
Overview of submissions to the United Nations Secretary-General pursuant to Resolution 78/241 on lethal autonomous weapons systems



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SUMMARY REPORT

INTRODUCTION

On 5th October 2023, United Nations Secretary General António Guterres, and President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Mirjana Spoljaric, issued a joint call to the international community, imploring political leaders ‘to establish specific prohibitions and restrictions on autonomous weapon systems, to shield present and future generations from the consequences of their use’ through the urgent negotiation of ‘a new legally binding instrument to set clear prohibitions and restrictions on autonomous weapon systems’, with negotiations for this legally binding instrument to be concluded by 2026.¹

Following this appeal, on 22nd December 2023 the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 78/241 on ‘lethal autonomous weapons systems’, with 152 states voting in favour of the resolution.² This was the first resolution on autonomous weapons systems at the UN General Assembly. Originally introduced at the UN General Assembly First Committee by Austria and a cross-regional group of 43 co-sponsoring states, the resolution ‘stresses the urgent need for the international community to address the challenges and concerns raised by autonomous weapons systems’, and ‘requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and observer States on lethal autonomous weapons systems, inter alia, on ways to address the related challenges and concerns they raise from humanitarian, legal, security, technological and ethical perspectives and on the role of humans in the use of force, and to submit a substantive report reflecting the full range of views received with an annex containing these views, to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session for further discussion by Member States.’³ This historic resolution also creates a specific agenda item, titled ‘Lethal autonomous weapons systems.’

In February 2024, pursuant to Resolution 78/241, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs invited the views of member states, observer states, civil society, the scientific community and industry on ways to address the related challenges and concerns lethal autonomous weapons systems raise from humanitarian, legal, security, technological and ethical perspectives and on the role of humans in the use of force. At time of publication, the Secretary-General had received 91 replies to this request, of which 58 submissions were made by states, groups of states (e.g. international conference outcome documents), or international organisations or unions of states

(e.g. CARICOM, the European Union, ECOWAS). Of these 58 replies, 49 were made by individual states.⁴

35 of the 58 submissions made by individual states express clear support for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems. 47 of the 58 submissions express support for some form of prohibitions and/or regulations. 36 submissions express support for a standard of human control over the use of autonomous weapons systems. 27 submissions view the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons as the preferable or appropriate forum for discussions on the issue of autonomous weapons. 12 submissions reference the need for a prohibition on autonomous weapons systems designed or used to target people. The majority of submissions recognise that autonomous weapons and the use of artificial intelligence for military purposes raise concerns for the international community, and numerous states expressed a preference for the term ‘autonomous weapons systems’ over ‘lethal autonomous weapons systems’.

This document contains short summaries of these submissions to the Secretary-General. Please note that this is a reference document, and that these short submission summaries cannot and do not reflect the full breadth and nuance of each state or group’s position on autonomous weapons systems and the negotiation of a legally binding instrument, and that there may be some minor inaccuracies due to translation errors. In case of doubt regarding a state’s position, please see the individual state page on the Automated Decision Research [state positions monitor](#).⁵

Further, this document does not include summaries of submissions made by other interested parties, such as the submission of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the submission of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial summary or arbitrary executions, or summaries of submissions made by the Stop Killer Robots campaign or Stop Killer Robots coalition members.

It is expected that the Secretary-General’s report will restate the Secretary-General’s call for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems by 2026. It is also likely that the Secretary-General will underscore the essential need for a standard of human control over autonomy in weapons systems, as well as highlighting the significant risks which autonomous systems raise for international peace and security, human rights, and respect for international humanitarian law. The Secretary-General has consistently stressed that giving machines the power and discretion to take human life is morally repugnant and politically unacceptable, and that ‘human control must be retained in life and death decisions. The autonomous targeting of humans by machines is a moral line that we must not cross.’⁶ It is to be hoped that states heed this urgent call.

POSITION SUMMARIES

[Argentina](#)

- Argentina supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.

- Argentina's submission to the Secretary-General highlights that it is 'crucial to acknowledge the serious risks and challenges' posed by autonomous weapons, 'in terms of compliance with international humanitarian law and the protection of human dignity and human rights, as well as ethical concerns, international stability and security, and the maintenance of peace.'
- Argentina's submission states that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the 'appropriate forum' for discussions on autonomous weapons, but recognises that 'discussions in other forums can have advantages in terms of universality and linkages with other discussion topics (cybersecurity, labor, transportation, intellectual property, among others).'
- Argentina notes that any development in the regulation of autonomous weapons 'should be guided by the principles of distinction, proportionality, and human responsibility in the use of force', with a 'a balance between defensive needs and humanitarian protection.'
- In terms of regulations, Argentina argues that 'the general criterion should be to maintain significant human control over the critical functions of autonomous weapon systems' operation. Additionally, it is crucial to have sufficient knowledge and information to understand LAWS, conduct evaluations of their functioning, and avoid the development of algorithmic biases'

Australia

- Australia does not currently support the negotiation of a legally binding instrument, and it does not support the creation of a parallel process for the negotiation of legally binding rules on autonomous weapons.
- Australia's submission to the Secretary-General advocates for continued discussion within the CCW's Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS, in order to 'build shared understanding of how existing law applies to LAWS before pursuing any new legal instrument.' Australia does not support proposals advocating for a standard of human control over autonomous weapons, as it argues that there is 'no express IHL requirement for a weapon to be subject to 'human control'.
- Australia prefers to refer to 'AWS' rather than 'LAWS', 'since autonomous weapons may have a range of effects, including non-lethal, that are regulated by IHL.'

Austria

- Austria supports the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons, as 'the complexities of increased autonomy in weapons systems raise unprecedented challenges regarding application and compliance with international law'.
- Austria believes that a new legal instrument 'also needs to address wider issues, such as humanitarian risks and the fundamental ethical concerns related to autonomous weapons systems', and emphasises that a new legal framework 'should not only relate to international humanitarian law but also international

human rights law and international criminal law’, with these bodies of law being relevant ‘due to the high likelihood of autonomous weapons systems being used outside armed conflict, the prevalence of dual-use within the related technologies and the major role of private industry in design and development of autonomous weapons systems.’

- Austria’s submission to the Secretary-General states that Austria will ‘promote negotiations for a legally binding instrument that consists of prohibitions and regulations. Autonomous weapons systems that cause effects that cannot be adequately explained, predicted or sufficiently controlled, are unacceptable and would violate international humanitarian law and therefore must be prohibited. Autonomous weapons systems that select and engage persons as targets in a manner that violates the dignity and worth of the human person as well as the principles of humanity or the dictates of public conscience are unacceptable and must be prohibited.’
- Austria supports a standard of meaningful human control and the Austrian submission argues that those autonomous weapons which are not prohibited ‘should be regulated in order to ensure meaningful human control over the use of these systems.’
- Austria does not support the use of the qualifier ‘lethal’ to describe autonomous weapons systems, as ‘it finds no justification in international humanitarian law, which protects civilians not only against death, but also against injury.’

Chair’s Summary of the ‘Humanity at the Crossroads’ conference

- The Chair’s Summary of Austria’s April 2024 ‘Humanity at the Crossroads’ conference, endorsed by 32 states at the time of writing, states that the ‘seriousness of risks regarding AWS require us to clarify the application of existing legal rules and to establish clear prohibitions and regulations to preserve the human element in the use of force’; that ‘Targeting people is a most pressing ethical issue’, and that ‘AWS that would function by distinguishing certain groups of people from others would be liable to problems of bias in the datasets and algorithms that they are built on.’
- The Chair’s Summary highlights that ‘Distance and dehumanisation, the risks of lowering the political threshold to use force as well as escalation risks, including by machine-to-machine interaction, raise further concerns.’
- The Summary argues that the international community is at an ‘Oppenheimer moment’, in which ‘geopolitical tensions threaten to lead a major scientific breakthrough down a very dangerous path for the future of humanity.’
- The Chair’s Summary affirms a ‘strong commitment to work with urgency and with all interested stakeholders for an international legal instrument to regulate autonomous weapons systems.’

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet declared its position on the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems, but has called for international cooperation to establish clear ‘standards and regulations’ on them.
- In its submission to the UN Secretary General, Bosnia and Herzegovina raises concerns regarding autonomous weapon systems reliability and accuracy, and their ability to distinguish between military and civil targets.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina’s submission states that a ‘major ethical issue is the moral responsibility for the use of autonomous systems that have the ability to make life and death decisions’, noting that this ‘raises the question of autonomy in decision-making and how much we can trust algorithms in situations that require moral judgment.’

Brazil

- Brazil supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons, and its submission to the Secretary-General highlights that there is an ‘urgent need for a normative legal framework for AWS that addresses humanitarian and ethical concerns.’
- Brazil advocates for a two-tier approach with prohibitions and regulations. Brazil supports continued discussion within the CCW GGE on LAWS, but argues that ‘all avenues of negotiation should be explored to the fullest in order to achieve the best possible instrument, with the largest number of adherents, and with the earliest entry into force.’
- Brazil’s submission to the Secretary-General highlights that ‘there is ‘an implicit requirement for meaningful human control imbedded (sic) in IHL, notably vis-à-vis the principles of distinction, proportionality and military necessity’, with similar requirements ‘also at the core of international human rights law.’ Brazil states that ‘Meaningful human control is fundamental to ensure accountability, compliance with international humanitarian law, and the protection of human dignity in armed conflict.’
- Brazil’s submission further advocates for the adoption of technical standards in order to ‘establish a common approach for evaluating the development and use of AWS.’

Bulgaria

- Bulgaria’s submission to the Secretary-General supports the negotiation of a new instrument on autonomous weapons, following a two-tier approach, in the form of an Additional Protocol (VI) to the CCW.
- Bulgaria states that human control ‘is central to the IHL compliance and ethical acceptability of autonomous weapon systems’, and argues that in order to ‘ensure the use of such weapons systems fully complies with the IHL and its

key principles and to avoid any accountability gaps’, human control ‘must be preserved and retained at the various phases of research and development, validation, deployment and use of autonomous weapons systems, but primarily at the targeting cycle.’

- Bulgaria’s submission states that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons offers ‘an appropriate international framework for discussions’ on autonomous weapons systems.

Canada

- Canada has not yet declared support for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument.
- Canada acknowledges the rapid technological advancements impacting international policy discussions on LAWS. It emphasises adherence to ‘existing international law, particularly international humanitarian law (IHL)’, which mandates human involvement and accountability in weapon systems.
- Canada’s submission recognises that ‘there are various options to address potential prohibitions, including a potential legally binding instrument’, but argues that it ‘is unclear at this stage what gaps in the current international framework a new instrument would seek to fill and, consequently, what a new treaty might entail.’
- Canada states that ‘consensus should be sought on reaching a common understanding of what “human involvement” would be required in order for weapon systems to be compliant with IHL.’ For Canada, ‘human involvement’ encompasses ‘both human judgment and human control’.

CARICOM

- The CARICOM Declaration on Autonomous Weapons Systems, adopted during a conference in September 2023, highlights concerns and principles regarding the development and use of these technologies.
- It emphasises the potential risks to global security posed by AWS, particularly in terms of ethical, legal, and humanitarian impacts. CARICOM calls for a legally binding international instrument to regulate AWS and stresses the importance of maintaining human control over these systems.
- The Member States advocate for inclusive multilateral cooperation to address these challenges effectively.
- The declaration commits ‘CARICOM to support initiatives that prioritise human rights, security, and international law in the development and deployment of AWS.’
- CARICOM has also expressed its views on the ‘implications of AWS for non-proliferation and the risks of diversion to non-state actors, including criminals and terrorist groups, and the challenges of AWS to internal and domestic security,

including law enforcement and border security.’

China

- China’s submission to the Secretary-General states that it is the responsibility of all countries to effectively control the security, legal, ethical, and humanitarian risks arising from artificial intelligence.
- China believes that all countries should deal with autonomous weapons from the perspective of preventing a new arms race.
- China maintains that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the appropriate forum for discussing the autonomous weapons issue, and that it is important to uphold the principle of consensus in the field of international security.
- China says that autonomous weapons should not be discussed in isolation from ‘lethality’, as confusing ‘lethal autonomous weapons systems’ with ‘autonomous weapons systems’ complicates the issue and could further delay the discussion process.
- China states that introducing prohibitions and restrictions in a general manner could undermine the legitimate defence capabilities of states, and that lethal autonomous weapons systems should be categorised as either ‘acceptable’ or ‘unacceptable’, with a prohibition of ‘unacceptable’ weapons systems following the example of the Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons, and a legal instrument concluded on ‘acceptable’ weapons.

Chile

- Chile’s submission supports the establishment of a binding legal instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Chile believes that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the most appropriate framework for the regulation of autonomous weapons, and supports the negotiation of an additional protocol to the Convention.
- Chile highlights unpredictability as one of the main challenges of autonomy in weapons systems, and states that unpredictable systems, and systems whose ‘decisions’ cannot be explained, should be prohibited.
- Chile further recommends that the use of autonomous weapons systems in urban or highly populated areas should be avoided, in order to avoid the risk of unintentionally directing attacks against civilian targets, and to reduce the possibility of disproportionate collateral damage.

Costa Rica

- Costa Rica’s submission to the Secretary-General highlights Costa Rica’s support for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument, its role as host of the Latin

American and Caribbean Conference on the impact of autonomous weapons systems in 2023 and in its active participation in the ‘Core-Group’ that promoted resolution AG 78/241 on autonomous weapons systems.

- Costa Rica stresses that it is ‘imperative to launch an open mandate within the framework of the United Nations to begin negotiations on a legally binding international instrument regarding autonomous weapons systems.’ This instrument should ‘contemplate prohibitions and regulations to guarantee Meaningful Human Control to avoid further dehumanization of war and guarantee individual accountability and State responsibility, thus ensuring compliance with International Law, including IHL, IHRL and addressing ethical perspectives, as well as the prevention of its social and humanitarian impact.’
- Costa Rica’s submission underlines that ‘the current international regulatory framework does not have all the answers to the legal challenges posed by autonomous weapons systems.’
- Costa Rica seeks an approach to a legally binding instrument that guarantees ‘Meaningful Human Control at all stages, promoting transparency and explainability to counteract biases in the operation of these systems and avoid the systematic reproduction of discriminatory assessments of historically vulnerable populations.’
- Costa Rica notes that ‘it is unacceptable to delegate life and death decisions to autonomous weapons systems, as this reduces human beings to mere data and contradicts fundamental ethical principles.’

Cuba

- Cuba’s submission to the UNSG advocates for the ‘urgent adoption’ of a legally binding instrument which ‘prohibits the manufacture, possession and use of fully autonomous weapons and that establishes regulations for the use of semi-autonomous weapons, including drones.’
- Cuba’s submission argues that discussions in the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons must ‘move towards a legally binding instrument that, in addition to prohibitions for fully autonomous weapons systems and regulations for semi-autonomous weapons; includes a general obligation to maintain significant human control in the use of force, a prohibition on any “unpredictable” system or that prevents attribution in the event of non-compliance with binding obligations.’
- Cuba hopes that the CCW Group of Governmental Experts, with the Group’s new mandate to formulate a set of elements of an instrument, will ‘produce tangible results.’
- Cuba highlights that ‘the use of autonomous lethal weapons could not guarantee compliance and observance of the norms and principles of International Law, in particular International Humanitarian Law (IHL), including its principles of Distinction and Proportionality’, and further states that ‘the use

of fully autonomous weapons would not allow an effective assessment of the responsibility of the State for internationally wrongful acts. Due to the very characteristics of autonomous weapons, it is difficult or impossible to attribute responsibility to a State or individual in the case of illicit acts that involve the use of these weapons.’

- Cuba’s submission stresses that ‘machines cannot replace human beings in the most important decisions of war, and in no case can they decide on people’s lives.’

ECOWAS

- ECOWAS Member States convened in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in April 2024 to address the implications of AWS.
- The key message from the ECOWAS communiqué is that ECOWAS states will encourage the international community to commence negotiations for a ‘binding international instrument and enhance regional cooperation to manage AWS challenges effectively.’
- The communiqué draws attention to AWS proliferation to non-state actors and calls for urgent international regulations based on humanitarian law and ethical principles.
- The communiqué reflects ECOWAS’s commitment to addressing the complex issues surrounding AWS through coordinated regional and international efforts aimed at safeguarding human rights, promoting peace, and ensuring responsible technological development.

Egypt

- Egypt supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Egypt’s submission to the Secretary-General states that pursuing a two-tiered approach, ‘comprising the prohibition of fully autonomous weapons while regulating other military applications of AI represents the most realistic and effective course of action.’
- Egypt further states that the term ‘fully autonomous weapons’ should ‘exclusively target weapons that can operate without any meaningful human control or intervention, as well as effective verification.’
- The submission also states that there is a need to ‘streamline international AI military guidelines under the UN without arbitrary oversight or discriminatory controls’ while emphasising human responsibility and accountability in military operations.
- Egypt opposes autonomous weapons that violate international humanitarian law (IHL) and underscore the importance of ‘AI oversight and explainability’.
- Egypt supports a balanced approach to AI in military use, advocating for

‘capacity-building in developing nations’ alongside effective regulation.

El Salvador

- El Salvador supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems.
- In its submission to the UN Secretary General, El Salvador says that the use of the term ‘lethal’ limits the scope of addressing these weapon systems and additionally that lethality is not a prerequisite for ‘serious damage and harm to civilians.’
- On IHL compliance, El Salvador says that to comply with IHL principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution requires ‘real-time assessments during hostilities and requires significant human control.’
- El Salvador’s submission states that those autonomous weapons systems ‘whose primary objective is the identification of human targets, whether to cause damage or loss of life’ should be prohibited.

European Union

- The European Union’s submission to the UN Secretary-General on LAWS emphasises several key points:
- On the aspect of emerging technologies and global security, the EU acknowledges AI and autonomous systems with dual capabilities for economic growth and security risks. The EU calls for international norms to manage these technologies responsibly.
- The EU supports international cooperation to address AI’s implications in military contexts while advocating for best practices and ethical considerations in forums like the CCW.
- The submission also highlights the importance of ‘mitigating biases in AI and ensuring human oversight in decisions involving lethal force’ to uphold International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and ethical standards.
- The EU supports the two-tier approach which proposes ‘distinguishing between autonomous systems compliant with IHL and those not’, therefore urging states to refrain from developing or deploying non-compliant systems.
- The EU’s perspective on gender stresses the relevance of gender equality in discussions on LAWS, underscoring this priority across emerging technologies.’

Fiji

- Fiji supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument.
- Fiji’s submission highlights several concerns around the ‘ethical, legal, accountability, environmental, and security challenges posed by autonomous weapons.’ These include risks to international law compliance, potential for

misuse by non-state actors, environmental damage, and algorithmic biases perpetuating inequalities.

- Fiji recommends ‘the immediate start of negotiations for a legally binding instrument to prohibit autonomous weapons’, with prohibitions on systems that target people and prohibitions on systems that cannot be used with meaningful human control, and regulations ‘on all other weapons systems to ensure they are effectively controlled, understood and limit the area and duration of their use’ Fiji also stresses the need for inclusive discussions at the UN General Assembly.
- The submission reflects on the urgency for a treaty by 2026 to prohibit and regulate autonomous weapons, ‘echoing global leaders’ and humanitarian organisations’ urgent appeals for new international rules.’
- Fiji underscores the importance of swift international action to establish ‘robust legal frameworks that safeguard human dignity, ensure accountability, and protect the environment’ amidst the growing threat of autonomous weapons systems.

Finland

- Finland has not yet declared support for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- In its submission to the Secretary-General, Finland expresses its support for negotiations on principles and regulations, but underlines that an instrument could be either ‘politically or legally binding’, and that its objective is ‘the conclusion of an international instrument, without prejudging its nature, with the widest possible group of states including countries developing, producing and using such weapons’, in order ‘for such an instrument to have a real impact in practice.’
- Finland states in its submission that the adoption of ‘international principles and regulations’ on ‘lethal autonomous weapons systems’ is ‘fundamental to ensure compliance with international law, to increase security and to reduce potential risks of conflicts.’
- Finland supports a two-tier approach, with prohibitions on ‘systems that operate without any form of human involvement and outside a human responsible chain of command’ and regulations on the development and use of all other weapons systems that have autonomous features or functions to ‘ensure their compliance with the rules and principles’ of IHL, to include provisions to ‘guarantee appropriate levels of human involvement and accountability, transparency and foreseeability in testing and operation, legal reviews and risk mitigation measures in the development, production, purchase and deployment of LAWS.’
- Finland argues that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is ‘the forum to continue discussions on a future instrument’, while noting that ‘other initiatives to ensure the safe and responsible military use of AI and autonomy may also be useful, but most not contravene the objectives of the GGE LAWS.’

France

- France states in its submission to the Secretary-General that the ‘best way’ to address ‘the challenges and concerns posed by LAWS’ is to continue the discussions within the CCW, and to structure an instrument in the form of the two-tier approach, ‘in order to ensure that the development and use of lethal autonomous weapons systems will comply with International Humanitarian Law (IHL) while preserving sufficient human control as well as human responsibility and accountability.’
- France proposes the creation of a consultative committee of technical experts within the CCW, the purpose of which would be ‘to periodically inform CCW High Contracting Parties on new developments in technologies relevant for the discussion on emerging technologies in the area of LAWS’.
- France says that human control ‘must be retained in order to ensure that lethal autonomous weapons systems are used in compliance with applicable international law, in particular international humanitarian law’.
- France argues that ‘systems operating completely outside human control and a responsible chain of command (“fully autonomous lethal weapons systems”) would run contrary to the key principle of retaining human control - and therefore must be prohibited’, while control over ‘partially autonomous lethal weapons systems’ could be maintained ‘by the implementation of appropriate policies and measures at different stages.’

Germany

- Germany supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Germany’s submission to the UN Secretary General notes that the questions and challenges around autonomous weapons ‘are among today’s most pressing and complex issues’ in the area of arms control, and commends regional and international efforts to ‘foster debate on LAWS’, as such initiatives ‘intensify the debate and contribute to the development of norms for responsible behaviour.’
- Germany notes that its position is built upon the eleven Guiding Principles consented by the GGE in 2019.
- Germany states that ‘In assessing the admissibility of weapons systems that contain autonomous functions, maintaining a framework of human control is in Germany’s view the key requirement. A responsible chain of command and human control must be at the centre of the development and use of any weapons system, including in weapons systems with autonomous functions.’
- As such, Germany underlines that ‘the decision over life and death must be made by humans.’
- Germany’s submission sets out a ‘framework of human control’, which ‘encompasses not only the human being, but also other measures and requirements that prepare and support decision-making (i.e., control in design and

control in use.’

- Germany supports a two-tier approach of prohibitions and regulations in the form of an additional protocol to the CCW
- Germany views the continuation of the work of the CCW GGE as ‘important in order to generate an effective outcome.’
- Like France, Germany proposes the establishment of a working group of technical experts ‘to include deeper knowledge of technological developments.’
- Germany’s submission emphasises that ‘there can be no further delay for the GGE to live up to its mandate in order to deliver tangible results’, and that in its view, the Secretary-General’s report ‘will help enormously to identify even more areas of convergence and reinvigorate the important debate in the framework of the CCW.’

Greece

- Greece has not yet declared support for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument.
- With regard to risks and concerns, Greece acknowledges the significant concerns posed by the incorporation of AI and machine learning into weapon systems, arguing that these technologies raise political, legal, moral, and ethical issues, potentially lowering the threshold for engaging in armed conflicts.’
- Greece has doubts about whether fully autonomous weapon systems comply with IHL, especially regarding principles such as ‘target distinction, proportionality, and precautions in dynamic battlefield environments.’ Greece supports stringent adherence to these principles.
- Greece states that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is the appropriate forum for discussions on regulating and possibly prohibiting lethal autonomous weapons. The submission emphasises that the CCW ‘balances humanitarian concerns with military necessity.’
- Greece asserts that ‘military applications of AI must fully comply with international law, particularly IHL and International Human Rights Law.’
- Greece has expressed its commitment to actively participate in future discussions contributing to the development of international instruments ensuring that autonomous weapons systems respect international humanitarian law.

Group of States who drafted draft Protocol VI

- The G16 group of High Contracting Parties (HCPs) to the CCW emphasises the need to develop legally binding rules on autonomous weapons systems. They assert that autonomous weapons systems pose significant ethical, legal, humanitarian, and security challenges that require international regulation.
- Draft Protocol VI was initially put forward by the G13 group and supported by additional delegations.

- Draft Protocol VI aims to prohibit and regulate autonomous weapons that operate without meaningful human control. It includes provisions on characterizations, prohibitions, regulations, risk mitigation, compliance, and consultations among HCPs.
- The document outlines international efforts within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) to address autonomous weapons. It highlights proposals for Draft Protocol VI, which aims to regulate autonomous weapons by prohibiting systems without meaningful human control and establishing clear rules for human oversight and accountability.
- The Group draws attention to the need for new international legal frameworks to manage associated risks. They also call for inclusive negotiations toward a binding treaty. The Group underscores the importance of maintaining ‘human judgement and responsibility in decisions involving the use of force, ensuring compliance with international law and ethical standards.’

Guatemala

- Guatemala supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Guatemala’s submission to the Secretary-General states that Guatemala considers ‘that creating a system that has lethal capacity and that is not controlled by a human being is a violation of the right to life and international humanitarian law, as well as the Geneva Conventions, since it would make it impossible to assign of responsibilities because an abstract entity, such as a weapon handled by autonomous means (or artificial intelligence), cannot be subject to criminal liability.’

Honduras

- Honduras supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Honduras’ submission to the Secretary-General notes that ‘by not having regulations that exercise control over this type of autonomous weaponry, there is a risk of losing the control of the discriminated use of force by Artificial Intelligence, putting society in general at risk by violating its rights.’
- Honduras argues in its submission that ‘we must take into account that in order to be able to have control of something, it must comply with certain rules which limit their inappropriate use, this must be regulated and artificial intelligence cannot be the exception’, and that ‘human control must always prevail’.
- Honduras states that ‘regulation to sustain comprehensive control of new technologies and autonomous weapons systems is a matter of utmost importance and these require urgent and determined political leadership, a foresight in accordance with the importance of this development as humanity finds itself at a crossroads when decisions about life and death are delegated to machines.’

- Honduras' submission further highlights risks to global peace and security, vulnerabilities of autonomous weapons to system failures, proliferation of autonomous weapons by non-state armed groups, and the risks posed to autonomous weapons by hacking.

Ibero-American countries

- The Ibero-American countries submitted the 'special communication on the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapons', issued on 25 March 2023, to the Secretary-General.
- The special communication recognises the need to 'promote the negotiation of a legally binding international instrument, with prohibitions and regulations regarding autonomy in weapons systems, in order to ensure compliance with International Law', with the Ibero-American states committing to 'actively participate in order to advance common positions to promote such negotiations'.
- The special communication further recognises that 'as new weapons technologies continue to be developed and used in armed conflict, new prohibitions and regulations are needed', and that 'it is essential to maintain meaningful human control to avoid further dehumanization of war, as well as to ensure individual accountability and responsibility of the State, non-State armed groups, and the human rights of victims.'

India

- India does not support the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- India stresses the importance of 'uniform definitions and interpretations' regarding autonomous weapons, while also promoting 'transparency, confidence-building measures', and respecting national capacities in addressing associated risks.
- India states that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is the appropriate forum to discuss issues relating to autonomous weapons, and argues that 'deliberations on emerging technologies in the area of LAWS should not lead to a fragmentation of the normative sphere', and that 'efforts to create ground for generating parallel mandates or parallel sets of rules must be avoided.' and has articulated that inclusive dialogue is required to find common solutions.

Ireland

- Ireland supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Ireland's submission to the Secretary-General underlines the urgency of addressing the issue, and identifies concerns around civilian protection, legal accountability, security implications, technological vulnerabilities, and ethical

considerations such as dignity and discrimination.

- Ireland's submission underscores the applicability of international law including humanitarian, human rights, and criminal law. Ireland insists that autonomous weapons must comply fully with these legal frameworks, and stresses the 'necessity for human judgement in assessing compliance due to cognitive limitations and algorithmic biases'.
- Ireland argues for a functional characterisation of autonomous weapons, underscoring that 'autonomy is a feature of a weapon's functionality, rather than a specific weapon type. Governance frameworks should therefore focus on the prohibition or regulation of the integration of autonomy into weapons systems, rather than seeking to establish a fixed definition based on specific technical characteristics.'
- Ireland continues to echo its strong commitment to 'multilateralism and inclusive dialogue involving stakeholders such as the ICRC, civil society, academia, industry, and the UN General Assembly.' The submission emphasises the urgency of addressing AWS-related risks and the need for a comprehensive international framework.

Israel

- Israel does not support the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Israel's submission on autonomous weapons 'recognizes the potential advantages and challenges posed by autonomous weapons systems, arguing that such systems 'may serve both military necessity and humanitarian considerations and can be used to uphold compliance with IHL.'
- Israel's submission states that 'the CCW remains the most suitable forum for addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by emerging technologies in the area of LAWS.'
- Israel has commented on contextual considerations and stresses the need to consider the 'operational context and human involvement' in discussions about LAWS while also cautioning against oversimplifying discussions based solely on technological capabilities.
- On primary vs. secondary rules, Israel draws a distinction between primary IHL rules (such as prohibitions on specific weapons) and secondary legal or practical aspects like control and responsibility.
- On the evolution of technology, Israel acknowledges the evolving nature of technology and calls for a cautious and responsible approach to discussing LAWS 'over time.'

Italy

- Italy has not yet declared its position on the negotiation of a legally binding

instrument.

- Italy's submission on autonomous weapons emphasises its commitment to addressing these issues within the framework of the CCW, stating that it is 'by far the most suitable forum'.
- The submission underscores the importance of human control throughout the lifecycle of autonomous weapons, advocating for human judgement and accountability under IHL.
- Italy also proposes 'operational measures' and calls for a 'cooperative mechanism' among CCW parties to enhance transparency and compliance.

Japan

- Japan does not currently support the negotiation of a legally binding instrument.
- Japan's submission emphasises its commitment to maintaining 'a free and open international order' based on the rule of law. Japan views autonomous weapons as a critical issue in arms control and disarmament, stressing the need for a normative and operational framework that aligns with international humanitarian law (IHL).
- Japan supports the 'human-centric' principle, asserting that 'responsibility cannot be transferred to machines' and places great emphasis on maintaining human control throughout the lifecycle of LAWS.
- The submission explicitly warns against hindering 'civilian technological innovation' by overly broad definitions and stresses the 'evolving nature of autonomy in weapon systems'.
- Japan has expressed the importance of 'legal reviews and risk assessment measures' throughout the development and deployment of LAWS.
- Japan makes it clear that it separates discussions on autonomous weapons from those on responsible military AI use more broadly, but advocates for complementary efforts to maximise benefits and minimise risks.

Kiribati

- Kiribati supports the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems and states that a treaty 'should address a series of prohibitions that include autonomous weapons, which have artificial intelligence and hinder human users from understanding and predicting the systems' behaviours.'
- Kiribati fully endorses the Chair's Summary of Austria's Humanity at the Crossroads conference, and agrees with the ICRC that an autonomous weapons system is 'a weapon system that is designed to select and engage one or more targets without the need for human intervention after activation.' Kiribati has further expressed support for the ICRC's perspectives on the extent and types of

prohibitions and restrictions to be included in a legally binding treaty.

Latin American and Caribbean Conference

- The Communiqué of the Latin American and the Caribbean conference of social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapons (aka the Belen Communiqué), submitted to the Secretary-General, underlines that it is ‘paramount to maintain meaningful human control to prevent further dehumanization of warfare, as well as to ensure individual accountability and state responsibility.’
- The Communiqué recognises the need for collaboration ‘to promote the urgent negotiation of an international legally binding instrument, with prohibitions and regulations with regard to autonomy in weapons systems in order to ensure compliance with International Law, including International Humanitarian Law, and ethical perspectives, as well as the prevention of the social and humanitarian impact that autonomy in weapons systems entail.’

Luxembourg

- Luxembourg supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Luxembourg’s submission advocates for a two-tier approach ‘to ensure that international law, especially IHL, will continue to apply fully to LAWS from the development to the use of these weapons systems, with the role of humans in the use of force ‘a key factor of the two-tier approach to ensure this compliance.’
- Luxembourg’s submission states that ‘considering that autonomous weapon systems may be used to lethal and non-lethal ends, and that the use of force does not need to have lethal consequences to be contrary to international humanitarian law (IHL), it is Luxembourg’s position to refer to the weapons systems in question as “Autonomous Weapons Systems” instead of “Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems”.
- Luxembourg argues that the concept of human control is ‘an imperative’ to ensure compliance with international law.

Malawi

- Malawi supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems, and calls for the start of negotiations of a legally binding instrument ‘as soon as possible’, stating that the UN General Assembly should ‘consider starting negotiation in 2024 parallel to continued dialogue in all appropriate multilateral fora to encourage mutual enforcement.’
- Malawi expresses deep concern over the ‘humanitarian, legal, security, technological, and ethical challenges posed by AWS.’
- Emphasising meaningful human control over the use of force, Malawi argues that

‘the human user must be able to make a legal and moral judgment’ and be capable of being held accountable for any violations of legal and ethical norms .

- Malawi’s submission stresses the need for the inclusion of perspectives on ‘human rights, ethics, bias’ and input from marginalised and affected communities in shaping this regulatory framework.
- Malawi pledges readiness to collaborate with all states to expedite the development of a legal instrument.

Mexico

- Mexico’s submission to the Secretary-General highlights Mexico’s position that it is ‘urgent that the international community act diligently to establish prohibitions and regulations on autonomous weapons systems, since they represent a risk to international peace and security and are incompatible with full observance of the norms of international law, in particular, international humanitarian law (IHL).’
- Mexico’s submission sets out a number of concerns regarding autonomous weapons, including that ‘from an ethical perspective, the risk of machines making decisions about people’s life or death is alarming’; ‘from a security perspective, SAAS pose risks of asymmetric wars, would lower the threshold for the use of force, increase the risk of unintentional conflicts, as well as conflict escalation, which could accelerate an arms race’; and ‘From a humanitarian perspective, there is a latent risk of developing and using SAAS that are not subject to significant human control and, therefore, that cannot fully comply with the norms and principles of IHL.’
- Mexico argues that ‘the lack of definition does not constitute an essential requirement to advance regulation’, and that the characteristic of “lethality” is not appropriate to describe autonomous weapons, ‘since it is not a term used or justified under international law.’
- Mexico’s submission underscores Mexico’s support for a legally binding instrument which establishes prohibitions and regulations, noting that ‘International treaties provide a sense of commitment and certainty that other types of instruments do not offer; They are the basis of effective multilateralism; They are the only way to ensure the true equal participation of all States; Likewise, they help avoid regulatory fragmentation through national measures.’

Moldova

- Moldova supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument of autonomous weapon systems and has said that ‘it is necessary to define and regulate internationally and nationally the circumstances of partial or total prohibition of the use of LAWS.’ It has further called for the ‘establishment of international and national mechanisms for monitoring, control and legal accountability’ of AWS.
- Citing benefits which include optimised ‘situational awareness, rapid decision-making and the ability to lead forces in multiple theatres of operations’, Moldova

has said in its submission to the UN Secretary General that states will increasingly develop and deploy weapon systems with advanced autonomous features.

- Moldova has raised concern over ‘algorithmic error’ which could be aggravated by large scale deployment of autonomous weapon systems and can make human error seem like ‘approximation errors by comparison.’
- On human involvement, Moldova notes that ‘involvement of the individual in the decision-making process for the application of lethal force’ is a tenet founded in international humanitarian law governing armed conflicts and is implicit in the ‘principles of distinction, proportionality and military necessity.’ It further says that it is crucial ‘not to transfer to a machine or automated process the authority or capacity to use lethal force, so that in each individual case a human being should define this as legitimate, moral and legal.’

Netherlands

- The Netherlands supports the negotiation of legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems through a new protocol to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), to prohibit systems that cannot be ‘designed, developed and used in accordance with international law.’ In its submission to the UN Secretary General, Netherland has said ‘that a certain level of human judgement and control must be retained throughout different stages of the weapons system’s life-cycle to ensure compliance.’
- The Netherlands characterises autonomous weapon systems as systems that are ‘able to, after being activated, select and apply force against a target without further human intervention.’ The submission makes two further specifications in this characterisation:
 - Weapon systems that, upon activation, require human oversight and control, but this control is ‘nominal’, would also be characterised as autonomous weapon systems.
 - Autonomous weapon systems that have the ‘ability to change the task, assignment or goal, including applicable rules of engagement, that were delegated to the system, without human approval’ could potentially be prohibited as they are ‘inherently unpredictable and would operate outside of a responsible chain of command.’
- The Netherlands suggests possible prohibitions that could be part of a legally binding instrument which include application of force on civilians or civilian objects, systems that are indiscriminate, as well as systems that can be deemed unpredictable and uncontrollable.
- The submission also mentions possible limitations on types of targets as well as temporal and spatial limitations on deployment of autonomous weapon systems.
- It also notes the possibility of limitations through standards of testing, evaluation, validation and verification; intuitive human machine interaction; situational awareness and training of personnel.

New Zealand

- New Zealand supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems. New Zealand's submission to the UN Secretary General underlines the need for 'comprehensive and specific prohibition on AWS that cannot comply with IHL' and 'appropriate regulation of other AWS to ensure sufficient human control or oversight throughout the lifecycle of the weapon system.'
- While commending the efforts for same in the CCW, New Zealand also 'welcomes other international and regional events/initiatives that have emerged.'
- New Zealand does not use the qualifier 'lethal' for autonomous weapon systems, as the term is not 'formally used in international humanitarian law' and says that concerns should centre on the use of force, rather than lethality.
- New Zealand raises concern over autonomous weapon systems possibly lowering the threshold for war, and risks posed by proliferation to non state actors.
- New Zealand calls for compliance of autonomous weapon systems with principles of distinction, proportionality, and feasible precaution. Further, the submission raises concerns over possible violation of International Human Rights Law due to 'bias in datasets underpinning algorithms.'
- New Zealand calls 'human contextual judgement' in autonomous weapon systems critical in ensuring compliance with IHL and in ensuring human legal accountability.

Norway

- Norway supports the negotiation of new legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems through a protocol under the CCW aimed at 'clarifying how existing international law applies to autonomous weapons systems.'
- In its submission to the UN Secretary General, Norway distinguishes between two characterisations of autonomous weapon systems. The first category is systems that operate 'completely outside human control and a responsible chain of command.' The second category is systems that feature autonomy in critical functions such as 'identification, classification, interception and engagement.'
- Norway says that the objective of this distinction is to subject autonomous weapon systems to meaningful human control. It opines that human control over AWS should not only be 'meaningful', but also 'relevant', which suggests that human input must be substantive and sufficient to ensure compliance with international law.
- The submission further elaborates on how human control can be actioned for it to be 'meaningful' and 'relevant'. It proposes sufficient understanding on part of the human operator, predictability, explainability, reliability and human decision making on the use of force as crucial for human control.

Pakistan

- Pakistan supports the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems to ‘elaborate and clarify’ how existing International Humanitarian Law obligations apply to them. It suggests that a legally binding instrument is needed to ‘address the significant risks (of autonomous weapon systems) in a comprehensive and integrated manner.’
- The submission supports the definition that ‘Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems’ are those systems which ‘are designed to select and apply force to target(s) without human intervention after activation.’ Elaborating on the word ‘Lethal’, Pakistan says that ‘regardless of the actual consequences of its use, whether the applied force results in lethal effects or not’ should be regulated under the proposed legal instrument.
- Pakistan also proposes prohibitions and regulations in line with the two tier approach, where unpredictable and unexplainable weapon systems that can take decisions on the use of force without human control should be prohibited.
- Further, Pakistan proposes regulation of autonomous weapon systems through limitations on duration, geographical scope, scale of the operation and number of engagements.

Peru

- Peru’s submission to the Secretary-General’s reports states that it is Peru’s position ‘that the best way to address the problems presented by AWS is through the adoption of a legally binding instrument’, which should ‘establish a two-tier’ approach for the prohibition and regulation of autonomous weapon systems.
- Peru’s submission draws the Secretary-General’s attention to Draft Protocol VI on autonomous weapon systems, submitted by Peru and 13 other states to the GGE on LAWS in 2023, which stipulates that systems which operate without meaningful human control in the critical functions of ‘selection, targeting or intervention in the use of force’ should be prohibited, as well as autonomous systems that ‘cannot be predicted, explained, anticipated, understood, or tracked’.
- Peru’s submission highlights that Peru recognizes ‘the relevance of holding discussions around prohibiting such weapons systems from targeting human beings... and ensuring “meaningful human control” throughout the “life cycle” of the aforementioned weapon system. Peru also considers it necessary to prohibit weapons systems whose effects on combatants and civilians cannot be predicted.
- Peru believes that the use of the adjective ‘lethal’ when describing autonomous weapons systems ‘unduly restricts the scope of the concept and that it is convenient to refer rather to all systems of autonomous weapons, regardless of their lethality.’
- Peru’s submission reiterates ‘the urgency of achieving the establishment of binding standards on AWS, given that we recognize the serious risks and challenges that these weapons pose in terms of compliance with international

law, protection of human dignity, defense of humanitarian considerations , non-proliferation and the maintenance of international peace and security, which could lead to an arms race and lower the thresholds for the use of force.’

Philippines

- The Philippines supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument that is ‘robust and fool proof’, to address the threats of autonomous weapon systems.
- The Philippines believes that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is ‘the appropriate forum’ for discussions on autonomous weapons, and that the threats posed by these weapons can be addressed through an additional protocol to the convention.
- In its submission to the UN Secretary General, Philippines characterises autonomous weapon systems as those which ‘incorporate autonomy into the critical functions of selecting, targeting, engaging and applying force to targets.’ The submission further suggests prohibition of autonomous weapon systems which cannot operate with meaningful human control, and which cannot comply with the IHL principles of distinction, proportionality etc.
- The submission recommends regulations on autonomous weapon systems to ensure that meaningful human control is retained throughout the weapon system’s life cycle, and that the data used to train autonomous weapon systems does not perpetuate social bias.

Republic of Korea

- The Republic of Korea does not support the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons.
- The Republic of Korea, in its submission to the UN Secretary General, states that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS should be the ‘central and unique forum to address various issues pertaining to LAWS.’
- The Republic of Korea affirms that autonomous weapons which are incapable of being used in compliance with International Humanitarian Law should be prohibited. However, the submission further states that ‘the degree of human involvement is not necessarily a requirement to ensuring compliance with IHL’, and that ‘It would rather be case specific and the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precautions in attack are central when assessing compliance with IHL.’

Russian Federation

- The Russian Federation does not support the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems and has said in its submission to the UN Secretary General that it ‘does not see any convincing reasons requiring

immediate restrictions and bans against lethal autonomous weapons systems, modernization or adaptation of IHL to such weapons systems.’ It has also called discussions regarding such restrictions and prohibitions to be ‘premature.’

- The submission calls for an universal definition of autonomous weapon systems, and stresses that existing international law including IHL fully applies to these weapon systems.
- The Russian Federation says that use of phrases such as ‘meaningful human control’ or ‘form and degree of human involvement’ have no relation to international law, and politicise issues. Instead the submission says control can be achieved through ensuring the ability to change the mode of operation of the autonomous weapon system, including ‘partial or complete deactivation.’
- It suggests possible measures for retaining control over autonomous weapon systems including geographic and temporal limitations, limitations on type of targets, limitations on scale of use etc.

Serbia

- Serbia has not yet declared its position on the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- In its submission to the UN Secretary General, Serbia states that autonomous weapon systems ‘should be prohibited, or their production restricted and their use monitored.’ It has raised concerns that the absence of ‘human morals and ethics’ in the decision making process of these weapon systems, will lead to ‘excessive use of lethal force and unnecessary devastation.’
- It further says that the use of autonomous weapon systems raises concerns on the attribution of responsibility and accountability for use of force, and causes confusion regarding the chain of command.

Sierra Leone

- Sierra Leone’s submission notes that its position is encapsulated in the Freetown Communiqué from the April 2024 conference of ECOWAS states.
- Sierra Leone supports the Secretary-General’s call for the ‘urgent negotiation of a legally binding instrument to regulate AWS in line with international laws, including humanitarian and human rights laws, as well as fundamental ethical principles governing warfare.’
- Sierra Leone’s submission pledges to advance the ECOWAS strategy, and believes that the ECOWAS communiqué sets ‘a strategic agenda for future negotiations that would lead to negotiations on a legally binding instrument on AWS’.

Singapore

- Singapore’s submission supports a two-tier approach on autonomous weapons,

stating that autonomous weapon systems that cannot be used in compliance with IHL should be prohibited, and supporting ‘the concept of limits to ensure that LAWS can be used in accordance with IHL.’

- Singapore’s submission presents Singapore’s national principles on responsible military AI. These principles include the responsible, reliable, robust and safe incorporation of AI in the military domain, and notes the importance of regional initiatives on to ensure ‘inclusive and context-specific discussions on LAWS.’

Spain

- Spain supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Spain’s submission notes that Spain is in favour of a two-tier approach based on prohibitions and regulations, and notes that, in July 2023, the Spanish Ministry of Defence approved the “Strategy for the development, implementation and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Ministry of Defence”, which stipulates that ‘AI applications will be developed and used in accordance with the applicable national and international law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law’, and that ‘any development of AI, as well as its use, must allow clear human supervision in order to ensure proper accountability and the attribution of responsibilities.’

Sri Lanka

- Sri Lanka supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument.
- Sri Lanka states in its submission that it ‘remains fully convinced that adoption of a legally binding treaty will be the most effective approach to address the serious challenges posed by AWS.’
- Sri Lanka supports a standard of meaningful human control, highlighting that ‘it is highly questionable whether machine algorithms in complex battlefield environments could ensure application of carefully calculated decisions on distinction, proportionality, and precautions in attack - which are fundamental obligations under IHL.’
- Sri Lanka considers meaningful human control as an inherent requirement in this regard. Predictability, reliability and explainability should be considered as some of the key elements of meaningful human control in weapon systems.’
- Sri Lanka describes the creation, by some states, of non-binding and voluntary measures such as codes of conduct and political declarations, as ‘progressive developments’, but notes that ‘such measures would only be of complementary value strengthening the normative framework on the issue given their insufficiency to address serious legal, ethical and security challenges involved.’ Sri Lanka further highlights that Article 36 legal reviews would not be adequate ‘in the absence of an internationally agreed binding regulation.’

State of Palestine

- The State of Palestine supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapon systems. Additionally, its submission states that a non-legally binding instrument ‘would risk promoting the widespread development and use of AWS, in the absence of clear legal and ethical boundaries of acceptability.’
- The submission states that while the State of Palestine supports the definition of AWS as systems that ‘upon activation by a human user(s), use the processing of sensor data to select and engage a target(s) with force without human intervention’, the concept of ‘human intervention’ needs to be further elaborated. To aid this elaboration, the State of Palestine proposes the phrase ‘nominal human input’ where the human input ‘does not materially affect the autonomous process.’
- In its submission to the UN Secretary General, the State of Palestine proposes prohibitions on autonomous weapon systems that cannot be used with meaningful human control, as well as those that can be used to target human beings.
- The submission notes that the process of reducing human beings to data points contributes to digital dehumanisation, and that delegating life and death decisions to machines is a challenge to humanity as ‘machines cannot respect human dignity or show compassion or seek alternatives.’ The submission also raises concern that ‘AWS that target humans would reinforce or exacerbate existing structures of inequality’ and fuel ‘surveillance, interception and data collection and would raise concerns around the right to privacy.’
- Further, the State of Palestine’s submission underscores that regulation should focus on ensuring ‘sufficient predictability, reliability, understandability and explainability, and traceability’ of AWS.

Sweden

- Sweden has not yet declared its position on the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- Sweden’s submission states that it supports the two-tier approach, which includes prohibiting AWS which cannot be used in compliance with IHL, and regulating those systems which feature autonomy but can be used in compliance with IHL. Sweden states that the form of regulation ‘needs further thought and elaboration in order for the definitions and possible regulations to enjoy a broad support by the international community.’
- Sweden says that the CCW offers an ‘appropriate framework for the issue of emerging technologies’ as it engages diverse stakeholders in the field. Additionally, Sweden says that creating parallel processes and instruments which are not supported by key stakeholders ‘would not promote effective regulation and would risk further dividing the Member States, as well as undermining IHL.’
- In its submission to the UN Secretary General, Sweden says that ‘preserving

meaningful human control over the use of force is a key objective’ and that the responsibilities for decisions to use force must remain with humans, as accountability cannot be transferred to machines.

Switzerland

- Switzerland supports the two-tier approach and calls for the negotiation of an ‘international instrument’ to prevent unpredictable and unreliable autonomous weapon systems that cannot be used in compliance with international humanitarian law. Weapons that can ‘in principle’ be used in compliance with IHL should be regulated, with a focus on ‘risk mitigation, including positive obligations to uphold human control and imposing limitations on weapon parameters and deployment contexts.’
- Switzerland’s submission states that human control and involvement are central to regulation and prohibitions of autonomous weapon systems, and calls for advancing this in the CCW framework as ‘no other multilateral forum seems to be better placed to deal with key aspects relevant to autonomous weapons systems.’

Trinidad and Tobago

- Trinidad and Tobago’s submission states that it ‘joins the growing consensus among states that call for negotiation of an international legally binding instrument that prohibits unpredictable or uncontrollable autonomous weapons systems, capable of using force without meaningful human control and prohibits those designed or employed to apply force against persons, while implementing regulations for other forms of autonomous weapons systems.’
- Trinidad and Tobago emphasises that such an instrument ‘should be negotiated through a process that is transparent, inclusive and open to all stakeholders.’
- Trinidad and Tobago supports a standard of meaningful human control.
- Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the Chair’s Summary Report of the Vienna Conference.

United Kingdom

- The United Kingdom does not support the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- The U.K.’s submission states that artificial intelligence is ‘fundamentally transforming many aspects of our societies and will change the threats we face and the ways we respond to them’, and acknowledges that its military adoption ‘poses challenges to established systems of military governance and assurance.’ However, the U.K. maintains that ‘there is no gap in the application of IHL in respect to autonomy in weapons systems.’
- The U.K.’s submission emphasises that ‘Across all use cases there must always be

- human involvement must result in meaningful human control sufficient to satisfy our policies, ethical principles and obligations under IHL.’
- The U.K. believes that ‘The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its GGE is the appropriate forum to consider this issue.’

United States

- The United States does not support the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.
- In its submission to the Secretary-General, the U.S. expresses its continued support for the GGE on LAWS as ‘the best opportunity to advance international efforts on LAWS’, and states that it is ‘strongly opposed to any efforts to create parallel initiatives that would prejudge or seek to undermine the centrality of the LAWS GGE in making progress on the issue.’
- The U.S. reiterates that it does not currently support the negotiation of a new legal instrument on autonomous weapons, as it does ‘not believe the time is right for such an endeavour.’
- The U.S. submission underlines that the United States does not use terms like ‘meaningful human control’ in its own policies, arguing that ‘a focus on “control” would obscure rather than clarify the genuine challenges in this area.’

ENDNOTES

1. International Committee of the Red Cross, Joint call by the United Nations Secretary-General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for States to establish new prohibitions and restrictions on Autonomous Weapon Systems, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/joint-call-un-and-icrc-establish-prohibitions-and-restrictions-autonomous-weapons-systems>, 05 October 2023.
2. See: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/78/resolutions.shtml>
3. See: Stop Killer Robots (2023), 164 states vote against the machine at the UN General Assembly, <https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/news/164-states-vote-against-the-machine/>, 01 November 2023.
4. Lebanon's reply to the Secretary-General was submitted late, and a translation is not yet available. As such, it has not been included in this document. Kazakhstan's reply to the Secretary-General, listed under Res 78/241 in the UNODA documents library, relates instead to Res 78/240. Please note also that this figure includes other late submissions, such as those by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, and that these submissions may not be included in the Secretary-General's final report.
5. See: Automated Decision Research state positions monitor: <https://automatedresearch.org/state-positions/>
6. See, for example: United Nations (2018), 'Machines with Power, Discretion to Take Human Life Politically Unacceptable, Morally Repugnant, Secretary-General Tells Lisbon 'Web Summit'', <https://press.un.org/en/2018/sgsm19332.doc.htm>, 05 November 2018; ICRC (2023), 'Joint call by the United Nations Secretary-General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for States to establish new prohibitions and restrictions on Autonomous Weapon Systems, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/joint-call-un-and-icrc-establish-prohibitions-and-restrictions-autonomous-weapons-systems>, 05 October 2023.