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Thank you, Chair,

The Stop Killer Robots campaign welcomes this first international meeting on autonomous weapons systems at the UN General Assembly in New York. It marks a turning point in global diplomacy on this issue and provides an important opportunity for all states to be heard. If we are to create a treaty that truly addresses the profound and far-reaching impacts of autonomous weapons systems, every voice must be at the table.

We have seen important progress towards the goal of creating new international law on autonomous weapons systems in recent years. More than 120 states have publicly affirmed the need for a new international treaty to maintain meaningful human control over the use of force and ensure that the use of autonomy in weapons systems stays within ethical, legal, and humanitarian bounds.

We welcome the many efforts by states to advance the development of new international law on autonomous weapons systems. These are critical and encouraging steps in the face of a rapidly evolving and deeply concerning technological landscape.

We particularly welcome the efforts by states who have hosted regional meetings, and advanced joint commitments—whether through national policy positions, multilateral statements, or regional declarations. These initiatives have been essential in building momentum, deepening understanding, and expanding participation beyond the traditional arms control fora.

We believe the leadership shown by countries of the Global South, who are identifying the specific ways they will be impacted by autonomous weapons systems, is especially significant, and particularly welcome the strong declarations issued by the regional conference held by Latin American and Caribbean states, CARICOM, and ECOWAS.

The “Humanity at the Crossroads” conference on autonomous weapons systems hosted by Austria in April 2024 stands out as a major moment. It brought together states, experts, and civil society from around the world and demonstrated strong political will to establish legal boundaries that preserve human dignity and uphold the international rule of law. That leadership was crucial, but equally, we want to thank and commend the many other states across Africa, Latin America, Asia, the Pacific, Europe, and beyond who have taken proactive steps — whether by developing national policy, advancing joint statements, convening regional dialogues, or building support for a treaty.

These efforts have been essential in building the political momentum we need. They have helped move this issue beyond the CCW talks in Geneva and into the broader international arena where it belongs.

As we meet here in New York for the first time, we are reminded that this issue concerns the future of multilateralism, of international law, and of our shared humanity. The use of autonomy in weapons will not be confined to the battlefield—it will affect law enforcement, border control, and other domains of public life, including outside of conflict. That is why inclusivity and the

participation of all states is so essential, and why action under international human rights law must go hand in hand with international humanitarian law.

This is a shared responsibility. Every state has a stake in preventing digital dehumanisation and ensuring that emerging technologies are governed by ethics, human rights, and the rule of law. The choices we make today will shape the future of global security, international cooperation, and human dignity.

That is why we urge all states to build on the leadership already shown and the progress already made. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to take meaningful political action—before it is too late. The window to act is narrowing. If we fail to draw clear legal and ethical boundaries now, we risk entering a world where killing is automated, accountability is lost, and human beings are reduced to data points.

We urge states to meet again here under UNGA auspices and to prepare another UNGA resolution on autonomous weapons systems that is more ambitious in setting the goal of negotiating a new international treaty on autonomous weapons systems in 2026.

The world is watching. Let us rise to meet this moment—with courage, clarity, and conviction—to build a future where technology serves humanity, not the other way around.

Thank you.