

On March 17, 2017, Swiss parliamentarian Chantal Galladé ([@ChantalGallade](#)) of the Social Democratic Party ([@spschweiz](#), [@pssuisse](#)) introduced a motion ([17.3214](#)) calling on the Federal Council of Switzerland to work for an international legal prohibition of autonomous weapons.

Here is an unofficial English translation of the text of the motion.

Parliamentary Motion 17.3214

Introduced on 17 March 2017 by Chantal Galladé (Swiss Social Democratic Party)

Title: For an international prohibition of autonomous weapons

Text: The Federal Council is mandated to work, at the international level, for a prohibition of autonomous weapons under international law

Reason: A small group of states is developing weapon systems that, once activated, would be able to detect, track, select and attack targets without further human intervention. In the use of such fully autonomous weapons (AWS), the decision to kill a person or destroy an object is not made by a [sentient/rational] person but is the result of complex algorithms. The lack of human participation in the final decision to kill raises serious moral, humanitarian, legal and security concerns.

The concern is, thus, not with weapon systems that are remotely piloted by a human person (such as armed drones), nor with weapon systems where certain functions run autonomously (such as platforms that can navigate, but not fire autonomously). Neither is it about autonomous vehicles or robots that are not used as a weapon. Rather, it's about prohibiting under international law weapon systems that make decisions on life and death fully autonomously. Such a prohibition is being discussed at present by a group of governmental experts (GGE) at the UN. In December 2017, the Meeting of States Parties (MSP) of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) will probably adopt a mandate in order to start formal negotiations in 2018.

It is in the national security interest of Switzerland that the Federal Council participates constructively in this process and works toward an international prohibition of AWS. Like other prohibited weapons, such as nuclear weapons, anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions or chemical and biological weapons, AWS will never contribute to Switzerland's security. Rather, they threaten it.

AWS are incompatible with international humanitarian law because no matter how clever algorithms are, they can never distinguish with certainty between combatants and civilians. Moreover, they violate human rights, because with AWS, it will never be possible to determine who bears the responsibility if war crimes are committed.

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