



CAMPAIGN TO STOP KILLER ROBOTS

Statement to the Convention on Conventional Weapons Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems

Geneva

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On behalf of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots

As this week's discussions have made clear, for almost all High Contracting Parties, the way forward has to center on reaching agreement on what constitutes acceptable human control. And weapons systems that do not meet that acceptable level should be prohibited.

Ahead of the next meeting of this Group of Governmental Experts we encourage states and groups of states to submit working papers that are outcome-orientated. Put forward elements of text to delineate the principles of meaningful human control.

In November, states should commit to begin negotiations to draw the boundaries of future autonomy in weapon systems. Such a legally-binding instrument could be concluded by the end of 2019 here at the Convention on Conventional Weapons in the form of a new protocol.

This week our list of countries calling for a ban on fully autonomous weapons has grown from 22 to 26, and we warmly welcome the additions of Austria, China, Colombia, and Djibouti. This morning, for the first time, we heard China express its desire to negotiate and conclude a CCW protocol to prohibit the use of fully autonomous weapons. We note that in response to our queries, China has confirmed that its ban call is limited to use only.

We are more convinced than ever that a normative line must be drawn urgently to determine what is collectively acceptable when it comes to human control over weapons systems and the use of force.

States should be explicit that meaningful human control is required over the critical functions of target selection and engagement, and for each individual attack. Weapon systems that operate without such human control should be prohibited.

Our coalition includes the voices of engineers, roboticists, and scientists. They respectfully suggest that future discussions on a working definition of fully autonomous weapons focus on the critical functions of target selection and engagement to avoid any

disruption of the civilian uses of autonomy. This would help to avoid any confusion about the dual use nature of emerging technologies relating to these weapons systems.

The CCW is not the only arena for action on this urgent issue of international concern. We urge all states to adopt national policy and legislation to prevent the development, production and use of fully autonomous weapons. National action provides a solid base for international action.

Over the coming months campaigners around the world will be stepping up their work at the national level to increase public awareness of this multifaceted challenge and the need for action. We plan to do this in many different ways, from public seminars to press briefings to parliamentary hearings. We intend to engage directly with the public, which requires translating information on this subject into local languages, securing even more media coverage, and utilizing social media tools.

These activities will inevitably mean closer public scrutiny of country views on weapons systems that would operate without meaningful human control. It will also result in more questions about your position on the call to ban fully autonomous weapons.

We hope this national outreach will spur on your work here in Geneva this year. From our perspective, the most appropriate pathway for the GGE is to work, with a sense of urgency, towards a protocol that prohibits weapons systems that operate without meaningful human control in the critical functions of selecting and engaging targets, and over individual attacks.

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