

**UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**23rd Session**

**UK Statement**

**Clustered Interactive Dialogue**

**With Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions,**

**Dr. Christof Heyns and**

**Special Rapporteur on internally displaced people**

**Dr. Chaloka Beyani**

**29 May 2013**

Thank you, Mr. President,

The UK supports the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, and would like to add some national remarks.

As noted by the EU, the use of weapons which can select and engage targets without human agency is governed by the provisions of International Humanitarian Law. The UK is committed to upholding the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and encouraging others to do the same. However, we do not believe that the issue raised by Mr Heyns is one that should be dealt with by this Council, as the UK considers that there are other fora with mandates more appropriate to the consideration of issues of new weaponry governed by IHL. But for the avoidance of doubt, the UK considers the existing provisions of international law are sufficient to regulate the use of such systems and therefore has no plans to call for or to support an international ban on them.

The UK notes, for the purposes of future discussion in this Council, that there is a clear distinction between LARs and drones. Drones are remotely deliverable weaponry which involve human agency in selecting and engaging targets. Different considerations may therefore apply to drones, compared to those highlighted by Mr Heyns in respect of LARs.

The UK thanks you for your hard work and strongly supports your mandate to examine situations of extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions in all possible circumstances and to draw this Council's attention to them.

Mr President,

The UK would also like to thank Mr Beyani, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, for his vital work in support of his mandate and for his comprehensive and valuable report. The UK welcomes the focus on the human rights challenges faced by internally displaced women and girls including the unacceptable and widespread practice of sexual and gender based violence.

Thank you.