Permanent Mission
of Austria to the
United Nations in Geneva

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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
60th Regular Session

Interactive Dialogue with the Advisory Committee
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Thank you, Madam Vice-President,

Austria aligns itself with the EU statement.

We thank the Members of the Advisory Committee for its work and the resulting report.

Austria has been active on the issue of new and emerging technologies in the military domain since many years, in particular when it comes to autonomous weapons systems. It is our clear position that human control over the use of force must be maintained and that legal guardrails are needed to uphold existing norms. In addition, these technologies also require more specific regulation taking into account their technological specificities and related challenges.

Human rights considerations and related challenges do not get enough attention in current discussions on this topic in disarmament fora. This is regrettable, in particular since the discussion have emerged in the Human Rights Council through the report of the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Christof Heyns, in 2013. In this regard we would be interested on how to avoid silos and have more holistic discussions that both encompass International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law.

Many of these technologies will not be exclusively used for military purposes alone and have a wider impact. Therefore, we value the recommendations directed towards business enterprises and other stakeholders. How can we as States raise awareness about these recommendations and help with their implementation?