



CAMPAIGN TO STOP KILLER ROBOTS

Media Advisory

6 October 2014

Campaign Outreach at the United Nations in New York

What's happening?

Representatives from the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots will be in New York in the third week of October to talk with government representatives and other United Nations (UN) delegates as well as media and the public about concerns over fully autonomous weapons or “killer robots” and the need for a preemptive ban.

Since the campaign was formed two years ago in October 2012, the question of what to do about weapons systems that would select targets and fire without human intervention has shot to the top of the international disarmament and security agenda. Nations held their first multilateral [meeting](#) on the matter of “lethal autonomous weapons systems” at the UN in Geneva May 2014, where the call for a ban was a central feature of the deliberations. In August, a Canadian robotics company became the first private company to [publicly endorse](#) the call for a preemptive ban on fully autonomous weapons.

The campaign's New York outreach includes the following events:

- 20 October @ 10:00am: **Background briefing for interested media** by Campaign to Stop Killer Robots representatives at the New School (register for location details)
- 20 October @ 6:00pm: Public talk on “media advocacy for humanitarian disarmament” by Campaign to Stop Killer Robots representatives including Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams at The New School (free - no registration required)
- 21 October @ 1:00pm: [UN briefing](#) on concerns over fully autonomous weapons by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots at the UN (UN delegates only)
- 28 October @ 3:00pm: Plenary statement to UN General Assembly First Committee delivered by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots at the UN (UN delegates only)

Who's coming?

Approximately 20 representatives from the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots will be in New York in addition to a representative from a commercial company. The campaign delegation includes:

- Nobel Peace Laureate **Ms. Jody Williams** and other representatives from the 20 other Nobel Peace Laureates that issued a joint statement in May welcoming the Campaign

to Stop Killer Robots and urging an international ban on fully autonomous weapons. [@JodyWilliams97](#) [@NobelWomen](#)

- Clearpath Robotics Chief Technology Officer **Mr. Ryan Gariepy**, who drafted the statement issued by the Canadian company in August 2014 pledging not to develop or manufacture weaponized robots that remove humans from the loop. [@clearpathrobots](#)
- Philosopher of technology **Dr. Peter Asaro**, vice-chair of the [International Committee for Robot Arms Control](#), who directs Graduate Programs at the School of Media Studies at The New School for Public Engagement. [@peterasaro](#) [@icracnet](#)
- **Mr. Richard Moyes**, managing partner at [Article 36](#), a UK-based NGO that published an influential memo in 2013 proposing a focus on meaningful human control of autonomous weapons technologies. [@rjmoyes](#) [@Article36](#)
- Dutch humanitarian disarmament campaigner **Ms. Miriam Struyk** of [PAX](#), who leads outreach efforts in the Netherlands and produced the campaign's first short animated film. [@MiriamStruyk](#) [@PAXforpeace](#)
- Global coordinator of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots **Ms. Mary Wareham**, who also serves as advocacy director for the Arms Division of [Human Rights Watch](#). [@hrw](#) [@marywareham](#)

Why New York?

Each October, various committees of the UN General Assembly meet, including two that are relevant to international efforts to address fully autonomous weapons:

- First Committee on Disarmament and International Security
- Third Committee on Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Rights

No formal decisions will be taken on fully autonomous weapons, but the committees present an opportunity for nations to make statements expressing their interest and support for action to address concerns raised over the weapons as well as possible actions, such as the calls for a moratorium or bans.

No disarmament resolutions have been proposed to specifically address fully autonomous weapons, but an [annual resolution](#) by the First Committee on the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) may note that the CCW began discussing lethal autonomous weapons systems in May 2014. A decision on continuing those deliberations will be taken at the next annual meeting of the CCW in Geneva on 14 November. For more information on the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots objectives for First Committee see its [entry](#) on fully autonomous weapons for the [2014 edition](#) of WILPF's Reaching Critical Will "briefing book" for First Committee delegates.

No human rights resolutions have been proposed to specifically address fully autonomous weapons, but in 2014 the Third Committee will consider and likely adopt a resolution proposed every three years to renew the mandate of the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. Professor Christof Heyns is currently serving as UN rapporteur and authored the [2013 report](#) for the Human Rights Council that called on

all nations enact a moratorium on “lethal autonomous robots.” Heyns is scheduled to address the Third Committee on 22 October at 3:00pm.

Who supports the call for a ban on killer robots?

At the CCW experts meeting in May 2014, five nations explicitly called for a ban on fully autonomous weapons: Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Pakistan, and the Holy See. A preemptive ban is listed as one possible way forward by the [chair's report](#) on the meeting.

The imperative of maintaining meaningful human control over targeting and attack decisions emerged as the primary point of common ground at the meeting. Most nations that spoke highlighted the importance of maintaining meaningful human control over targeting and attack decisions, including Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and the UK. The US spoke about its 2012 Department of Defense [policy](#) that requires “appropriate” levels of human judgment over the full range of activities involved in the development and use of such weapons.

Since 2013, a total of 48 nations have now spoken on the topic of fully autonomous weapons, but, the CCW meeting of experts showed how very few nations have articulated their own policy and practice in any detail.¹ The CCW process should spur governments to acknowledge their practice on fully autonomous weapons and develop policy aimed at banning the weapons.

Who to contact for media requests?

To schedule an interview with campaign representatives and/or register to attend the media briefing on Monday, October 20 at 10:00am and receive the location details, please contact:

- **Ms. Mary Wareham**, Coordinator, Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, +1 (646) 203-8292, wareham@hrw.org

To schedule an interview with Ryan Gariepy of Clearpath Robotics, please contact:

- Ms. Meghan Hennessy, Communications Coordinator, Clearpath Robotics, + 1 (519) 513-2416 x833, mhennessy@clearpathrobotics.com

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¹ During 2013, a total 44 states spoke publicly for the first time on fully autonomous weapons: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, UK, and US. Four more nations provided their views in 2014, as of 1 October: Czech Republic, Guatemala, Mali, Norway.