

Regional Meeting on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems  
Islamabad, Pakistan  
9-10 December 2019

#### Civil Society Declaration

Campaign to Stop Killer Robots members and guests from eight Asian states met in Islamabad, Pakistan on 9-10 December 2019 at the invitation of the Sustainable Peace and Development Organisation (SPADO).<sup>1</sup>

The aim of the meeting was to learn more about the serious ethical, moral, technical, legal, proliferation, and security concerns raised by the ongoing development of fully autonomous weapons, also known as lethal autonomous weapons systems or killer robots. The participants strategized on how to achieve the Campaign's goal of a pre-emptive ban treaty to retain meaningful human control over the use of force.

The participants discussed approaches to building coordination between civil society in the region, and considered ways to engage regional bodies, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and states in South and Central Asia and Azerbaijan to create a strong regional position in support of banning lethal autonomous weapons systems. The participants reaffirmed the importance of the private sector in developing technology for peaceful purposes and civilian uses, and discussed disarmament as a tool to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The participants reflected on some measures that have been proposed to address concerns over killer robots, and the current status of multilateral talks within the United Nations. They agreed that fully autonomous weapons would violate international humanitarian law and international human rights law. They concluded that measures that fall short of a new international treaty to retain meaningful human control over the use of force will be insufficient to deal with the urgent threat posed by the introduction of fully autonomous weapons.

The participants affirmed the urgent need for states from Asia to immediately begin work to negotiate a new treaty to prohibit development, production, transfer, and use of fully autonomous weapons. They acknowledged the need for further actions to address this issue at national, regional and international levels, inter alia:

- Increase national outreach to encourage political support for the goal of banning killer robots. Build and leverage a broad regional coalition that includes civil society groups as well as academics, religious leaders, roboticists and scientists, youth, and other experts, and build their capacity to campaign on the issue;
- Work together to promote peace and stability within the region, and foster greater regional cooperation by and between Asian states towards the goal of immediately launching negotiations of a new treaty;
- Grow the membership of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots in the region, especially in countries where there is not yet a Campaign contact in place;

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<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka

Islamabad, Pakistan, 10th December 2019

Signatories:

Afghan Youth Association, *Afghanistan*

Azerbaijan Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Azerbaijan*

Center for International Security Policy, *Kazakhstan*

Center for Non-Proliferation and Export Control, *Kyrgyzstan*

Forum on Disarmament and Development, *Sri Lanka*

Japan International Volunteer Center, *Japan*

Khudi Welfare, *Pakistan*

Sri Lanka Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, *Sri Lanka*

Sustainable Peace and Development Organisation (SPADO) *Pakistan*

Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal, *Nepal*