



# CAMPAIGN TO **STOP** KILLER ROBOTS



## Report on outreach on the UN report on 'lethal autonomous robotics'

31 July 2013

## About this report on activities

This report on activities describes outreach by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots in relation to the report on ‘lethal autonomous robotics’ by the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Professor Christof Heyns.

This report on activities reviews reactions to the UN report by states and others, including summary analysis of statements provided during the debate that followed the presentation of the report. It describes outreach undertaken by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots in the lead-up to the report’s presentation, including outreach at the UN in Geneva on 28 May. The statements given on 30 May are contained in Annex I. The campaign’s press release and a list of media coverage relating to the report can be found in Annex II. The report by the UN Special Rapporteur is available online at: <http://bit.ly/15SIX8W>

The government statements in this report were recorded verbatim from Human Rights Council online broadcast recorded by UN Web TV. They should be acknowledged as this (“as delivered”) if cited in further research. The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots has the original statements provided to the Human Rights Council.

For more information please see the campaign’s website [www.stopkillerrobots.org](http://www.stopkillerrobots.org) and:

- Social media record on Storify: <http://storify.com/BanKillerRobots/un-report>
- Photographs on Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/stopkillerrobots/sets/72157633769719703/>
- Short film on YouTube: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_47ZI7e6vo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_47ZI7e6vo)

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## Table of Contents

<b>I. Reactions to the UN report.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Campaign views on the report .....	4
Analysis of governments reactions .....	5
Other reactions .....	7
<b>II. Campaign outreach.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Annex I: Country Statements .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Algeria.....	10
Austria.....	11
Brazil.....	11
China.....	12
Cuba .....	13
Egypt.....	14
France.....	14
Germany.....	15
Indonesia.....	15
Iran .....	16
Mexico .....	16
Morocco .....	17
Pakistan.....	17
Russia.....	18
Sierra Leone .....	19
Sweden.....	20
Switzerland .....	21
United Kingdom.....	21
United States of America .....	22
European Union .....	23
Argentina on behalf of GRULAC.....	23
Organization of the Islamic Conference, delivered by Pakistan.....	24
United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.....	25
Campaign to Stop Killer Robots via WILPF .....	26
International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) .....	27
Europe-Third World Centre and Geneva International Centre for Justice .....	28
<b>Annex II. Media coverage .....</b>	<b>29</b>

## **I. Reactions to the UN report**

The report by the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Professor Christof Heyns is the first in-depth review of the issue to be conducted under UN auspices. Made public at the end of April and presented to the Human Rights Council on 30 May, the UN report considers the central question of “whether it is not inherently wrong to let autonomous machines decide who and when to kill.” The report finds that there is wide acceptance that caution and some form of control of this technology are needed, over and above the general standards already posed by international law.

### **Campaign views on the report**

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots has urged all countries to consider and elaborate their policy on fully autonomous weapons, particularly with respect to ethical, legal, policy, technical, and other concerns raised in the UN report. It has called on countries to welcome the UN report on lethal autonomous robotics and endorse its four recommendations that call on all states to:

1. Place a national moratorium on lethal autonomous robotics. (Recommendation 118)
2. Declare – unilaterally and through multilateral fora – a commitment to abide by International Humanitarian Law and international human rights law in all activities surrounding robotic weapons and put in place and implement rigorous processes to ensure compliance at all stages of development. (Recommendation 119)
3. Commit to being as transparent as possible about internal weapons review processes, including metrics used to test robotic systems. States should at a minimum provide the international community with transparency regarding the processes they follow (if not the substantive outcomes) and commit to making the reviews as robust as possible. (Recommendation 120)
4. Participate in international debate and trans-governmental dialogue on the issue of lethal autonomous robotics and be prepared to exchange best practices with other States, and collaborate with the High Level Panel on lethal autonomous robotics. (Recommendation 121)

The report’s presentation by Professor Heyns to the Human Rights Council in Geneva on 30 May was highly anticipated as it was followed by a debate where—for the first time-ever in a multilateral forum—governments would provide their views on the question of what to do about fully autonomous weapons or ‘killer robots.’ Until this point the Human Rights Council had considered remote-controlled aerial vehicles or ‘drones,’ but neither the council nor any other

UN body had reviewed the implications emerging technology trending toward every-greater autonomy in warfare.<sup>1</sup>

## **Analysis of governments reactions**

During the “interactive dialogue” two dozen states spoke in the Human Rights Council for up to 3-minutes each with respect to the UN report’s findings on fully autonomous weapons.<sup>2</sup> (See Annex I containing statements as delivered) Three statements made on behalf of regional bodies European Union (comprised of 27 states), Organization of the Islamic Conference (56 states), and GRULAC (the Latin American and Caribbean Group of 33 states). Fifteen other states spoke in the course of the debate, but did not provide their views on the report’s findings or recommendations on lethal autonomous robotics.<sup>3</sup>

Given that this was the first-ever deliberation on this issue it was significant for two dozen states and the regional organizations to provide their views. All five permanent members of the UN Security Council spoke on this topic during the debate as did humanitarian disarmament leaders (Austria, Germany, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Switzerland) and leading states from the Non-Aligned Movement (Brazil, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Morocco, and Pakistan).<sup>4</sup>

None of the states that spoke on lethal autonomous robotics questioned why the issue was being discussed. States described the UN report as “interesting and timely” and an “an eye-opener.” Many acknowledged the challenges posed by these weapons, with several expressing specific concerns and citing findings from the report. Brazil highlighted several of the report’s findings and Brazil, including the prospect of acquisition of such weaponry by non-state actors.

Pakistan expressed its support for a ban on fully autonomous weapons, while Sierra Leone endorsed the report’s call for a moratorium. Some states asked if the call for a moratorium went far enough. The United Kingdom was the only state to openly declare opposition to the call for a ban on fully autonomous weapons.

Several states welcomed the recommendation for a high level panel to undertake “a deeper discussion” on the implications of lethal autonomous robotics on human rights law and on international humanitarian law. Several emphasized the need to consider broader and moral ethical concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> The UN report followed a 2010 report prepared by the previous UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Prof. Philip Alston, that stated: “Urgent consideration needs to be given to the legal, ethical and moral implications of the development and use of robotic technologies, especially but not limited to uses for warfare.”

<sup>2</sup> The states spoke in the following order: Pakistan, European Union, Morocco, Austria, Pakistan, Mexico, Argentina, Germany, USA, Brazil, Russia, Indonesia, Switzerland, Sierra Leone, Cuba, Sweden, Iraq, China, UK, Iran, Algeria, France, Egypt, and Uganda, UNODA.

<sup>3</sup> Armenia, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Cote d’Ivoire, Estonia, Georgia, India, Montenegro, Nigeria, Norway, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Turkey, and Uganda.

<sup>4</sup> The five permanent members of the UN Security Council are China, France, Russia, UK, and US.

No state opposed discussing the issue further. Brazil and France suggested the Convention on Conventional Weapons as an appropriate venue for discussing the topic further.

Sweden explained that it is traditionally responsible for the resolution on the work of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. It said the resolution would be put forward in 2014 and indicated that the resolution would include operative paragraphs on the recommendations contained in the report.

Some of the questions raised by states during the debate could guide subsequent work on this issue:

- Would you consider ethical guidelines on lethal autonomous robots as a useful tool in order to ensure that the use of such weapons complies with international human rights law? (Austria)
- How can the principle of democracy, in particular democratic control of armed forces, contribute to the potential problems posed by the use of lethal autonomous robotics? (Indonesia)
- What implications might there be for human rights doctrine and international humanitarian law when it comes to delegating a process of decision making from the human being to a machine? (Russia)
- What prospects of the use of lethal autonomous robotics are there when it comes to for non-combat processes? (Russia)
- What form could the international debate take and the international dialogue that is recommended by the special rapporteur? (Switzerland)
- What measures should states take to ensure that compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law is fully taken into account when it comes to the development and use of weapons systems such as armed drones or lethal autonomous robotics? (Switzerland)
- Who is to blame, when a breach of these laws occurs through the use of these robots? (Sierra Leone)
- These robots can be deployed outside conflict zones to hit targeted individuals, who are considered to be terrorists, but who have not been tried through due processes. What are the implications of this under international humanitarian law? Could this be considered as “extrajudicial execution”? (Sierra Leone)
- As with all other technology, these robots can fall into the wrong hands and be used indiscriminately. How does the international community guard against that to safeguard the right to life for the victims? (Sierra Leone)

Finally, there were a few notable changes between the original written statements and the statements as delivered and recorded on video. For example, the original statement by Austria mentions a “cross-regional statement” on this issue, but this was not included in the delivered

remarks. In its delivered remarks Pakistan dropped language from its original statement referring to developing countries “who may not have access to this technology.” Cuba’s original statement contains no reference to the moratorium, but in its delivered remarks Cuba supported the recommendation.

## **Other reactions**

The United Nations disarmament chief Angela Kane provided a statement that for the first time publicly outlined UN views on lethal autonomous robotics. She noted that “[t]he emergence of autonomous weapons calls into question the adequacy of measures to implement the rules of armed conflict that apply to the use of all weapon systems. The purpose of these rules is clear. The major imperative is to protect civilians from unacceptable harm.”

In its statement to the Human Rights Council—its first-ever statement in a multilateral fora—the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots welcomed the UN report and urged all to states endorse and implement its recommendations, including the call for an immediate moratorium on robotics weapons systems that, once activated, can select and engage targets without further intervention by a human. The campaign described this as “a first step towards a comprehensive international ban on these fully autonomous weapons.”

Other NGOs also spoke in support of the report’s findings on lethal autonomous robotics. The International Association of Democratic Lawyers said that the report’s recommendation of a moratorium was “not a sufficient solution” and urged that the development, production, and use of lethal autonomous robotics “be outright banned under any circumstances.” The Europe-Third World Centre and Geneva International Centre for Justice noted the most legal, moral and other codes require that when the decision to take a life is at stake it should be exercised by humans and asked “what if humans making these decisions do so under immoral, inhumane, unethical, and illegal means?”

## **II. Campaign outreach**

Members of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots were consulted by Professor Heyns in the course of the preparation of his report and provided input on several occasions. Prior to its release campaign members drew attention to the report as a key moment for the emerging movement concerned with these weapons.<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Watch provided a briefing in Geneva on 19 April attended by diplomats from 13 countries.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Campaign to Stop Killer Robots press release, “Urgent Action Needed to Ban Fully Autonomous Weapons,” 23 April 2013. [http://www.stopkillerrobots.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/KRC\\_LaunchStatement\\_23Apr2013.pdf](http://www.stopkillerrobots.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/KRC_LaunchStatement_23Apr2013.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Despite short notice, more than 20 Human Rights Council and/or disarmament diplomats participated in the briefing from 13 countries: Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Germany, India, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden, Switzerland, and Thailand. Apologies were received from Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Senegal, UK, and US.

The UN report was uploaded to the Human Rights Council website on 26 April, days after the launch of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots in London, an event that attracted considerable media interest. Within 24 hours the campaign had reviewed its findings and recommendations and issued a web post welcoming the report. The campaign later prepared a 3-page Synopsis of the report, highlighting its major findings and recommendations. News of the report and pending UN debate was picked up by first by bloggers and then by media, with significant pick-up following an *Associated Press* story on 2 May.<sup>7</sup> (See Annex II of media coverage)

On 30 April, the campaign issued its first “Action Alert” inviting its members to adapt a sample letter to send on behalf of their organization to their foreign minister to secure their government’s support.<sup>8</sup> The letter urged the country concerned to consider and publicly elaborate on its policy on fully autonomous weapons, particularly with respect to the concerns raised in the UN report, and called on the country to welcome the report and endorse its recommendations, including by placing a national moratorium on lethal autonomous robotics. Several governments responded, including Germany and the UK.<sup>9</sup>

In advance of the report’s presentation, the campaign identified three actions that governments could take to signal their interest and support on this issue: 1. Make a statement in the ‘interactive dialogue’ when the report was presented; 2. Attend the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots side event, and 3. Actively work to get the UN report recommendations reflected in the Council resolution on extrajudicial killings. Campaigners pressed governments to take strong action via the letters as well as in meetings, and media outreach. A seminar held by SWP in Berlin on 22 May provided an opportunity for in-depth discussion of Germany’s reaction to the report. A UNIDIR briefing on 23 May 2013 also attracted significant interest from diplomats and media.

On Tuesday, 28 May representatives from the campaign’s Steering Committee undertook outreach on the report at the UN’s Palais des Nations in Geneva. In the morning campaign representatives from Human Rights Watch, Article 36, ICRAC, and Mines Action Canada, met with staff from the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to discuss the issue and possible UN actions.

The UN Association of UN Correspondents/Association des Correspondents Auprès des Nations Unies (ACANU) hosted a briefing for its members by representatives of the Campaign to Stop

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<sup>7</sup> Blog entries included: “United Nations the next stop for killer robots,” Ministry for Disarmament blog, 28 April 2013. <http://www.4disarmament.org/2013/04/28/united-nations-the-next-stop-for-killer-robots/>; and Nidhi Subbaraman, “Activists, UN put 'killer robots' in the crosshairs,” *NBC News*, 29 April 2013. <http://www.nbcnews.com/technology/activists-un-put-killer-robots-crosshairs-6C9633925>

<sup>8</sup> Campaigners around the world sent letters, including in Austria, Canada, Colombia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States. Amnesty International issued its first action alert: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ACT30/038/2013/en>

<sup>9</sup> Include link



Killer Robots in its library at the UN Palais des Nations. Steve Goose of Human Rights Watch and Peter Asaro of the International Committee for Robot Arms Control presented the coalition's views on the UN report and discussed expectations for action by governments and others. The 45-minute briefing was attended by approximately 20 journalists. The campaign issued a press release and its synopsis of the UN report. The campaign coordinator published an op ed immediately after the debate.<sup>10</sup> (See Annex II of media coverage)

In the afternoon of 28 May, the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots held an hour-long side event briefing that was chaired by Beatrice Fihn of WILPF and featured campaign spokespersons Goose and Asaro. Approximately 60 people attended the side event, including representatives from 26 states and the European Union as well as civil society representatives.<sup>11</sup> Throughout the week of the Human Rights Council debate, campaigners held meetings with diplomats from many countries, including Austria, Canada, China, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, UK, and the US.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots will continue to follow-up with states, UN agencies, and others in 2013 and into 2014 when the Human Rights Council resolution is prepared to operationalize the UN report's recommendations.

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<sup>10</sup> Mary Wareham, "Preventing 'killer robots' deciding when to kill on the battlefield," 30 May 2013. <http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/3526/prevent-killer-robots-deciding-when-to-kill-on-battlefield>

<sup>11</sup> The following states attended the side event on 28 May: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, US, and Zimbabwe.

## Annex I: Country Statements

The following is a transcript of statements made on ‘lethal autonomous robotics’ or fully autonomous weapons in an interactive debate following the presentation of the report by the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Professor Christof Heyns during the 23rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on 30 May 2013.

They were recorded verbatim from Human Rights Council’s website videos recorded by UN Web TV with English translation provided by the UN.

The videos of all the statements, both with and without official UN translation, are available online in two sections:

- 9th meeting (OIC/Pakistan, European Union, Morocco, Austria, Pakistan, Mexico, GRULAC/Argentina, Germany, USA, Brazil, Russia, Indonesia, Switzerland, Sierra Leone, Cuba, Sweden, Iraq): <http://bit.ly/11Q9D2K>
- 10<sup>th</sup> meeting (China, UK, Iran, Algeria, France, Egypt, Uganda, UNODA): <http://bit.ly/11pXCED>

Some states gave longer statements and only the statement’s section on lethal autonomous robotics is extracted below. For clarity the transcript spells out the acronyms “IHL” (international humanitarian law) and “LARs” (lethal autonomous robotics).

If cited in further research the statements should be described as “as delivered” to indicate they may include differences from the original statements provided to the Human Rights Council. For example:

Statement of France (as delivered), UN Human Rights Council 23rd Session, 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, Geneva, 30 May 2013. Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, “Report on outreach on the UN report on ‘lethal autonomous robotics,’” July 2013.

### Algeria

*- As delivered by Mr. Mohamed Djalel Eddine Benabdoun and as translated from French by the UN:*

We endorse the statements made by the groups that we belong to. [OIC] We thank the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions for the presentation of his report.

The Rapporteur has also focused his report on lethal autonomous robots and has also focused on the concerns that they raise regarding the protection of life in times of war and in times of peace.

The question of their programming so that their use is compliant with international humanitarian law and with the provisions of international human rights law have rightly been raised by the Special Rapporteur.

We share the Special Rapporteur's concerns of the need to adopt appropriate measures so that the use of this technology respects human rights. Further to the moratorium mentioned by the Special Rapporteur on the use of this technology, we solicit his advice on additional measures to regulate their use.

## **Austria**

*- As delivered by Mr. Thomas Hajnoczi:*

We would like to thank Mr Heyns for your interesting and timely report focusing on lethal autonomous robots. In this context Austria would like to refer to the statement of the European Union.

You have rightly underlined the cross-sectoral aspects of this issue in proposing to set up a panel of experts from various fields. We deem this proposal interesting even if the Human Rights Council is in our view not the adequate framework to do that. We are looking forward to further discussion of LAR in various fora bearing in mind the multi-sectoral nature of this issue.

Would you consider ethical guidelines on lethal autonomous robots as a useful tool in order to ensure that the use of such weapons complies with international human rights law?

## **Brazil**

*- As delivered by Mr. Marcelo Bretas*

Brazil welcomes the report by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, which treats issues that bear on the future of the human rights system.

The report on the use of lethal autonomous robotics, besides translating into a call for the international community to reflect on such an issue, is indisputably praiseworthy for altering about the challenges ahead. Brazil welcomes the foresightedness and level of expertise of the report by rapporteur Christof Heyns.

It is, in fact, time this Council considered the progressive distancing between decisions to kill and the actual execution, which is rightly termed in the report as the next major step after the introduction of gunpower and nuclear weapons.

My delegation fully agrees with the idea expressed in the report that, if the killing of one human being by another has been a challenge that legal, moral, and religious codes have grappled with since time immemorial, one may imagine the host of additional concerns to be raised by robots exercising the power of life and death over humans.

Therefore Brazil would like to voice its concurrence with some of the rapporteur's views on the use of such weapons, as: the possibility of recourse to force without resorting to human abilities to interpret context and to make value-based calculations; the consequences of a lowered human cost of conflicts like the trivialization of war; the facilitation of breaches of sovereignty; the

prospect of acquisition of such weaponry by non-state actors of all kinds; and the uncertainties surrounding the accountability for killings committed by autonomous armaments.

In view of these arguments, Brazil senses an intention by the special rapporteur to ensure that the development of such novel weaponry do not turn into a new and uncontrollable threat to civilians. And this is very much in line with the ideas expounded by the Minister of External Relations of Brazil on the occasion of the high-level segment of the previous session of this Council when he welcomed the investigation by the special rapporteur on human rights and counter terrorism on the impact of the use of drones on civilians.

Such concern of our country and the thoughts and recommendations by special rapporteur Christof Heyns point in the very same direction, in the sense that the protection of the human rights of the most vulnerable presupposes the strictest ethical and legal considerations, which is specifically called for in situations of armed conflict.

In this connection, Brazil believes it worth highlighting that the development of new military technologies must carefully observe the principles of proportionality in the use of force and of distinction between civilian and military targets, as basic canons of international humanitarian law. In this context, it extends its support to the rapporteur's suggestion to convene a Human Rights Council high level panel on the use of lethal autonomous robotics for a deeper discussion on the implications of their use on human rights and on international humanitarian law.

Finally, my delegation would like to note that an appropriate forum for discussion of a future regime on the use of lethal autonomous robotics, without prejudice to the need for this Council to assess the issue from its own perspective, could be the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, whose goal is to ban or restrict the use of certain types of weapons that cause unnecessary or unjustifiable suffering to combatants and affect civilians indiscriminately.

## **China**

*- As delivered by Mr. Cui Wei and as translated from Mandarin by the UN*

The Chinese delegation would like to thank the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Mr Heyns for his report.

China has taken note of the detailed analysis contained in Mr. Heyn's report on the emerging issue of lethal autonomous robotics. As the report pointed out, this issue related to various areas such as the development of military, science and technology, international peace, arms control, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law, and is highly complex.

In fact, the exploration of this emerging issue by the international community is still at a very preliminary stage. We believe that this issue should be further studied to consider actions to be taken in the future.

## **Cuba**

*- As delivered by Ms. Vilma Thomas Ramirez and as translated from Spanish by the UN.*

My delegation has taken note of both reports, which address issues which are of great interest and very topical and we thank the rapporteurs for their presentations.

We think that it is very interesting that Mr Heyns has looked at the development and potential use by some states of automated weapons systems that are controlled by software that can kill or contribute to the death of human beings. We agree that we must look at the question urgently internationally and we must do so in a serious and rational manner.

The development in this kind of weaponry means that those who use them can use them without incurring any physical risks themselves and they don't incur any cost either apart from the economic cost. As a result any place in the world can become a large and perpetual battlefield thanks to their actions and they can use force even if when force is not required.

Cuba shares the concern expressed in the report of the negative impact on the enjoyment of human rights, particularly the right to life, because of the use of drones, and other lethal autonomous robots and other forms of selective killings that are carried out pursuant to the executive decisions of certain countries.

The killings, which are the result of the use of these weapons, appear to be tantamount to extrajudicial executions that are in violation of international laws.

We propose that future assessment of these weapons look carefully the consequences of the use of drones in conflict situations and in the context of the fight against terrorism. We suggest looking at the figures of those who have died as a result of the use of such devices. It would also be worth us investigating the consequences of the issue on the international security systems and the security systems of the states, as mentioned by the Rapporteur.

We support his proposal to set up a moratorium on the testing, production, manufacture, transfer, acquisition, deployment and the use of these artifacts while we wait for an international conference to set laws for their use.

In the meantime if we don't achieve a moratorium and if we don't achieve a regulation of their use we would like to know what the rapporteur thinks about actions we the international community could take to tackle those states who are bent on using these weapons in blatant violation of the right to life.

## **Egypt**

*- As delivered by Mr. Amir Essameldin Ahmed*

My delegation welcomes Mr Heyns and thanks him for his introductory remarks.

We read with great interest the content and findings of his current report dedicated to the subject of lethal autonomous robotics.

The report is an eye-opener on a very important and challenging development in the course of weaponry research and development and the relevant considerations in this regard, particularly with reference to the issue of the possible ramifications on the value of human lives, the calculation of the cost of war, as well as the possibility of the acquisition of this weapon by terrorist and organized crime networks or its usage for non-warfare related purposes.

Also, the question of the adequacy of the existing international human rights and humanitarian law frameworks to this type of new lethal innovation is very relevant and invites us to consider further study and consideration of the matter.

## **France**

*- As delivered by Ms. Katerina Doychinov and as translated from French by the UN.*

France supports the statement of the European Union. France would like to thank Mr Heyns for his report.

The use of lethal autonomous robots raises a number of questions of a legal, strategic and ethical nature.

In this regard, France would like to state that it does not possess and does not intend to acquire robotized weapons systems with the capacity to fire independently. Our concept is based on the full responsibility of military and political leaders in the decision to use armed force. France believes that the role of human beings in the decision to open fire must be preserved.

France believes that these important issues also have dimensions related to international humanitarian law in general and to law relating to arms in particular. For that reason the question about these potential future weapons should be discussed in a multilateral framework, the appropriate forum should be that of the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the CCW. This forum would be the most appropriate to bring together all of the legal, technical, and military competencies necessary for a calm and complete discussion involving all actors likely to ensure the universality of any normative work which may arise.

We therefore raise the question about the need to create an ad hoc panel under the auspices of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in order to deal with this issue.

With regard to the problem of summary or arbitrary executions this should be dealt in the same way regardless of the action because it is the fundamental principle which is at issue and not the means. Therefore there is no particular reason to single out one of them.

France also recalls that regardless the weapons used during armed conflict, all parties must respect international humanitarian law.

## **Germany**

*- As delivered by Mr. Hanns Schumacher*

Germany aligns itself with the comprehensive statement made by the European Union. Germany would like to comment on the report of the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Christof Heyns.

Mr. Heyns, your report was indeed a very meaningful contribution to a politically, morally, and legally important and highly necessary debate.

We will carefully examine your findings. In the first analysis let me highlight the following recommendations, which Germany believes to be worth considering. First, states should subscribe to a commitment to abide by international law. International humanitarian law as *lex specialis* in all situations of armed conflict and, where applicable, international human rights law has to be observed while studying, developing, acquiring or adopting new weapons or means of warfare be they manned or unmanned. This should set certain limits to the use of fully autonomous weapons systems.

Second, governments should be as transparent as possible regarding the development and evaluation of new weapon technology. We believe that additional transparency measures should be taken into consideration. Germany strongly supports the idea to include unmanned systems in national reports to the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Further steps to achieve this should be considered.

Third, we would like to call on respective parties to participate in an international debate. Please share best practices with other states. We have taken note of the recommendation to establish a high level panel on lethal autonomous robotics tasked to publish a report on the technological framework and ethics and making recommendations regarding policy issues. Great care should be laid down on the drafting of its terms and mandate in order to make it a workable body.

## **Indonesia**

*- As delivered by Mr. Prayusdinyarto Prakasa Soemantri*

My delegation would like to thank both rapporteurs for their reports.

On the issue of lethal autonomous robotics and the protection of life my delegation notes the concerns of the special rapporteur on the possible, far-reaching effects on societal values,

including fundamentally on the protection and value of life and on international stability and security.

My delegation further notes of the special rapporteur's observation that lethal autonomous robotics have difficulties complying with the principle of humanitarian laws such as rule of distinction and proportionality. The autonomous decisions that the robots may take complicate the issue of responsibility. There is, therefore, a need to approach this issue in a more comprehensive manner democratically.

In this regard, the democratic control of the use of armed forces becomes one of the means that can be used. My delegation would like to ask the following: How can the principle of democracy, in particular democratic control of armed forces, contribute to the potential problems posed by the use of lethal autonomous robotics?

## **Iran**

*- As delivered by Mr. Mohsen Ghanei*

My delegation takes positive note of the report by the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and shares his concern with respect to lethal autonomous robotics as well as his respective recommendations to the United Nations and respective stakeholders, which need careful and thorough consideration.

We are of the view that the nature of lethal autonomous robotics technology makes accountability and legal responsibility for states in general, as well as subordinates in their systems.

As the special rapporteur demonstrated in his report, robotic systems with various degrees of autonomy and lethality are currently in use by some countries, specifically by the United States of America. These current inhumane uses of lethal autonomous robotics in many parts of the world like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other places by direct and classified order of the United States authorities should have been condemned by the special rapporteur in the present report.

With regard to the use of lethal autonomous robotics, my delegation would like to raise a following question to special rapporteur: What kind of immediate actions can be taken by the international community on the current violations of international humanitarian law as well as human rights in this respect?

## **Mexico**

*- As delivered by Mr. Ulises Canchola and as translated from Spanish by the UN.*

We support the statement by GRULAC and we welcome the presentations by the rapporteurs.



We share the concern on the need to constantly look at the evolution of technology in the light of the obligation to protect the right to life. The flow of arms must be controlled to prevent individual cases of arbitrary executions, as well as the cheapening of life on a wide scale.

The prospect that lethal autonomous robotics might decide arbitrarily on the life and death of human beings is a source of additional concern for us. As states we have the obligation to guarantee the right to life because the right to life is the fundamental right that we should defend.

The lawfulness of any lethal weapon should be assessed in accordance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law. That is why it is fundamental that we apportion responsibilities, legal accountability not only for the use of the weapons, but also for the way in which they are acquired, developed, and transferred. In particular, the arms that have a high potential for lethal ability must be limited for the right to life to be protected.

## **Morocco**

*- As delivered by Mr. Said Ahouga and as translated from French by the UN:*

My delegation would like to thank Mr Christof Heyns, the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. We would like to thank him for his report and also for the thoughts that he has given us on the various ethical, legal, and moral aspects of the use of lethal autonomous robotics.

We take note at the concerns expressed with the prospect of such machines no matter how intelligent and high performance, de facto have the right to determine the life of human beings. The implications of the limited use of such revolutionary technology could turn out to be as immeasurable and needs to be examined with a view to determining necessary regulation for human rights.

It is important to strike a balance between the development of military tools which are in keeping with legitimate needs and for the prevention of threats to the right to life, in particular for the civilian population and non-combatants. For example, the emphasis should be laid on the responsibility of depriving someone of life in the case of these weapons systems' malfunction.

Therefore, we believe it would be useful for this to be discussed in order to give a grasp the various moral and legal implications of the use of such a weapons system looking towards developing an appropriate approach and relevant code of conduct.

## **Pakistan**

*- As delivered by Ms. Mariam Aftab:*

Pakistan thanks the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Christof Heyns for his report on lethal autonomous robotics, LARs, as weapons systems. As the special

rappporteur has pointed out these weapons raise far-reaching concerns on a wide range of legal and human rights issues.

The special rapporteur has recommended that states put in place national moratoria on aspects of lethal autonomous robotics and has called for the establishment of a high-level panel on lethal autonomous robotics to discuss this issue further.

My delegation shares the view that the development and deployment of lethal autonomous robotics would have a wide range of implications, not just in the field of disarmament but with regard to international human rights and humanitarian law.

As the special rapporteur has pointed out in his report, the use of lethal autonomous robotics raises complex moral, ethical, and legal dilemmas. The situation in which one party to a conflict bears only economic costs and its combatants are not exposed to any danger, is no longer war but one-sided killing.

We concur with the special rapporteur that lethal autonomous robotics take the problems that are present with drones and high altitude war strikes to their factual and legal extreme.” The concurrent concern is that the development of these weapon systems will have a disproportionate impact for developing countries because they have born the brunt of wars in the post-Cold War era.

Moreover, by reducing the cost of war for one or both sides, lethal autonomous robotics would make recourse to the use of force more frequent, thereby increasing the resort to war.

Therefore, my delegation is of the view that there is a need to move beyond national moratoria. The international community should consider a ban on the use of lethal autonomous robotics. We have similar precedents in the case of blinding laser weapons, that is Protocol IV of the CCW, which prohibited the employment of laser weapons whose specific purpose is to cause blindness.

My delegation is of the view that the risks posed by the lethal autonomous robotics are similar in nature and therefore warrant the same kind of restrictions by the international community. We believe that the experience with drones demonstrates that once these technologies are developed and operationalized, it is almost impossible to restrict their use. It is, therefore, necessary to impose the necessary restrictions at the earliest possible stage in their development in order to prevent violations of human rights.

## **Russia**

*- As delivered by Mr. Alexey Ulsugin and as translated from Russian by the UN:*

We would like to thank Mr. Heyns for his report on the development and use of autonomous robotic combat systems or lethal autonomous robotics.

We have read his report with great interest, and we note the complexity and the lack of clarity in the legal, moral, and ethical matters of the development and possible use in the future of lethal autonomous robotics.

Particular attention, in our view, should be paid to the conclusion of the special rapporteur to the effect that the use of this kind of weapon could have serious implications for societal foundations, including the negating of human life.

In our view, in future, such machines could also significantly undermine the ability of the international legal system to maintain minimal legal order.

We would like to underline the importance of ensuring transparency in all aspects of the development of the robotic weapon systems and also the need to take into account the standards of international humanitarian law and international human rights law at all stages of the development of lethal autonomous robotics.

We would like to put a question to Mr. Heyns: What implications might there be for human rights doctrine and international humanitarian law when it comes to delegating a process of decision making from the human being to a machine? What prospects of the use of lethal autonomous robotics are there when it comes to for non-combat processes?

We will follow the further investigation with interest of the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions when it comes to unmanned aircraft or drones and lethal autonomous robotics, in particular in the context of compliance with international humanitarian law.

## **Sierra Leone**

*- As delivered by Ms Yvette Stevens:*

My delegation thanks the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions for his comprehensive report.

The development of lethal autonomous robotics is becoming increasingly prevalent, and it is but timely that such a technology be viewed under a human rights lens.

From the military standpoint, the use of drones is considered advantageous in terms of saving the lives of the combatants of the attacking side during wars. It is also argued that robots can be programmed to minimize errors and reach their targets with a high degree of accuracy. But robots are machines and as we have seen with semi-automatic devices can indiscriminately kill innocent victims, including women and children.

The international instruments—international humanitarian law—are clearly targeted at conventional warfare and the use of robots raises questions about accountability. Who is to blame, when a breach of these laws occurs through the use of these robots?

In addition, we have seen these robots can be deployed outside conflict zones to hit targeted individuals, who are considered to be terrorists, but who have not been tried through due processes. What are the implications of this under international humanitarian law? Could this be considered as “extrajudicial execution”?

Furthermore, as with all other technology, these robots can fall into the wrong hands and be used indiscriminately. How does the international community guard against that to safeguard the right to life for the victims? These are all questions, which need to be answered before the use of robots becomes widespread.

My delegation agrees with the recommendation that the Human Rights Council should call on all states to declare and implement national moratoria on at least the testing, production, assembly, transfer, acquisition, deployment and use of lethal autonomous robotics until such time as an internationally agreed-upon framework on the future of lethal autonomous robotics has been established.

My delegation agrees with the recommendation that] that the High Commissioner convenes a multi-sectoral high level panel, as a matter of urgency, to take stock of technical advances of relevance to lethal autonomous robotics and propose a framework to enable the international community to address effectively the legal and policy issues related to lethal autonomous robotics, and concrete substantive and procedural recommendations in that regard.

## **Sweden**

*- As delivered:*

Sweden associates itself with the statement made by the European Union and would like to make a few additional comments.

The practice of extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions is abhorrent and represents a flagrant violation of the inherent right to life. As such the task given to the special rapporteur to examine situations in all circumstances and for whatever reason and to submit the findings on an annual basis to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, is of great importance.

As special rapporteur in this field you play an important role and we wish to thank you for your efforts and work on your latest report. We look forward to seeing you continue your important mission and express our full support.

Traditionally Sweden has the special responsibility to present draft resolutions on the issue of extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions. We did so in 2008 and 2011 and we look forward to presenting a resolution to renew the mandate of the special rapporteur and also containing operative paragraphs on the substance of the issue. We look forward to presenting a draft resolution on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions next year.

Finally, we see in your report that you intend to present a report on unmanned combat aerial vehicles to the General Assembly in 2013. At this stage, would it be possible to say something about the focus of the report and when it would be available?

## **Switzerland**

*- As delivered by Ms. Anh Thu Duong and as translated from French by the UN:*

My delegation would like to thank Mr Christof Heyns for his report and welcome his efforts to clarify the rules applicable to remote controlled automatic weapons.

We continue to be concerned by the fundamental matters of the use of remote control weapons, such as drones, or automatic systems, such as lethal autonomous robotics, from the point of view of human rights and international humanitarian law.

My delegation is particularly concerned with the implications that almost complete autonomy of such machines could have when it comes to the rules of the use of force during armed conflict and in situations of maintaining order, as well as the question of international legal responsibility. In this regard, Switzerland would like to recall that in no circumstances may states delegate their responsibility when it comes to the use of lethal force.

As mentioned by the special rapporteur it is important for any technological development, including armed robots, to be in keeping with international law.

As the special rapporteur suggests, my delegation encourages the establishment of a high level group bringing together experts from various areas to shed light on these matters and we are prepared to take part in an international debate to determine what the best approach would be to such weapons systems. It is important that this dialogue take place rapidly in order to ensure that the use of this new technology is fully in keeping with international law.

Efforts in this regard should be coordinated with those being made by the special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the campaign against terrorism.

Switzerland has two questions for the special rapporteur, Mr Heyns. First, what form could the international debate take and the international dialogue that is recommended by the special rapporteur? Second, what measures should states take to ensure that compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law is fully taken into account when it comes to the development and use of weapons systems such as armed drones or lethal autonomous robotics?

## **United Kingdom**

*- As delivered by Mr. Chris Lomax:*

The UK supports the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and would like to add some national remarks.

As noted by the EU, the use of weapons which can select and engage targets without human agency is governed by the provisions of international humanitarian law. The UK is committed to upholding the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and encouraging others to do the same.

However, we do not believe that the issue raised by Mr. Heyns is one that should be dealt with by this Council as the UK considers that there are other fora with mandates more appropriation to the consideration of issues of new weaponry governed by international humanitarian law. But for the avoidance of doubt, the UK considers the existing provisions of international law sufficient to regulate the use of such systems and therefore has no plans to call for or to support an international ban on them.

The UK notes for the purposes of future discussion in this Council that there is a clear distinction between lethal autonomous robotics and drones. Drones are remotely deliverable weaponry which involve human agency in selecting and engaging targets. Different considerations may therefore apply to drones, compared to those highlighted by Mr. Heyns in respect of lethal autonomous robotics.

The UK thanks you for your hard work and strongly supports your mandate to examine extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions in all possible circumstances and to draw the council's attention to them.

## **United States of America**

*- As delivered by Mr. Stephen G. Townley:*

The United States thanks the special rapporteur for presenting his report on what he calls lethal autonomous robotics (LARs) and what we would refer to as autonomous weapons systems.

We appreciate the special rapporteur's recognition of U.S. Department of Defense Directive 3000.09, a policy that establishes a prudent, flexible, and responsible framework for the development and use of autonomous capabilities in weapons systems, including a stringent review process for certain new types of autonomous weapons that might be propose in the future.

As reflected in this and other directives, the United States remains committed to complying with the law of war, also called international humanitarian law, with respect to all new weapons systems and their use in armed conflict.

Although we may differ on some aspects of the report, we agree that lethal autonomous weapons may present important legal, policy, and ethical issues, and we call on all states to proceed in a lawful, prudent, and responsible manner when considering whether to incorporate automated and autonomous capabilities in weapon systems.

As the report suggests this is not an entirely new issue. Some existing weapon systems meet the basic definition of an autonomous weapon as used in this report. For example, for decades the United States has operated defensive systems, such as the ship-based Aegis or land-based Patriot surface-to-air missile defenses, which can operate in a human-supervised autonomous mode to defend against time-critical air and missile attacks.

At the same time, as the report also correctly notes, “[t]echnology may in some respects be less advanced than is suggested by popular culture.” For example, for U.S. unmanned aircraft human operators control weapons employment at all times; they are not autonomous weapons.

We welcome further discussion among states of the legal, policy, and technological implications associated with lethal autonomous weapons. However, we note that these implications go beyond the Human Rights Council’s core expertise.

We therefore would like to see such discussion take place in an appropriate forum that has a primary focus on international humanitarian law issues, with the participation of states that have incorporated or are considering incorporating automated and autonomous capabilities in weapon systems. In such a discussion among states, we believe that it will be important to ensure that technical, military, and international humanitarian law expertise is included.

## **European Union**

*- As delivered by Ms. Anne Koistinen*

We would like to thank special rapporteur Heyns for his presentation, continuous hard work, and latest interesting report. Its focus on lethal autonomous robotics is forward-looking and although it addresses future as well as ongoing technological developments it is of potential interest to the international community.

The EU therefore takes note of this contribution by the special rapporteur to address and attempt to map out possible consequences of the development of such weapons. It is undoubtedly a complicated field, both legally and technically.

We agree with the special rapporteur that the use of weapons, including those with select targets without a human in-the-loop, is governed by international humanitarian law. Therefore this is not an issue that sits squarely within the work of this council, but should be debated outside this council in other international fora, in particular in the framework of the relevant arms control fora of the United Nations.

As concerns related to lethal autonomous robotics touches upon several different fields, could the Special Rapporteur elaborate on which other fora you this could be debated?

## **Argentina on behalf of GRULAC**

*- As delivered by Mr. Mariano Alvares Wagner and as translated from Spanish by the UN:*

GRULAC would like to express its thanks to the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions for the presentation of his report.

We welcome the fact that it [the report] has focused on an issue which is of growing interest to the international community, which is lethal autonomous robotics, and the effect of their use on human rights.

In particular, we, the countries of the region, will be looking at his analysis on the current technology, the factors that foster or hinder its development, and the possible future use thereof and the suggested ways forward.

There is a reference whereby these systems might lead to a “normalization of the conflict” and we are worried about that. There is a potential arms race that might be created by this that would create divisions between states and weaken the system of international law. There is a possibility that these LARs might trigger reprisals, retaliation, and terrorism, and they might have an impact on human rights and international humanitarian law.

As a way to avoid these negative consequences the report concludes that an international body should be set up with the responsibility of looking at the situation and suggesting long-term solutions. In this regard, we would be grateful if the Rapporteur could clarify if he is referring to the High Level Group which he recommends the High Commissioner convene.

We would also like to know if the UN competent bodies should not do more than just collaboratively transparently as requested in the report.

## **Organization of the Islamic Conference, delivered by Pakistan**

*- As delivered by Ms. Mariam Aftab:*

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference].

The OIC thanks the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Mr Christof Heyns for his report.

The special rapporteur has focused on lethal autonomous robotics, LARs, and their deployment. He has argued there are far-reaching concerns as to the extent that lethal autonomous robotics can be programmed comply with international humanitarian law and international human rights law. States should establish national moratoria on lethal autonomous robotics and states should take action on this issue.

The development of lethal autonomous robotics weapon systems is an extremely important issue. As the special rapporteur has pointed out in his report, there is a qualitative difference between reducing the risk that armed conflict poses to those who participate in it and the situation where



one side is no longer a “participant” in armed conflict in as much as its combatants are not exposed to any danger. This development fundamentally changes the nature of war. This is further compounded by questions relating to the fixing of legal responsibility in the case of the use of lethal autonomous robotics.

We agree with the special rapporteur that there is a need to take immediate action before further developments in this technology overtake policy-making and undermine the existing international human rights and humanitarian law framework.

We would like to know from the special rapporteur whether the national moratorium on lethal autonomous robotics would be sufficient or whether there is a need to initiate an international process with a view to ban the use of lethal autonomous robotics. We look forward to further debate and discussion on this important issue in the Human Rights Council.

### **United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs**

*- As delivered by Mr. Jarmo Sareva:*

I am pleased for this opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of Ms. Angela Kane, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. The Office for Disarmament Affairs welcomes this opportunity to engage in this interactive dialogue on lethal autonomous robotics.

Autonomous weapon systems pose unique challenges that deserve further consideration and action in the appropriate United Nations forums. These challenges have multiple dimensions and raise implications in the areas of non-proliferation, ethics, international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international security.

The emergence of autonomous weapons calls into question the adequacy of measures to implement the rules of armed conflict that apply to the use of all weapon systems. The purpose of these rules is clear. The major imperative is to protect civilians from unacceptable harm. There must also be adequate human accountability at all times. Yet, one key question posed by autonomous weapons is how can accountability be maintained when humans are no longer involved in the final decision?

I am pleased that the report of the special rapporteur has recognized the contribution that the progressive development of disarmament law has made to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of armed conflict.

Concern over the humanitarian impact of war has long been a driving force for disarmament and arms control. The humanitarian perspective has been instrumental in successful efforts to prohibit and eliminate certain categories of weapons of mass destruction. It has also resulted in the elimination of weapons that can cause excessive injuries or that have indiscriminate effects, including anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions.

History has proven that we need not wait for a weapon system to fully emerge before appropriate action can be taken to understand its implications and to adopt effective measures to mitigate and eliminate unacceptable risk. Indeed, this was the experience with the successful effort to ban blinding laser weapons, accomplished within the framework of the inhumane weapons convention.

In the context of the United Nations disarmament machinery and beyond, challenges posed by unmanned combat systems are getting increasing attention. Existing measures adopted by the Security Council and considered by ad hoc bodies of the General Assembly have tended to focus on unmanned aerial vehicles, particularly those capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction.

As work continues to adequately address concerns pertaining to unmanned combat systems, it is clear that the issue of autonomous weapons merits special consideration. The Office for Disarmament Affairs intends to remain closely engaged on this issue and looks forward to contributing to and supporting the efforts of Member States.

### **Campaign to Stop Killer Robots via WILPF**

*- As delivered by Beatrice Fihn, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom:*

I am speaking on behalf of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, which my organization—the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom—is a member.

We believe that human control over the use of violent force is essential for ensuring the protection for civilians. The campaign is calling for a comprehensive ban on fully autonomous weapons that would be able to select and attack targets without meaningful human intervention. This prohibition should be achieved through an international treaty on these fully autonomous weapons as well as through national laws and other measures.

The campaign welcomes the report of the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Prof. Christof Heyns on 'lethal autonomous robotic weapons.' We share the multiple moral, ethical, legal, policy, technical, and other concerns that the report raises with respect to these weapons.

We agree that the central question that must be asked is "whether it is not inherently wrong to let autonomous machines decide who and when to kill." We note that the UN report describes this question as an "overriding consideration" and states "if the answer is negative, no other consideration can justify the deployment of [lethal autonomous robotics], no matter the level of technical competence at which they operate."

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots urges all states to endorse and commit to implement the report's recommendations, including an immediate moratorium on robotics weapons systems that can select and engage targets without further intervention by a human. Implementing these

recommendations should be seen as a first step towards a comprehensive international ban on fully autonomous weapons.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots commits to implement the UN report's recommendations to NGOs. We formed this coalition to raise awareness about fully autonomous weapons and we urge transparency with respect to both states' policy and practice in the development of robotic weapons systems.

We support the recommendation to establish a panel of experts to consider how to effectively address this challenge.

We think it is impossible to assert that existing laws are adequate without having a public debate on the implications of these new technologies. We therefore urge all countries to consider and publicly articulate their policy on fully autonomous weapons and we welcome the many statements that have been made today, as it really highlights the importance that we place on this issue.

## **International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL)**

*- As delivered by Ms. Nicol Savia:*

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers and the Europe Third World Centre welcome the report by the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions in order to draw attention to the use of drones other lethal robots.

These new weapons systems, used to assassinate suspects all around the world, pose a very serious threat to international peace and security. US drone strikes have been launched in several countries and they've already killed approximately 3,000 people in Pakistan alone. Many of them were civilians.

We express our grave concern about the development and future proliferation of lethal autonomous robotics. Although they would pose many of the same dangers as robotic drones, which are currently in use, lethal autonomous robotics would take these dangers to the extreme by omitting human beings from the decision about whether and when to kill other human beings.

This has profound implications for violating the prohibition of the arbitrary deprivation of the right to life as well as the international humanitarian law principles of proportionality and distinction. Distinction prohibits the targeting of civilians and indiscriminate attacks. Proportionality requires measuring the expected harm to civilians against the anticipated military advantage. These principles require distinctively human judgment.

Because of their aversion to risking lives of human soldiers states that use lethal autonomous robotics may more readily deploy lethal autonomous robotics than real human soldiers, and lower the threshold for using lethal force, thereby violating the principle of last resort. These

principles require that the use of lethal force be the last resort after all peaceful means have been exhausted.

As stated by the special rapporteur, the use of these robots can threaten state sovereignty, creating serious international division and weakening the rule of international law. Moreover, military technology is easily transferred into the civilian sphere, and lethal autonomous robotics could thus be used by states to suppress any kind of social protests and peaceful demonstrations. There are serious concerns about legal accountability. Indeed the many levels likely to be involved in a decision about deployment could result in a potential accountability gap or vacuum.

However we consider that the special rapporteur did not draw the necessary conclusions from his study. National moratoria are not a sufficient solution. The development, production, and use of lethal autonomous robotics must be outright banned under any circumstances. Peoples of the world need peace and not “higher force projection,” “force multiplication” or other ‘benefits’ offered by these new lethal technologies.

## **Europe-Third World Centre and Geneva International Centre for Justice**

*- As delivered by Ms. Daniela Donges:*

We would like to thank the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions for his report.

In your report you outlined that it is an underlying assumption of most legal, moral and other codes that when the decision to take a life is at stake the decision-making should be exercised by humans. But what if humans making these decisions do so under immoral, inhumane, unethical, and illegal means?

# # #

## Annex II. Media coverage

The lethal autonomous robotics findings and recommendations of the report by the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and its presentation and debate in the Human Rights Council received widespread media coverage in countries including: Australia, Canada, China, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, UK, and US. All major wire services covered the report as well as *The Guardian*, *National Geographic*, *The New York Times*, and other notable publications.

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