



PERMANENT MISSION OF FINLAND  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK

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## VERBAL NOTE

The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and referring to the note LA/COD/21 dated 5 March 2018, requesting information on the Status of the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts, and on measures taken to strengthen the existing body of international humanitarian law with respect to its dissemination and full implementation at the national level, Finland would like to refer to the response given in 2014, which is still relevant. In addition Finland would like to provide the following information:

At the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 8–10 December 2015 Finland made a number of pledges, including one to undertake and support a study looking into the rules and principles of IHL and their application in the context of autonomous weapons systems. To that end a research report on autonomous weapons systems by Dr. Jarna Petman of the University of Helsinki was made available in 2017. The report *Autonomous Weapons Systems and International Humanitarian Law: 'Out of the Loop'?* was commissioned by the Foreign Ministry's Research Unit. The end product is a very readable and useful booklet that dwells on the legal implications of lethal autonomous weapons systems. The focus is on the transfer of the decision to use lethal force from humans to autonomous machines. The report discusses LAWS from the vantage point of IHL principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution as well as touches upon the issue of accountability for breaches of IHL. Drawing on a variety of materials the report makes some valuable policy recommendations which highlight the importance of "meaningful human control" over the selection and engagement of targets when using LAWS.

The report can be downloaded free of charge from:

<http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=173824&GUID={9F35FE3C-22A3-47FF-AA59-45AC418734BC}>

The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurance of its highest consideration.

1 June 2018

H.E. António Guterres  
Secretary-General of the United Nations

