



CAMPAIGN TO STOP KILLER ROBOTS

Substantive Talks on Killer Robots Must Continue *Convention on Conventional Weapons decision due on 14 November*

(Geneva, 13 November 2014) – Nations must continue and deepen their deliberations in 2015 on the questions relating to ‘lethal autonomous weapons systems’ with the ultimate objective of creating new international law prohibiting such weapons, said the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots today.

“The diplomatic talks must continue if we are to avoid sleepwalking into a world where decisions about who, where and when to kill are delegated to computer programs,” said Professor Noel Sharkey, Chair of the International Committee for Robot Arms Control (ICRAC), a co-founding member of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. “We can prevent the development and proliferation of autonomous robot weapons, but only if substantive talks continue and result in concrete action.”

Several robotic systems with various degrees of autonomy and lethality are currently in use by high-tech militaries including the US, UK, China and Russia and there is concern the trend will result in weapons systems that would give full combat autonomy to machines. Already, South Korea and Israel are deploying armed robot border guards, which retain a human in or on the decision-making loop.

These and other nations are participating in the annual meeting of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) where states will decide by consensus on Friday, 14 November on whether to continue next year with their deliberations on ‘lethal autonomous weapons systems’ also known as fully autonomous weapons or killer robots. In May 2014, more than 80 nations attended the first CCW meeting ever held on the matter. The consensus decision by the CCW requires that no single nation object to further talks.

“Weapons that operate without meaningful human intervention run counter to the core principle of human dignity and are morally unacceptable,” said Ms. Miriam Struyk of PAX, a co-founder of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. “Nations must never go down the path of developing weapons that would select targets and independently decide to attack without any human intervention.”

An [inter-religious declaration](#) released this week by PAX in cooperation with Pax Christi International endorses the call for a preemptive ban on fully autonomous weapons. Signed by more than 70 faith leaders of various religious denominations, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the statement shows how ethical concerns over killer robots are widely shared within society.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots supports any action to urgently address fully autonomous weapons in any forum, including the Convention on Conventional

Weapons, where a 1995 protocol banning blinding lasers provides a pertinent example of a weapon that was preemptively banned before it was ever fielded or used.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots calls on all nations to establish and articulate their policy on fully autonomous weapons and to start working urgently at both the national and international level to legislate a preemptive ban.

“It's not enough to say that weapons will always be under human control. Countries need clear policies explaining what constitutes meaningful human control over targeting and attack decisions on the battlefield and in law enforcement,” said Ms. Laura Boillot of Article 36, a co-founder of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. “New laws are needed to draw a clear line now, before fully autonomous weapons are developed.”

To read the interfaith declaration, please visit:

<http://www.paxforpeace.nl/stay-informed/news/interfaith-declaration>

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