



CAMPAIGN TO STOP KILLER ROBOTS

MEDIA ADVISORY

Sixth International Meeting on Killer Robots Opens at UN Geneva on 27 August States Should Commence Negotiating a Ban Treaty Without Delay

More than 70 countries are expected to participate in a Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) meeting on lethal autonomous weapons systems at the United Nations (UN) in Geneva on 27-31 August 2018. It will be the sixth time since 2014 that countries meet about this issue.

Approximately [45 representatives from 19 non-governmental organizations](#) of the [Campaign to Stop Killer Robots](#) will participate in the meeting, including 1997 Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams and roboticist Noel Sharkey. The campaign is [a global coalition of 76 organizations in 32 countries](#) working since April 2013 to preemptively ban lethal autonomous weapons systems, also known as fully autonomous weapons.

UN Geneva-accredited correspondents are invited to attend a Campaign to Stop Killer Robots [side event briefing at 1:00pm on Tuesday, 28 August](#) in Room XXIII. Bonnie Docherty will present her latest [Human Rights Watch report](#) on how killer robots would fail to meet the Martens Clause, an ethical standard codified in international law for assessing emerging technology. ICRC's Peter Asaro and a guest speaker from the Tech Workers Coalition will discuss how their work encouraging Google to end its participation in a Pentagon project to “[assist](#) in object recognition” of video footage collected by military drones. On 7 June, Google released [a set of ethical principles](#) that commit not to design or develop artificial intelligence for use in weapons. Ariel Conn from Future of Life Institute will [present a statement](#) signed by more than 200 technology companies, societies, and groups and 2,600 AI experts and other individuals committing them to “neither participate in nor support the development, manufacture, trade, or use of lethal autonomous weapons.”

While the serious challenges raised by fully autonomous weapons have gained widespread attention over the past five years, progress by states toward determining what to do about them has been slow. States have identified and explored key legal, operational, moral, technical, proliferation and other concerns raised by allowing machines to select and attack targets without further human intervention. There is now widespread agreement about the need to retain some form of human control over future weapons systems and the use of force.

Many states say they have “no plans” to acquire or develop fully autonomous weapons. A total of [26 countries are explicitly calling for a ban](#) on fully autonomous weapons.* [Austria](#) and [other states](#) have proposed beginning negotiations on new international ban treaty to retain meaningful human control over weapons systems.

On the other hand, France, Israel, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States have explicitly rejected moving to negotiate new international law on fully autonomous weapons. The CCW

operates by consensus so any single state can oppose and potentially block a proposal to start negotiations. These and other military powers are heavily investing in armed drones and other autonomous weapons systems with decreasing levels of human control. The concern is that a variety of available sensors and advances in artificial intelligence are making it increasingly practical to design weapons systems that would target and attack without any meaningful human control. If the trend toward autonomy continues, humans may start to fade out of the decision-making loop for certain military actions, perhaps retaining only a limited oversight role, or simply setting broad mission parameters.

India's Ambassador Amandeep Singh Gill will oversee the CCW meeting in his capacity as chair of the CCW Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems. He is also serving as executive director of the secretariat of a [High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation](#) announced by the UN Secretary-General on 12 July.

There is no live feed of the CCW meeting or side events, but the highlights will be tweeted by [@BanKillerRobots](#) using the hashtag #CCWUN as well as by [@CCW_UNODA](#). Please also follow the campaign's accounts on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

Campaign representatives will also address a private briefing for members of the Association des Correspondents Auprès des Nations Unies (ACANU) at the beginning of the week.

See the [campaign website](#), including the [delegation list](#), [side event flyer](#), and this background [Briefing Note](#), also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

For more information and to schedule an interview, please contact:

- Clare Conboy-Stephenson, Media consultant. Tel. 44 (7507) 415-987, media@stopkillerrobots.org