play an important role in defence and in fighting terrorists. These weapons systems can be more effective than a human operator and can reduce the possibility of error. Also, international law fully applies to these weapons systems and does not require any adaptation to these specific weapons. The Russian Federation opposes the development of any international legally binding instrument and a moratorium on developing and using these systems. The text will fragment discussions.

The representative of Cuba said his country will abstain on the draft resolutions, titled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction" (document [A/C.1/78/L.39](#)) and "The Arms Trade Treaty" (document [A/C.1/78/L.42](#)). On "L.39", he said Cuba retains the right to use anti-personnel mines for defence purposes given that the country has been facing the hostile policy of the United States for six decades. On "L.42", the Treaty was adopted prematurely, without consensus. It is an unbalanced instrument. Arms transfers can be manipulated for political purposes. Cuba disassociates itself from all provisions that refer to the Treaty.

On a point of order, the representative of Colombia asked to make a general statement on the conventional weapons cluster, which the Chair allowed.

The representative of the Russian Federation raised a point of order, advising the Chair to subsequently consult with delegates in such circumstances.

The Chair noted the remarks and agreed.

The representative of Colombia called for concerted action at all levels and collective support in order to combat the scourge of anti-personnel mines. She invited all members to support “L.39” on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Her country is cognizant of the impact of these mines on lives and communities and hopes for a world free of them. “Signing it will save lives,” she said.

The representative of India, explaining the delegation’s abstention on “L.39”, supported the vision of a world free of anti-personnel mines and expressed commitment to their eventual elimination. India is a High Contracting Party to Additional Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which accounts for the legitimate defence requirements of States, especially those with long borders. India has fulfilled its obligations, including stopping the production of non-detectable mines and rendering all its anti-personnel mines detectable. India is also observing a moratorium on the export and transfer of anti-personnel landmines.

On its “L.42” abstention, the speaker said India subscribes to the Arms Trade Treaty’s objective, which its export control system meets. India submits an annual report under the UN Register of Conventional Arms and participates in the Wassenaar Arrangement. India continues to keep the Treaty under review from the perspective of the country’s defence, security and foreign policy interests.

The representative of Iran said his country will vote in favour of the draft resolution titled “Through-life conventional ammunition management” (document [A/C.1/78/L.41](#)). As both the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and the procedural report of the Open-Ended Working Group have explicitly stated, all conclusions, recommendations, and suggested actions within this framework are entirely voluntary and subject to the discretion of Member States. It is crucial, therefore, to underline that this document and all its provisions are purely voluntary and do not entail any binding obligations.

He said Iran will abstain on the draft resolution titled “Lethal autonomous weapons systems” (document [A/C.1/78/L.56](#)), citing several reasons, including that the definition and scope of the terminology “lethal autonomous weapons” in this proposal is not clearly defined. It is unnecessary to include the issue of human rights in preambular paragraph 6. His delegation does not support referencing an event that intentionally excludes certain Member States from participation in preambular paragraph 7. The Group of Governmental Experts operating under the scope of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons should focus on States parties.

The representative of the United States said her country supports “L.41” because, among other things, it recognizes the important role of cooperation among States and other stakeholders on through-life conventional ammunition management. On “L.56”, she said that although her delegation believes certain aspects could be further refined, it supports the text as it recognizes the contribution the Secretary-General’s reports can make on certain conventional weapons. On

emerging technologies in lethal autonomous weapons systems, she said the views of all Member States should be taken into account. Her country does not support the creation of a parallel process on laws “or any other efforts that will seek to undermine the centrality of the CCW [Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons] Group of Governmental Experts on making of progress on this issue”.

The representative of Egypt, explaining the delegation’s abstentions on “L.39”, “L.42” and “L.20”, titled “Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions” (document [A/C.1/78/L.20](#)), reiterated his country’s reservations on “L.39”, including the Convention’s unbalanced nature and development outside the UN framework. The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention lacks balance between the humanitarian concerns of anti-personnel landmines and their possible legitimate military uses, especially in countries with long borders and extraordinary security challenges. Also, the Convention does not establish any legal obligation for States to remove mines placed in other States’ territory, making it impossible for many States to meet demining requirements on their own. Egypt is one of the most affected countries, with millions of landmines placed in its territory during the Second World War.

On “L.42”, Egypt remains at the forefront of any genuine effort to combat the illicit arms trafficking and eradicate any arms transfers to terrorists and illegal armed groups. However, the desire of some States to politicize the legitimate arms trade led to shortcomings and loopholes in the Arms Trade Treaty, especially the deliberate lack of necessary definitions and clear criteria making implementation selective and subjective. The Treaty allows exporting States to abuse it and completely ignore the prohibition of international State-sponsored weapons supply to unauthorized recipients, including terrorists and illegal armed groups, which represent the real main threat.

On “L.20”, the Convention on Cluster Munitions’ selective nature was developed outside the UN framework and lacks an equitable and clear definition of cluster munitions. It was deliberately designed to fit the specific production requirements of some States.

Next, the Committee turned to draft resolution “L.20”, titled “Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions” (document [A/C.1/78/L.20](#)).

By the text, the General Assembly would express grave concern regarding the number of allegations, reports of documented evidence of the use of cluster munitions in different parts of the world, at the related significant increase in civilian casualties and other consequences that impede the achievement of sustainable development. It would urge all States not party to the Convention to ratify or accede to it as soon as possible and to provide the Secretary-General with complete and timely information as required by the Treaty’s article 7 in order to promote transparency and compliance.

The Committee approved the draft as a whole by a recorded vote of 139 in favour to 1 against (Russian Federation), with 35 abstentions.

Next, the Committee took up draft resolution “L.39”, titled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction” (document [A/C.1/78/L.39](#)).

By the text, the General Assembly would note with deep regret that anti-personnel mines continued to be used in some conflicts around the world, causing human suffering and impeding post-conflict development. It would invite all States that have not signed the Convention to accede to it without delay and urge the one remaining State that has signed but not ratified the Convention to ratify it without delay. The Assembly would also urge all States parties to provide the Secretary-General with complete and timely information to promote transparency and compliance with the Convention.

The Committee approved the draft as a whole by a recorded vote of 161 in favour to 1 against (Russian Federation), with 16 abstentions.

Next, the Committee turned to draft resolution “L.40”, titled “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects” (document [A/C.1/78/L.40](#)).

By the text, the General Assembly would call upon all States to implement the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. It would also call upon all Member States to contribute towards continued implementation at the national, regional and global levels of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It would encourage States to reinforce cross-border cooperation, with full respect for each State’s sovereignty over its borders.

Recorded votes were requested on preambular paragraphs 22 and 24.

Preambular paragraph 22 would have the General Assembly welcome the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in the scope of the Arms Trade Treaty.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 143 in favour to none against, with 18 abstentions.

Preambular paragraph 24 would have the Assembly take note of the adoption, without a vote, of the final report of the Open-Ended Working Group established pursuant to Assembly resolution 76/233 and the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, which is a voluntary cooperative framework that contains political commitments to strengthen existing initiatives and address gaps in through-life conventional ammunition management.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 138 in favour to none against, with 26 abstentions.

The Committee approved “L.40” as a whole without a vote.

Next, the Committee turned to draft resolution “L.41”, titled “Through-life conventional ammunition management” (document [A/C.1/78/L.41](#)).

By the wide-ranging text, the General Assembly would decide to adopt the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and call upon all States to implement it. It would also decide to convene a meeting of States in 2027 for two weeks in New York to review implementation. It would further decide to establish in 2026 a new standing dedicated fellowship

training programme on through-life conventional ammunition management to strengthen the technical and practical knowledge and expertise of government officials directly responsible for the Framework's implementation, particularly in developing countries.

Recorded votes were requested on preambular paragraph 13 and the draft as a whole.

Preambular paragraph 13 would have the General Assembly take note of discussions of conventional ammunition in the framework of the Programme of Action, International Tracing Instrument, Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and of the Arms Trade Treaty's requirement that States parties shall designate competent national authorities to have an effective and transparent national control system to regulate the transfer of relevant ammunition and munitions. It would also take note of work and measures pursued at regional and subregional levels.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 128 in favour to none against, with 29 abstentions.

Turning to the draft as a whole, the Committee approved it by a recorded vote of 169 in favour to none against, with 5 abstentions (Belarus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syria).

Next, the Committee turned to draft resolution "L.42", titled "The Arms Trade Treaty" (document [A/C.1/78/L.42](#)).

By the text, the General Assembly would call upon all States that have not yet done so to ratify, accept, approve or accede to the Arms Trade Treaty to achieve its universalization. It would also call upon States parties, in a position to do so, to provide assistance to requesting States to promote the Treaty's implementation. The Assembly would encourage further steps to enable States to increasingly prevent the diversion of conventional arms and ammunition to unauthorized end users. It would encourage eligible States to make best use of the voluntary trust fund.

Recorded votes were requested on preambular paragraph 11 and the draft as a whole.

Preambular paragraph 11 would have the Assembly recall the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, in particular the section of the agenda entitled "Disarmament that saves lives".

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 148 in favour to none against, with 16 abstentions.

Turning to the draft as a whole, the Committee approved "L.42" by a recorded vote of 155 in favour to none against, with 23 abstentions.

Next, the Committee approved without a vote the draft resolution "L.44", titled "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects" (document [A/C.1/78/L.44](#)).

By the text, the General Assembly would call upon all States that have not yet done so to take all measures to become parties as soon as possible to the Convention and the Protocols thereto. It would also call upon all High Contracting Parties that have not yet done so to express their consent to be bound by the Convention's Protocols and the amendment extending the scope to include armed conflicts of a non-international character.

The Committee, acting without a vote, approved "L.44".

Next, the Committee turned to draft resolution "L.56", titled "Lethal autonomous weapons systems" (document [A/C.1/78/L.56](#)).

The text would have the Assembly express concern about the possible negative consequences and impact of autonomous weapons systems on global security and regional and international stability, including the risk of an emerging arms race, lowering the threshold for conflict and proliferation, including to non-State actors. It would stress the urgent need for the international community to address the challenges and concerns raised by those weapons systems, in particular through the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, and to further understand the issues involved.

Recorded votes were requested on preambular paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and operative paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and the draft as a whole.

Preambular paragraph 1 would have the Assembly affirm that international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and international human rights law, applies to autonomous weapons systems.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 148 in favour to 1 against (India), with 12 abstentions.

Preambular paragraph 3 would have the Assembly be mindful of the serious challenges and concerns that new technological applications in the military domain, including those related to artificial intelligence and autonomy in weapons systems, also raise from humanitarian, legal, security, technological and ethical perspectives.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 151 in favour to none against, with 11 abstentions.

Preambular paragraph 4 would have the Assembly express concern about the possible negative consequences and impact of autonomous weapons systems on global security and regional and international stability, including the risk of an emerging arms race, lowering the threshold for conflict and proliferation, including to non-State actors.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 149 in favour to 1 against (India), with 13 abstentions.

Preambular paragraph 6 would have the Assembly note the adoption by consensus of Human Rights Council resolution 51/22 of 7 October 2022 on human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 148 in favour to 5 against (Belarus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Mali, Russian Federation), with 8 abstentions (China, Iran, Israel, Nicaragua, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye).

Preambular paragraph 7 would have the Assembly acknowledge the important contribution of international and regional conferences and initiatives.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 147 in favour to 4 against (Belarus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mali, Russian Federation), with 11 abstentions.

Preambular paragraph 8 would have the Assembly recognize the valuable contributions made by UN entities and international and regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, civil society organizations, academia, industry and other stakeholders in enriching international discussions on autonomous weapons systems.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 152 in favour to none against, with 12 abstentions.

Preambular paragraph 9 would have the Assembly recognize the efforts of the Secretary-General within the New Agenda for Peace initiative to address the issue of autonomous weapons systems.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 152 in favour to none against, with 13 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 1 would have the Assembly stress the urgent need for the international community to address the challenges and concerns raised by autonomous weapons systems, in particular through the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, and to continue to further its understanding of the issues involved.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 154 in favour to none against, with 12 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 2 would have the Assembly request the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and observer States on lethal autonomous weapons systems, inter alia, on ways to address the related challenges and concerns they raise from humanitarian, legal, security, technological and ethical perspectives and on the role of humans in the use of force, and to submit a substantive report reflecting the full range of views received, with an annex containing these views, to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session for further discussion by Member States.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 150 in favour to none against, with 16 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 3 would have the Assembly also request the Secretary-General to invite the views of international and regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, civil society, the scientific community and industry to include these views in the original language received in the report's annex.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 152 in favour to 3 against (Belarus, Mali, Russian Federation), with 9 abstentions (China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Iran, Israel, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye).

Operative paragraph 4 would have the Assembly decide to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session the item entitled "Lethal autonomous weapons systems".

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 154 in favour to 3 against (Belarus, Mali, Russian Federation), with 9 abstentions (China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Iran, Israel, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye).

Turning to the draft as a whole, the Committee approved "L.56" by a recorded vote of 164 in favour to 5 against (Belarus, India, Mali, Niger, Russian Federation), with 8 abstentions (China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates).

Next, the Committee turned to draft resolution "L.61", titled "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them" (document [A/C.1/78/L.61](#)).

By the text, the General Assembly would encourage the international community to support the implementation of the Economic Community of West African States Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials. It would also encourage the countries of the Sahelo-Saharan subregion to facilitate the effective functioning of national commissions to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and in that regard invite the international community to lend its support. The Assembly would call upon the international community to provide technical and financial support to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

A recorded vote was requested on preambular paragraph 16, which would have the General Assembly welcome the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in the scope of the Arms Trade Treaty, as well as the inclusion of international assistance in its provision.

The Committee retained the provision by a recorded vote of 150 in favour to none against, with 18 abstentions.

The Committee then approved the draft as a whole without a vote.

The representative of [Armenia](#), on draft "L.42", said the delegation strongly advocates a robust and legally binding conventional arms control regime at regional and international levels to enable efficient regulation of trade in these weapons and to prevent their diversion into illicit markets, thus fostering human rights violations. He stressed the need for balanced and non-restrictive references to the principles of international law and posited that the Treaty could currently be interpreted as restrictive of sovereign rights and legitimate access to relevant technologies. His country, therefore, abstained on the draft, with a similar disposition to all other resolutions of the Committee containing a reference to this Treaty. It consequently dissociates from those paragraphs.

The representative of [Argentina](#) said his delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution on lethal autonomous weapons to give greater visibility to the issue and renew impetus to current discussions. He underscored the importance of the views of all members and interested parties

who do not typically participate in discussions on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Argentina, together with other countries, has submitted a legally binding instrument as a proposal for an additional protocol to the Convention to establish prohibitions and regulations on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons.

The representative of Jordan, speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, explained the Group's abstentions on preambular paragraph 13 of "L.41" and preambular paragraph 24 of "L.40", titled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects" (document [A/C.1/78/L.40](#)). The Group believes that States have the right to manage conventional ammunitions within national borders to serve security needs and preserve their rights in that regard, pursuant to Article 51 of the UN Charter, which enshrines the legitimate right to self-defence. The Group sought to introduce language to address conventional weapons, given various technologies in play and national legislative frameworks. It hopes the resulting non-consensus-based language and other problematic aspects will not be introduced in other contexts to "merely sow division among our countries".

He reiterated condolences to the victims of Israeli aggression, which is ongoing in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Gaza Strip. He reiterated condemnation of the inappropriate aggression and called for a cessation of the war and of displacement of Palestinians, and the provision of assistance.

The representative of the Republic of Korea, speaking after the vote, said that his country abstained on "L.20", as Seoul is not a party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, owing to the unique security situation on the Korean Peninsula. However, it will continue its responsible management of such weapons and efforts to mitigate humanitarian concerns. His country abstained on "L.39", as it is not a party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, again, due to the unique security situation on the Korean Peninsula. The Republic of Korea keeps anti-personnel mines under tight control. His country supported "L.56". The Group of Governmental Experts should serve as a central forum to discuss issues on lethal autonomous weapons. The international community should be careful not to undermine ongoing efforts.

The representative of South Africa on "L.56" said his country abstained on operative paragraph 2, which requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of lethal autonomous weapons systems and submit a substantive report to the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly for further discussion. He believes the integrity of the process under way in the Group of Governmental Experts related to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons should be respected, and States parties have already made their views known on the issue. For that reason, among others, South Africa cannot support the second operative paragraph. It did, however, support "L.56" as a whole because of its comprehensive and meaningful posture.

The representative of Indonesia, noting references to the Arms Trade Treaty in certain draft resolutions, said that, while his country supports the Treaty's principles and objectives, the instrument should not impose unnecessary limitations, conditionalities and restrictions on developing countries' capabilities. Noting his vote in favour of the resolution on lethal autonomous weapons, "L.56", he said the text is a crucial step for comprehensive dialogue involving non-parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, in an inclusive and transparent manner.

The representative of Egypt, explaining the delegation's vote in favour of "L.56", supported a two-tier approach that includes fully autonomous weapons and regulating other military applications of artificial intelligence (AI). The UN disarmament machinery must actively address increasing threats associated with an emerging category of weapons, which could activate themselves, select their target and take a human life. Even if an algorithm can determine what is legal under international humanitarian law, it can never determine what is ethical. An algorithm must not be in full control of decisions involving killing or harming humans. The principle of human responsibility and accountability for any use of lethal force must be preserved regardless of the type of weapon system involved. While noting important discussions in the Group of Governmental Experts, he regretted that progress is minimal and no tangible results have been reached, due to some States' continued misguided belief that absolute dominance in these domains can be maintained.

The representative of Iran, speaking after the vote, said his country abstained on "L.20", as Tehran is neither a signatory nor a party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Nor can it support an instrument negotiated outside the UN. Iran abstained on "L.39", as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention focuses mainly on humanitarian concerns and does not adequately consider the legitimate military requirements of many countries, particularly those with long land borders requiring the limited and responsible use of mines to defend their territories. Iran also abstained on "L.42". The Arms Trade Treaty places a higher priority on the political and commercial interests of certain arms-exporting countries than the observance of the fundamentals of international law. The draft resolution calls upon non-parties to accede to the Treaty. Such a call for its universalization is unacceptable because the Treaty was not adopted by consensus. His delegation disassociates itself from all references to the Treaty. Iran joined consensus on "L.61", but its position on the Arms Trade Treaty remains the same.

The representative of Saudi Arabia said his country abstained on preambular paragraph 13 of "L.41" and the whole resolution because it rejects any correlation between conventional ammunitions and small and light arms. He reiterated that the management of these ammunitions relates to the national security of each State and must respect their sovereignty. Because application of the global framework is voluntary, Saudi Arabia is neither bound by nor obligated to it. It would, however, apply the framework in adherence to its national laws as it does not interfere in his country or other countries' affairs. He called for a focus on main issues of the framework and requested that his statement be attached as an official document to the resolution.

The representative of Australia said that while the resolution on lethal autonomous weapons systems could have benefited from certain modifications, her delegation voted "yes". The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the most appropriate forum for multilateral discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems, she said, noting that a report by the Secretary-General could lend additional impetus to discussions under way in the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems by eliciting the views of a broader range of stakeholders. The report should be balanced and inclusive of the views of all UN Member States and take a pragmatic approach to opportunities for progress in the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons that can achieve consensus, she added.

The representative of Pakistan, explaining the delegation's abstentions on "L.20" and "L.39", said his country does not support concluding important international treaties outside the UN framework, as a matter of principle. Pakistan considers the multilateral framework of the Convention on Certain

Conventional Weapons as the most appropriate forum to address cluster munitions, striking the delicate balance between minimizing human suffering while not compromising States' legitimate security interests.

On "L.39", Pakistan is party to Additional Protocol II of the Convention and remains committed to ensuring that its mines will never become a source of civilian casualties. At the same time, landmines continue to play a significant military role for many States. Reliance on them is integral to Pakistan's defence of long borders, which are not protected by any natural obstacle. On its votes in favour of "L.56", Pakistan believes that discussions should continue in the Group of Governmental Experts to develop international rules through a new protocol. Other disarmament bodies should play a complementary role to address broader issues of AI and military application by building positive synergies and avoiding duplication. The scale of challenges necessitates a holistic multilateral response within the UN machinery.

The representative of China, speaking after the vote, said that Beijing abstained on "L.56" and all its provisions subjected to votes, except preambular paragraph 3. China has constructively participated in the Group of Governmental Experts and submitted a paper on the use of AI in the military domain. However, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the proper venue for discussing lethal autonomous weapons. Initiating a new discussion in the General Assembly would have a negative impact. Further, "L.56" confuses "lethal autonomous weapons" with "autonomous weapons".

The representative of Japan said his country voted in favour of "L.56" because, with the rapid development of technology, it recognizes the importance of these discussions which, though they may involve some sensitivities, help to build upon the common recognition among stakeholders within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. He welcomed the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on laws and its substantive progress, saying "it is meaningful that we have reached consensus that laws must not be used if they are incapable of being used in compliance with international humanitarian law". Japan believes that the Group remains the most appropriate forum for international rule making.

The representative of Germany, noting the Committee's adoption of "L.41" and his country's co-sponsorship, thanked delegations for their constructive contributions. Highlighting "this historic moment", he noted that it may be the first time in 10 years that the UN has successfully concluded a new instrument on conventional arms control. "This is a tremendous achievement in our collective efforts to reduce the risks and human costs of illicit traffic and diversion of conventional ammunition, as well as to prevent and mitigate unplanned explosions at munition sites," he said, adding: "Today's decision will save lives".

The representative of Poland, explaining its support of "L.56", strongly endorses the overarching affirmation that international law and the UN Charter apply to autonomous weapons systems. It is crucial to retain language that binds emerging technologies with the framework of the Group of Governmental Experts and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Poland considers the Convention the most appropriate forum to discuss these weapons systems, and the Group is the forum to make progress on identifying challenges and opportunities. Other international forums are not equally fit, as they often lack technical and diplomatic capacity and do not address the significant balance between humanitarian aspects and military necessity.

The representative of the Russian Federation said that his country voted against “L.20”, as the Convention on Cluster Munitions was adopted hastily outside the UN framework. The Kremlin did not participate in the negotiations, which aimed at introducing discriminatory restrictions contrary to the interests of his country’s defence and security. The Convention manifests double standards by banning “bad” weapons while permitting a certain type of “high-tech” ones beneficial to a specific group of countries. Another shortcoming is that the instrument allows all States to use such munitions in joint military operations with countries that have not acceded to the Convention. The case in point is the transfer of cluster munitions into Ukraine by the United States. Though Ukraine and the United States are not parties to the Convention, they are subjected to the imperative of international humanitarian law.

The representative of Brazil said his country abstained on “L.20”. It supports efforts to address cluster munitions under UN auspices, culminating in the adoption of a legally binding instrument — a protocol — to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, leading to a ban on cluster munitions. It actively participated in negotiations in the framework of the Group of Governmental Experts towards that end. The establishment of a parallel negotiating process to the Convention is neither consistent with the objective of strengthening it nor with the goal of promoting the adoption of balanced, effective and non-discriminatory arms control instruments. His country voted for “L.56” because it understands that the process carried out by the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems might benefit from the fresher views of a wider audience.

The representative of Türkiye said his delegation abstained on “L.56” as the final version of the resolution does not address some of its concerns. The development and use of lethal autonomous weapons systems that do not have meaningful human control are undesirable and conflict with international humanitarian law, he said, adding that international law and international humanitarian law should be sufficient to alleviate concerns regarding use of such weapons systems. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the right forum to address matters related to the emerging technologies in lethal autonomous weapons systems, he added. Noting lack of agreement on the definition of those weapons systems, he warned that the absence of shared terminology increases “question marks” on the way forward.

The representative of Cuba, explaining its votes on “L.41”, abstained on preambular paragraph 13 because his country does not welcome establishing synergies between the ATT and other instruments that do have universal acceptance. However, Cuba voted in favour of “L.41” as a whole, in agreement with the new Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management. His country is firmly committed to preventing and combating ammunitions trafficking, in strict accordance with national laws and international obligations. Cuba carries out the political commitments in good faith, bearing in mind the need to respect every State’s sovereign prerogatives. He underscored the Framework’s guiding principle reaffirming every State’s legitimate right to manufacture, stockpile and manage ammunition for its own defence and security. International efforts can be complementary by strengthening cooperation and assistance. It is crucial to ban attempts to politicize components in a way that keeps particular States from using weapons and munitions for their own security.

The representative of Singapore said that her country voted in favour of “L.39”. It supports initiatives against indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines and declared a two-year moratorium in 1996 on the exports of landmines without a self-neutralizing mechanism. In 1998, it expanded

the moratorium to include all types of landmines and later extended it indefinitely. Singapore voted in favour of “L.20” in support of initiatives against indiscriminate use of cluster munitions. It declared an indefinite moratorium in 2008 on their export.

The representative of Israel, on “L.56”, said his country is convinced that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons remains the most suitable forum for addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by emerging technology in a legal way. Deliberations must substantively and meaningfully continue, with a focus on furthering mutual understanding. He urged against undermining the work done in the Convention through the creation of a parallel forum and stressed the importance of the full application of international humanitarian law to lethal autonomous weapons systems. He supported “L.40” and “L.42”, but wishes to reiterate that the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms does not have the mandate with regard to ammunition. The new Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management was created for that purpose.

The representative of India said the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the appropriate forum to discuss issues relating to lethal autonomous weapons, with a view to striking a balance between military necessity and humanitarian imperatives. Noting that a substantial body of work has been done and continues to be done by the Group of Governmental Experts associated with that Convention on emerging technologies in lethal autonomous weapons, he said that work must be built upon, including to deepen a common understanding of definitions and characterization of lethal autonomous weapons. Parallel mandates and processes amount to a duplication of efforts and resources, he added, noting his delegation’s vote against “L.56”.

The representative of Syria, explaining its abstentions on “L.41” and “L.42”, said that “L.41” is not balanced and still has shortcomings. Since the beginning of the Open-Ended Working Group, Syria has called for focusing on political commitments to serve as guidelines and to avoid linking to non-consensual or non-universal conventions and frameworks. No measures should prejudice the local ownership of ammunitions, and any procedures should be implemented within national legal frameworks. He emphasized the need to not refer to specific types of ammunition that go beyond the mandate.

On “L.42”, he said Syria is not in favour of any resolutions referring to the Arms Trade Treaty, given its failings, which cannot be ignored. His delegation worked hard to achieve a Treaty that is not used just to pressure some States. Syria was not against the Treaty if the process had been conducted in a consensual way. Any measures to control weapons need to be based on consensus or they will not achieve desired objectives. In the Middle East, he added, Israel is still following a policy of aggressive armament, and Syria has suffered from terrorist acts by groups able to obtain all types of weapons and ammunition and all forms of military equipment.

General Statements, Other Disarmament Measures and International Security

CAMILLE PETIT (France) introduced the draft resolution, titled “Programme of action to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies in the context of international security” (document [A/C.1/78/L.60/Rev.1](#)). Last year, this text enjoyed overwhelming support, co-sponsored by 74 States, with 156 votes in its favour. This year’s text, submitted by France, Colombia and the United States, is an important step forward. It welcomes the work of the 2021-2025 Open-Ended Working Group, in particular, its second annual progress report, which mentions the agreement on the common elements of the future regular institutional

dialogue mechanism, and calls for further discussions on the scope, structure and content of the Programme of Action at the Group's sixth, seventh and eighth sessions.

Another objective of "L.60/Rev.1" is to reaffirm the agreed normative framework to promote responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, which was developed by the six successive Groups of Governmental Experts and the first Open-Ended Working Group. The text aims to establish a permanent, inclusive and action-oriented mechanism to strengthen State capacities to implement this normative framework on a voluntary basis and to consider the need to develop additional standards or legally binding obligations. This mechanism will launch after the conclusion of the Open-Ended Working Group in 2025, and before the end of 2026. Taking a decision now on the establishment of this future mechanism will ensure continuity in this essential work, she stressed, encouraging all States to support "L.60/Rev.1" and its operative paragraph 4.

ANDREY BELOUSOV (Russian Federation) restated his country's calls for shaping the international information security system on a sound legal basis and on the foundation of the principles of sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. He said document "L.11", presented by his country, aims to safeguard the Open-Ended Working Group as the only decision-making mechanism on security issues in the use of ICTs under UN auspices, and to ensure it fulfils its mandate. It also requests the Secretary-General to report on States' positions on the information security negotiations format at the end of the Group's mandate in 2025. He expressed concern that Western countries, while publicly supporting the Open-Ended Working Group, seek to replace it with a draft resolution on a Programme of Action beneficial only to themselves. He called on Member States to give their full support to "L.11".

BO RA LEE (Republic of Korea), introducing the draft resolution on "Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation" (document [A/C.1/78/L.19](#)), said her country is proudly tabling this resolution in the Committee for the third time, and stressed the importance of joint efforts to empower, engage and educate youth in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. This year's resolution contains a few minor and technical updates to mainly reflect updated circumstances of the past years, she pointed out, noting that the draft resolution has been adopted by consensus since its inception in 2019. She called on Member States to "vote yes" on preambular paragraph 12 and to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

ROSANIS ROMERO LÓPEZ (Cuba) encouraged all delegations to support the resolutions introduced by the Non-Aligned Movement: "L.4", titled "Relationship between disarmament and development" (document [A/C.1/78/L.4](#)), "L.6", titled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control" (document [A/C.1/78/L.6](#)) and "L.7", titled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation" (document [A/C.1/78/L.7](#)). She also urged all delegations to vote in favour of "L.11", titled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" (document [A/C.1/78/L.11](#)), and co-sponsored by Cuba. The Open-Ended Working Group on the security and use of information and communications technologies from 2021 to 2025 is the only inclusive and transparent process for Member States to consider on an equal footing on any issue related to cybersecurity.

Right of Reply

The representative of the United States, in exercise of the right of reply, responded to the explanation of vote after the vote by the Russian Federation's delegate. It is correct that the United States has transferred some cluster munitions to Ukraine. This is to help Ukraine defend itself against the Russian Federation's invasion of its territory. Washington, D.C. did so with the understanding that Kyiv will respect international humanitarian law in their use. What the Russian Federation failed to say is that Moscow is using cluster munitions in Ukraine, and it was the first to introduce such munitions there. The Kremlin is using those weapons indiscriminately in Ukraine in violation of international humanitarian law. That is not for its defence, but for offensive purposes in pursuit of its aggression.