Egypt submits a working paper and articulates its legal position at the CCW GGE on LAWS.

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On 2 March 2026, Egypt participated in the meetings of the first 2026 session of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS), (held from 2 to 6 March 2026), where it articulated its position on the regulation and prohibition of LAWS through both specific reservations expressed during the negotiations during the negotiations aimed at strengthening the clarity and legal robustness of the emerging framework, as well as through the submission of a detailed working paper to the GGE.

On 3 March 2026, Egypt raised concerns regarding the use of flexible terminology in the GGE rolling text such as “context-appropriate” in relation to human judgment and control, warning that such language introduces ambiguity and allows for divergent interpretation, which may undermine the consistent application of international humanitarian law,and therefore called for more precise and unambiguous legal formulations

Egypt also addressed a provision in the GGE rolling text stating that:- “States shall refrain from manufacturing, otherwise acquiring, stockpiling, or transferring LAWS that cannot be used in compliance with IHL, while allowing their retention for training and countermeasures.” Egypt argued that the prohibition is already clearly established, and that permitting retention, even for limited purposes, introduces unnecessary complexity and potential loopholes that could weaken the rule. It therefore called for removing this allowance in order to preserve the clarity, coherence, and normative strength of the provision.

Moreover, Egypt opposed replacing clear prohibition-based language such as “it is prohibited” with “must not be used,” emphasizing that prohibition-based language is essential to ensuring the strength and effectiveness of any future legal instrument on LAWS.

On 5 March 2026, Egypt submitted a Working Paper to the GGE outlining its core position on LAWS Systems, reaffirming that fully autonomous weapons pose a grave threat to international peace and security and raise humanitarian, legal, and ethical concerns.

Egypt outlined the main elements underpinning its position as follows: -

First, it advocated for a **two-tiered approach** comprising the prohibition of fully autonomous weapons while regulating other military applications of AI. In this regard, Egypt emphasized that systems whose behavior cannot be reasonably predicted, understood, or explained should fall within the scope of prohibition.

Second, Egypt called for **streamlining multiple international initiatives** under the UN umbrella to ensure their inclusivity and effectiveness, while avoiding arbitrary oversight mechanisms or discriminatory export controls.

Third, Egypt emphasized **the centrality of human responsibility**, stressing that delegating the decisions to take a human life to machines is unacceptable and constitutes a grave violation of international humanitarian law. It further underlined that human judgment and control must extend across the entire lifecycle of weapon systems, with human operators retaining final authorization over the use of force.

Fourth, it also advocated a **balanced and realistic approach** that allows States to benefit from AI opportunities through technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries, while ensuring regulatory frameworks do not entrench inequalities between States.

For contextual background, the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (GGE on LAWS), established under the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), is a forum mandated to examine the legal, ethical, and technical dimensions of emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems. Its work focuses on developing a set of elements for a possible instrument, without prejudging its nature, while also exploring other measures to ensure compliance with International Humanitarian Law, including issues of accountability, human control, and potential prohibitions or regulations. Egypt participates in this process as an observer state, meaning that it contributes to the deliberations but is not a member of the core group of governmental experts. Egypt remains a signatory to the CCW. (For more on Egypt's statuts on treaties related to arms control and disarmament, check here).

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