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<center>Online Discussion Meeting on the New Agenda for Peace</center>
<center>Saturday, 19 August at 9:00 p.m. Tokyo time</center>

<center>Opening Remarks</center>
<center>Tshilidzi Marwala</center>
<center>Rector, United Nations University</center>

Thank you, Mr. Yasushi AKASHI, for your enlightened remarks. I have been asked by Professor Hasegawa to follow you and speak, but only for five minutes. Therefore, my remarks will be brief, but I would like to touch upon what was **not** of major concern for Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his Agenda for Peace 30 years ago, which has been brought out as new and critically significant by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in his New Agenda for Peace.

That is the weaponization of new and emerging technologies. Technology and warfare have been intrinsically linked throughout human history. From sharpened stones to atom splitting, technologies to advance human existence have also been used for mass killing and destruction, as we witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Rapidly advancing and converging technologies are already revolutionizing conflict dynamics in Ukraine and elsewhere. The proliferation of armed uncrewed aerial systems, commonly known as drones, is rapidly advancing in armed conflict with increased use of varying degrees of sophistication by both State and non-state actors, including terrorists. They have already been deployed against civilian targets, including office buildings, schools, and even hospitals.

Furthermore, developments in artificial intelligence and quantum technology-related weapons systems are exposing the insufficiency of existing global governance frameworks. The magnitude of the artificial intelligence revolution has now descended upon us; its potential for harm – for societies, economies, and human existence itself – is unpredictable and unimaginable.

New technologies can also be used in conflict settings to reduce harm and risk, such as the use of unmanned vehicles for surveillance and reconnaissance, defusing explosive devices and clearing minefields. Therefore, implementation of these technologies in high-risk conflict zones requires careful assessments of their possible impact on local populations and conflict dynamics. These new technologies can provide tremendous benefits while also posing serious ethical and legal concerns.

To conclude my brief remarks, I urge you, as Secretary-General Guterres has done in his policy brief, to explore, formulate, and present to the UN and its member states to take concrete actions to prevent the weaponization of emerging technologies and promote their responsible application. More specifically, we should examine and propose how the United Nations can embark upon the task of preventing State and non-State terrorist groups from misusing new technologies to plan attacks, including cyberattacks, while acknowledging that new technologies can also be used responsibly to reduce risk and harm to humanity in conflict settings. Thank you, and I look forward to your deliberations.