



**CAMPAIGN TO STOP
KILLER ROBOTS**



Report on Activities

Convention on Conventional Weapons Group of Governmental Experts meeting
on lethal autonomous weapons systems

United Nations Geneva

27 – 31 August 2018

About this report

This report details activities by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots at the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems held at the United Nations (UN) in Geneva on 27-31 August 2018.

The report records the campaign's contributions, reviews the participation of governments in these meetings, and its annexes provide a summary of country views and the campaign's delegation list.

Campaign coordinator Mary Wareham of Human Rights Watch prepared this report, drawing from statements posted online by the CCW implementation support unit and WILPF's Reaching Critical Will Project. The report also draws on notes of the deliberations taken by Bonnie Docherty of Human Rights Watch and her Harvard Law School International Human Rights Clinic student Paras Shah.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots is grateful for the generous donor support that enabled us to have a strong presence at the CCW meetings and to conduct outreach in the lead-up and afterwards.

This report is available on the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots website at:
www.stopkillerrobots.org/publications.



Mary Wareham
Washington DC
9 January 2020

Table of Contents

About this report	2
I. Lead-up to the CCW meeting	4
II. CCW meeting on killer robots, August 2018	4
III. Campaign Activities	6
Annex I	7
Annex II: Campaign Delegation List	9
Annex III: Media Coverage – August-October 2018	11

I. Lead-up to the CCW meeting

At the CCW's annual meeting in November 2017, states agreed to continue the work of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) established in 2016 and approved Ambassador Amandeep Singh Gill of India to continue as GGE chair. Two GGE meetings on killer robots were scheduled for in 2018, on 9-13 April and 27-31 August.

There were several events and initiatives on killer robots in the period between the April and August 2018 GGE meetings.

At the national level, a group of lawmakers in Japan held a parliamentary seminar on killer robots on 17 April together with local NGOs and AI experts. In July in Belgium, a parliamentary defence committee approved a [resolution](#) urging the Belgian government to support international efforts to prohibit the use of fully autonomous weapons and ensure that the Belgian army will never use them.

In early June, Google published a [set of ethical principles](#) that included a pledge from the company to not develop artificial intelligence for use in weapons. Days earlier, the company said it would end its participation in a Department of Defense initiative called Project Maven after the contract expired at the end of 2018. In July, more than 200 technology companies and organizations from more than 36 countries signed on to [a pledge](#) released by the Future of Life Institute at the International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Stockholm, committing to “neither participate in nor support the development, manufacture, trade, or use of lethal autonomous weapons.”

In May, UN Secretary-General António Guterres issued his “Agenda for Disarmament,” flagging concerns over fully autonomous weapons and offering to support states to elaborate new measures including “legally binding arrangements” to ensure that “humans remain at all times in control over the use of force.”

In July, the [European Parliament adopted a resolution](#) calling for the urgent negotiation of “an international ban on weapon systems that lack human control over the use of force.” The resolution called on the European Council to work towards such a ban and “urgently develop and adopt a common position on autonomous weapon systems.”

II. CCW meeting on killer robots, August 2018

This was the sixth CCW meeting on lethal autonomous weapons systems since 2014.¹ A total of [90 countries](#) participated in August 2018 GGE meeting on lethal autonomous weapons systems in addition to UN agencies such as the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNMAS, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, and various academics. Unlike GGE meetings in other fora, the CCW GGE meetings are open to all interested states plus UN agencies, the ICRC, and registered NGOs.

¹ Previously, 84 states participated in the last CCW meeting on lethal autonomous weapons systems in April 2018, while 86 attended in November 2017, 94 attended in 2016, 90 in 2015, and 87 in 2014.

The chair's [agenda](#) for the August GGE meeting continued on the agenda covered by the first meeting in 2018: a) a common understanding on concepts and characteristics relevant to the objectives and purposes of the Convention; b) consideration of the human element in the use of lethal force, c) potential military applications of related technologies and d) possible options for addressing the humanitarian and international security challenges posed by lethal autonomous weapons systems.

The chair encouraged states to prepare substantively for the meeting by submitting working papers in advance, of which seven were submitted. [Austria, Brazil, and Chile](#) made a joint proposal for the CCW to move to a mandate to negotiate a legally binding instrument. [Estonia and Finland](#) focused on technical perspectives, [France, United Kingdom](#), and the [United States](#) each provided papers on human-machine interaction. [Australia](#) focused on the Article 36 legal reviews of weapons process. [Brazil](#) issued a paper entitled “Areas of Convergence on LAWS.”

The GGE meeting opened with a panel of experts discussing characteristics and was followed by a series of three-hour sessions on characteristics, human control, and the way forward. It concluded in the early hours of Saturday, 1 September after states adopted a report containing a set of non-binding principles and recommendations.

During the meeting, a clear majority of states proposed commencing negotiations in 2019 on a new treaty. Most of the 26 states that previously expressed support for a ban repeated that position during the meeting, including Colombia, Iraq, Pakistan, Panama, a group of African states and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) group of states. Austria, Brazil and Chile recommended the CCW “negotiate a legally-binding instrument to ensure meaningful human control over the critical functions” of weapons systems.²

Australia, Israel, Russia, South Korea, and the United States, however, rejected any move to negotiate a new treaty or other measures. They repeatedly noted potential benefits of autonomy in weapons systems.

Some states suggested the CCW focus on future deliberations on other measures, such as a political declaration floated by France and Germany to outline principles such as the necessity of human control in the use of force and the importance of human accountability. The Campaign expressed concern that measures short of new international law will simply not be enough to protect humanity from fully autonomous weapons.

The CCW states parties were tasked with making a recommendation on future work to the CCW's annual meeting in November. The [final report](#) notes that there was significant divergence with regard to the mandate of the CCW; some states proposed strengthening the mandate of the CCW while others maintained that the current mandate provides sufficient flexibility for

² A total of 26 states support the call to ban fully autonomous weapons: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, Holy See, Iraq, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, State of Palestine, Uganda, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

discussions. The meeting recommended that the GGE continue in 2019 and meet for a total of ten days.

The final decision on future work of the GGE on LAWS will be taken at the CCW's annual meeting on 23 November 2018.

III. Campaign Activities

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots delegation to the August 2018 CCW meeting consisted of more than four dozen representatives from Australia, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, Finland, France, Japan, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States (see Annex II).

During the August meeting, campaigners met with delegates from dozens of countries. The campaign convened a [side event briefing](#) on 28 August moderated by Maria-Pia Devoto of SEHLAC and focusing on “ethical concerns over fully autonomous weapons. The panel featured remarks and presentations from Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams, Bonnie Docherty of Human Rights Watch, Amr Gaber of the Tech Workers Coalition, Peter Asaro of the International Committee for Robot Arms Control, and Ariel Conn of the Future of Life Institute.

Human Rights Watch published a new report for distribution at the meeting, entitled [*Heed the Call: A Moral and Legal Imperative to Ban Killer Robots*](#).

For more information, please see:

- CCW [2018 GGE website](#)
- WILPF Reaching Critical Will [2018 CCW webpage](#)
- Campaign to Stop Killer Robots [website](#) and [Flickr site](#) (photos)
- Campaign to Stop Killer Robots [YouTube page](#)

Annex I

Country Views on Killer Robots

31 August 2018

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots monitors the positions of countries on the call to ban fully autonomous weapons.

Who wants to ban killer robots?

Twenty-six countries are calling for a prohibition on fully autonomous weapons:

Alphabetical order

1. Algeria
2. Argentina
3. Austria
4. Bolivia
5. Brazil
6. Chile
7. China*
8. Colombia
9. Costa Rica
10. Cuba
11. Djibouti
12. Ecuador
13. Egypt
14. Ghana
15. Guatemala
16. Holy See
17. Iraq
18. Mexico
19. Nicaragua
20. Pakistan
21. Panama
22. Peru
23. State of Palestine
24. Uganda
25. Venezuela
26. Zimbabwe

Chronological order

1. Pakistan on [30 May 2013](#)
2. Ecuador on [13 May 2014](#)
3. Egypt on [13 May 2014](#)
4. Holy See on [13 May 2014](#)
5. Cuba on [16 May 2014](#)
6. Ghana on [16 April 2015](#)
7. Bolivia on 17 April 2015
8. State of Palestine on 13 November 2015

9. Zimbabwe on [12 November 2015](#)
10. Algeria on [11 April 2016](#)
11. Costa Rica on [11 April 2016](#)
12. Mexico on [13 April 2016](#)
13. Chile on [14 April 2016](#)
14. Nicaragua on 14 April 2016
15. Panama on 12 December 2016
16. Peru on 12 December 2016
17. Argentina on 12 December 2016
18. Venezuela on 13 December 2016
19. Guatemala on 13 December 2016
20. Brazil on 13 November 2017
21. Iraq on 13 November 2017
22. Uganda on 17 November 2017
23. Austria on 9 April 2018
24. China* on 13 April 2018
25. Djibouti on 13 April 2018
26. Colombia on 13 April 2018

* China [states that its call](#) is to ban the use of fully autonomous weapons, but not their development or production.

On 9 April 2018, [a group of African states](#) recommended concluding a legally binding instrument “at the earliest” and found that “fully autonomous weapons systems or LAWS that are not under human control should be banned.”

A March 2018 [working paper by the Non-Aligned Movement](#) calls for a “legally binding international instrument stipulating prohibitions and regulations on lethal autonomous weapons systems.” The campaign invites national statements affirming support for these objectives.

Annex II: Campaign Delegation List

Campaign Delegation

Convention on Conventional Weapons
Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems
United Nations Geneva
27-31 August 2018

Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, @bankillerrobots

Head of Delegation: Ms. Mary Wareham, @marywareham

Ms. Clare Conboy-Stephenson, @ClareConboy

Ms. Isabelle Jones, @issjones

Ms. Anne-Sophie Simpère, @asimpere

Mr. Amr Gaber, @amrtgaber

Amnesty International, @amnesty

Ms. Rasha Abdul Rahim, @rasha_abdul

Article 36, @article36

Mr. Richard Moyes, @rjmoyes

Ms. Maya Brehm, @schoggitaler

Association for Aid and Relief Japan, @aarjapan

Mr. Yuki Sakurai

Center for International Security and Policy (Kazakhstan), @cisp_astana

Mr. Alimzhan Akhmetov

Committee of 100 (Finland)

Ms. Minna Vähäsalo

Facing Finance, @FacingFinance

Mr. Thomas Küchenmeister

Ms. Vanessa Müller

Human Rights Watch, @hrw

Mr. Steve Goose

Ms. Bonnie Docherty

Mr. Mark Hiznay

Mr. Paras Shah

International Committee for Robot Arms Control, @icracnet

Prof. Noel Sharkey, @NoelSharkey

Dr. Peter Asaro, @peterasaro

Dr. Thompson Chengeta, @DrThompsonLaw

Mr. Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan, @yeshuamp

Dr. Elke Schwarz, @ElkeSchwarz

Prof. Lucy Suchman
Dr. Jutta Weber
Dr. Steve Wright
Dr. Amanda Sharkey

Mines Action Canada, @MinesActionCan

Mr. Paul Hannon, @PCHannon
Ms. Erin Hunt, @erinlynnhunt

Nobel Women's Initiative, @NobelWomen

Ms. Jody Williams, @JodyWilliams97

Norwegian Peace Association, @Fredslaget

Ms. Lene Grimstad, @LeneGrimstad

PAX, @PAXforpeace

Ms. Miriam Struyk, @MiriamStruyk
Mr. Daan Kayser, @DaanKayser
Ms. Susanne Maria "Maaike" Beenes, @maaikebns
Mr. Michel Uiterwaal, @MichelUiterwaal

Pax Christi Vlaanderen, @paxchristiVL

Mr. Willem Staes, @willemstaes

Protection

Mr. Ayman Sorour, @aymansorour

Project Ploughshares, @ploughshares_ca

Ms. Branka Marijan, @brankamarijan

Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, @PugwashConfs

Dr. Linda Johanna Friman

SafeGround, @SafeGroundInc

Ms. Matilda Byrne

SEHLAC, @SehlaOrg

Mr. Camilo Serna
Ms. Maria Pia Devoto, @piadevoto

Sri Lanka Campaign to Stop Killer Robots

Prof. Yanitra Kumaraguru

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, @WILPF @RCW_

Ms. Ray Acheson, @achesonray
Ms. Allison Pytlak, @a_pytlak
Ms. Katrin Geyer, @kat_geyer
Ms. Sylvie Ndongmo, @sndongo2005, @WilpfCameroon

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German:

[Streit um autonome Kriegsmaschinen](#)
[Militärische Roboter werden die Kriegführung revolutionieren](#)
[Militärische Roboter werden die Kriegführung revolutionieren](#)
[Killerroboter auf dem Vormarsch - Diplomaten feilschen um Kontrolle](#)
[Verbot von Killerrobotern gefordert](#)
[KI-Wettrüsten: Supermächte setzen auf autonome Waffensysteme](#)
[Darf eine Maschine über Leben und Tod entscheiden?](#)
[Listicle: Kampfroboter ohne Kontrolle?](#)
[Das Ende der Moral – im nächsten Krieg werden Roboter kämpfen](#)
[Die Killerroboter kommen: Die Welt wappnet sich für den Hyperkrieg](#)
[UN-Diplomaten streiten um ein Verbot für Killerroboter](#)
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[Killer-Roboter auf dem Vormarsch](#)
[Killerroboter auf dem Vormarsch – Diplomaten ringen um Kontrolle](#)
[Diplomaten streiten über Ächtung von Killerrobotern](#)
[Töten nach Algorithmus? - Streit um autonome Waffensysteme.](#)
[Fortschritt oder Horrorszenario? Was Sie über Killerroboter wissen sollten](#)
[Amnesty international fordert Verbot von Killerrobotern](#)
[Amnesty fordert Verbot von Killerrobotern](#)

[Verbot von Killerrobotern gefordert](#)
[Die Vereinten Nationen beraten über ein Verbot von Killer-Robotern.](#)
[Diplomaten ringen um Kontrolle: Krieg der Kampfmaschinen.](#)
[Sollen Killer-Roboter verboten werden?“](#)
[Kommentar: Killer-Roboter verbieten](#)
[Killerroboter industrialisieren das Tötens vollends.](#)
[Amnesty International fordert Verbot von Killerrobotern](#)
[Killerroboter: Amnesty International fordert Verbot](#)
[Streit um autonome Kriegsmaschinen](#)
[Was sind Killerroboter – und sollte man sie verbieten?](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[UN wollen Killer Roboter stoppen](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[TV Beitrag ARD](#)
[Schaffung autonomer Waffen nicht vollständig zu stoppen](#)
[UN-Verhandlungen über autonome Waffen](#)
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[Amnesty International fordert Verbot von Killerrobotern](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[UN-Streit in Genf: Entscheiden bald Killerroboter über Tod und Leben?](#)
[Abrüstungsexperten beraten über Schranken für Killerroboter](#)
[Nicht länger Science Fiction](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[Angst vor dem Killer-Roboter](#)
[Genfer Gespräche über autonome Waffensysteme](#)
[Töten nach Algorithmus](#)
[Autonome Waffen: Verhaltenskodex reicht nicht](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[Amnesty International für Verbot von Kampf-Roboter](#)
[Menschenrechtler für Verbot](#)
[Kampfmaschine, die alleine entscheiden](#)
[Killerroboter: Amnesty International fordert Verbot](#)
[UN Diskutiert über Killerroboter: Darf eine Maschine über Leben und Tod entscheiden?](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht.](#)
[UN-Konferenz in Genf. Amnesty: Killerroboter verbieten](#)
[Abrüstungsexperten beraten über Schranken für Killerroboter](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[Die UN diskutieren über Killerroboter.](#)
[Wieder Streit über Killerroboter bei UN-Konferenz in Genf.](#)
[Radio](#)
[Abrüstungsexperten verhandeln Schranken für Killer-Roboter.](#)
[Was sind Killerroboter - und sollte man sie verbieten?](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht.](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[Autonome Waffen ächten - ohne Wenn und Aber!](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht.](#)
[Verbotsforderung: Autonome Waffen verstoßen gegen Menschenrechte](#)
[Killerroboter bleiben umstritten](#)
[Killer-Roboter: Fakten über tödliche Systeme](#)
[Diplomaten kämpfen um Kontrolle von Killerrobotern](#)
[Autonome Kriegsmaschinen](#)

[Pressestimme: 'Rheinpfalz' zu autonomen Waffen](#)
[In Genf wird gerade die Zukunft von Killerrobotern diskutiert.](#)
[Im Kampf gegen die Killer-Roboter](#)
[Kommentar zum Krieg mit Autopilot: Automatische Waffensysteme müssen verboten werden.”](#)
[Stoppt Killerroboter.](#)
[Tödliche Roboter-Waffen weltweit ächten.](#)
[Militärmächte gegen Verbannung von Killerrobotern.](#)
[Warum autonome Waffen wohl nicht verboten werden.](#)
[Wenn Maschinen über Leben und Tod entscheiden](#)
[Pressemitteilung: Autonome Waffensysteme international ächten](#)
[Keine Einigung über Umgang mit autonomen Waffen](#)
[Killerroboter: Verhandlungen ohne Einigung beendet.“](#)
[„Keine Einigung zum Umgang mit Killerrobotern“](#)
[„Kein Verbot für den Killerroboter“](#)
[Killerroboter auf Vormarsch – Diplomaten ringen um Kontrolle](#)
[Killerroboter am Vormarsch: Diplomaten ringen um Kontrolle](#)
[Abrüstungsexperten verhandeln über Schranken für Killer-Roboter.](#)
[Was sollen Killer-Roboter dürfen?](#)
[Killerroboter: Diplomaten ringen um Kontrolle](#)
[Konsens über Verbot von Killerrobotern noch nicht in Sicht](#)
[Ringen um die Zukunft intelligenter Kampfroboter.](#)
[Konsens über Umgang mit Killerrobotern nicht in Sicht](#)
[Zähes Ringen im Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)
[Wie gefährlich sind die Killer-Roboter?](#)
[Kein Konsens über Umgang mit Killerrobotern“](#)
[Keine Einigung zum Umgang mit Killerrobotern](#)
[Der Siegeszug der Killerroboter](#)
[Die Lage stimmt nicht optimistisch](#)
[Keine Einigung im Ringen um Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)

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[Killerroboter auf dem Vormarsch – Diplomaten ringen um Kontrolle](#)
[Uno verhandelt über Schranken für Killerroboter](#)
[Amnesty fordert Verbot von Kampf-Robotern](#)
[Amnesty International will Killerroboter gänzlich verbieten](#)
[Amnesty International fordert Totalverbot von Kampf-Robotern](#)
[Weshalb Killerroboter kaum verboten werden](#)
[Militärische Roboter werden die Kriegsführung revolutionieren](#)
[Killer-Roboter sind bald Realität](#)
[Amnesty International fordert Totalverbot von Kampf-Robotern](#)
[Amnesty fordert Verbot von Kampfrobotern](#)
[Sollen Maschinen Menschen töten? Sechs Fragen zur Killer-Roboter-Debatte der UNO in Genf](#)
[Kampf um die Killerroboter](#)
[Erster Erfolg für autonome Waffensysteme](#)
[Weltgemeinschaft uneins über Umgang mit Kampfrobotern](#)
[Keine Einigung im Ringen um Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)
[Keine Einigung im Ringen um Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)
[Keine Einigung im Ringen um Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)
[Keine Einigung im Ringen um Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)
[Keine Einigung im Ringen um Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)
[Keine Einigung im Ringen um Umgang mit Killerrobotern in Genf](#)
[Einsatz von Killerroboter bleiben unregelt](#)