



**79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, First Committee
Statement by Stop Killer Robots**

Thank you, Madame Chair.

I am speaking on behalf of Stop Killer Robots, a global coalition of over 250 civil society organisations across more than 70 countries with a shared commitment to ensuring meaningful human control over the use of force.

Since the UNGA last year, reports of Israel's use of military AI tools in Gaza have shown the devastating and unacceptable harm that can result from seeking to increase the speed of violence through AI and automation, entailing the erosion of meaningful human control and decision-making in the use of force, and the reduction of people to data points. Meanwhile, reports of intensifying investment into the development of autonomous weapons by militarised countries demonstrate that states are already looking to compete for military advantage through increasing autonomy in weapons systems.

The race to regulate autonomous weapons systems is at a critical point. As the UN Secretary-General has said: 'time is running out for the international community to take preventative action'. Autonomous weapons raise profound legal, ethical, humanitarian, and security concerns. Their development and use could lead to the undermining of international human rights and international humanitarian law, the erosion of human dignity, an increase in civilian casualties, and the escalation of conflicts. It is time to take machines making life and death decisions off the table.

It is clear that negotiating new international law on autonomous weapons systems is now more urgent than ever.

Last year, the UN Secretary-General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross issued a landmark joint call for states to negotiate a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons by 2026. This call is supported by thousands of technology and artificial intelligence experts, Nobel Laureates, faith leaders, and civil society around the world. More than 120 states from all regions have now called to launch negotiations of a legally binding instrument.

Stop Killer Robots commends the leadership of those states looking to make substantive progress by hosting regional and international conferences on autonomous weapons, most recently by the Philippines, Sierra Leone, and Austria.

The resolution on autonomous weapons systems being proposed in this First Committee is a positive step forward in expanding the international discussions on autonomous weapons and

would allow for the consideration of perspectives including ethical concerns, international human rights law, international criminal law, and respect of the UN Charter, as well as issues outside armed conflict situations. Through this resolution, member states and other stakeholders will be invited to consider the full range of challenges and concerns posed by autonomous weapons systems through informal consultations. Stop Killer Robots urges states to commit to progress and calls upon all states to Vote Against The Machine and support the resolution.

We cannot afford to delay progress towards a legally binding instrument any longer – states must respond with the urgency required to prevent further dehumanisation through automated killing and injury. Launching negotiations on robust international law can only be achieved through shared political will and determined international collaboration.

Stop Killer Robots remains ready and willing to support states committed to achieving progress on a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons. Our human dignity today, and that of future generations, is at extreme risk and the international community must draw legal lines for humanity through international law, now.

Thank you.