



Kaohsiung Artificial Intelligence Model United Nations I

Committee: General Assembly 1

Topic: (0201) Ensuring ethical governance on the militarization of artificial intelligence.

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Introduction

The use of artificial intelligence has started a new era in the global world, especially in the political world. Artificial intelligence has completely changed how societies operate and how economies grow. As Artificial Intelligence becomes more powerful, the question now arises of how to ensure ethical governance on the militarization of artificial intelligence.

Governments can now use Artificial Intelligence with autonomous defense systems, cyber operations and more. The United States and China have also invested extensively in military AI. This is reflected with projects like the US Department of Defense's Joint Artificial Intelligence (JAIC) and China's "Next Generation AI Plan", which specifically links AI development to national security. Such increasing competition requires the international community to take a step back and evaluate the regulations of the militarization of artificial intelligence.

The fact that there is a lack of regulations has allowed AI to improve with very limited safeguards and regulations. The United Nations must act as a mediator to ethically govern the militarization of artificial intelligence.

Background Information



Political and Commercial Stakes of AI

Artificial Intelligence has become the foundation of modern power. There has been a global effort to develop and control the best and fastest, most advanced AI technologies over the past decade. According to Stanford's 2024 AI index, global AI investment reached over \$200 billion, with national governments contributing significantly through public-private partnerships and strategic innovation funds.

For governments, AI is imperative to national security, since there are many advanced military applications. These Military applications include autonomous drones, surveillance systems, cyber defense protocols, and battlefield logistics. The US Pentagon's Project Maven and NATO's AI strategy are just two of many programs seeking to integrate machine learning into defense operations. Similarly China's military civil fusion doctrine explicitly mandates the transfer of AI advances into state defense capabilities. These developments have prompted fears of an AI arms race, with many scholars and analysts warning that autonomous weapon systems could pose a problem for global security.

Meanwhile, corporations are racing to dominate the AI marketplace. Companies like Google, OpenAi, Nvidia and Meta have made revolutionary and groundbreaking advances in language modeling, robotics, chip design and revolutionary AI developments. While their mission is primarily economic, the lack of oversight and regulations allows such technologies to have many unregulated opportunities to be utilized.

The Governance Vacuum

Despite these similar ambitions, there is no global consensus on how to regulate AI. The European Union's AI Act (set to take full effect in 2026) represents one of the first serious attempts to create a comprehensive legal framework. However, it is limited in jurisdiction and does not apply to non-EU companies operating globally. The United States lacks federal AI legislation entirely, while China's approach emphasizes national control over ethical universality.

UNESCO's 2021 Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, signed by 193 countries, was a document advocating for fairness, transparency and human rights in AI development. Yet it was a nonbinding agreement, therefore without a shared international regulatory structure, the world risks a reality where AI is concentrated in a handful of countries and the ethical consequences of AI are no longer considered.



Definition of Key Terms

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence refers to the capacity of machines to perform tasks typically associated with human intelligence. These tasks include reasoning, learning perception and decision making. In military applications, AI is used to automate surveillance, improve target recognition, simulate combat scenarios and control autonomous weapons. (Oxford English Dictionary)

Militarization of AI

The militarization of AI refers to the integration of artificial intelligence into military systems, strategies and operations. These include autonomous drones, AI powered cybersecurity tools, combat simulations, threat detection systems and more.

Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS)

Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems are military systems that can select and engage targets without further human intervention. Unlike remotely operated drones, LAWS functions independently using sensors and algorithms. These systems challenge the core principles of international humanitarian law, particularly accountability and ethics.

Meaningful Human Control

Meaningful human control refers to the principle that humans should maintain oversight and the authority to make decisions over the use of such force, especially in situations involving life and death. This concept is important to ethical debates surrounding autonomous weapons since it ensures that machines do not operate independently outside of human judgement entirely.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

International Humanitarian Law is a set of rules that looks to limit the effects of armed conflict by protecting civilians and regulating the means and methods of warfare. The deployment of AI powered weapons systems will raise many new challenges to the IHL, especially in terms of ethics.



Key Issues

Lack of International Regulation

One of the most important challenges in governing the militarization of AI is the absence of a binding international framework. While many discussions have taken place in conventions such as the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), no global treaty currently regulates the use or development of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). This lack of regulation allows powerful countries to pursue military AI development independently, and creates extremely ambiguous standards and ethical dilemmas.

Loss of Meaningful Human Control

As AI systems become more autonomous, the principle of maintaining meaningful human control in warfare decreases significantly. Since many scenarios allow machines to make decisions that kill without any real time human oversight, the accountability becomes dangerously unclear. This issue is both a cause and effect as autonomy is often pursued to improve combat speed and efficiency, but the difficulty in attributing responsibility when errors occur show the moral problems.

Ethical and Humanitarian Risks

The use of AI in warfare risks violating the ethical principles in the laws of war because algorithms or AI may lack the capability to distinguish between combatants and civilians, or interpret context in rapidly evolving battlefields. Additionally, flawed design can lead to wrong targeting or worse. These humanitarian risks are a direct effect of giving up the moral decision making to machines and calls for ethical governance and meaningful human control.

Major Parties Involved

United States of America (USA)

The United States is a global leader in the development and deployment of military artificial intelligence technologies. Through initiatives such as the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center (JAIC),



Project Maven, and Department of Defense AI strategies, the USA has done a lot to improve AI integration across defense systems. The US has resisted calls for a ban on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS), as they favor nonbinding ethical guidelines. The US's position has a significant influence on the direction of international discussion on AI governance.

People's Republic of China (PRC)

China has identified AI as an important part of their national strategic priority, especially in its Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan. The country is rapidly integrating AI into its military capabilities. China has invested heavily in facial recognition, autonomous drones and battlefield decision systems. While it has supported limited regulation of LAWS in the UN context, it often aligns with Russia in advocating for state sovereignty and opposing legally binding bans.

Russian Federation (Russia)

Russia has publicly opposed the negotiation of a legally binding treaty on autonomous weapons. It emphasizes the military advantages of AI, including missile guidance systems and AI-supported battlefield command structures. Russia frequently argues that restrictions on military AI would hinder national defense capabilities.

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) is a key international body facilitating discussions on disarmament, including the governance of emerging technologies in warfare. UNODA supports efforts to explore the ethical, legal, and humanitarian implications of military AI.

NVIDIA

NVIDIA is a US based multinational technology company that designs high performing graphics processing units (GPU), which are essential for the training of large language models and deploying advanced AI systems. Its hardware powers many military and commercial AI applications, from drone vision to real time data analysis. NVIDIA is critical in the power struggle for AI.



Timeline

When referring to specific dates, please use the following format: Month Day, Year (e.g., June 15, 2025). Each date mentioned should be accompanied by a description of the event to provide context within the report. (Please delete this paragraph when completed.)

Date	Description of event
July, 2015	Thousands of AI researchers and developers gathered at the International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI) warning against the development of autonomous weapons to sign an open letter. This letter called for the ban of autonomous weapons and demanded governments to only allow human controlled military technology.
November, 2017	The Convention of Certain Conventional Weapons met to discuss ethical, legal, and technical implications of autonomous weapons. This meeting aimed to define and establish principles to take further steps in the future.
March, 2019	The European Parliament passed a resolution that banned the usage of Lethal Autonomous Weapons. The resolution emphasized that machines should not be able to determine life-or-death decisions and pushed for a legally binding instrument that requires human authentication to operate.
June, 2021	The U.S. Department of Defense releases guidance on adopting the 2020 AI ethical principles to ensure that any military AI systems are responsible, reliable, and traceable. This marked a huge step showing dedication for monitoring ethics with autonomous weapons.
December, 2021	The UN GGE held a meeting to further discuss implications and policies regarding lethal autonomous weapons. However, there was no consensus reached at the end. This



showed the divide of geopolitical perspectives regarding the use of AI military technology.

February, 2023

The first REAIM (Responsible AI in the Military Domain) was hosted by South Korea and the Netherlands. The summit gathered to discuss negative factors surrounding autonomous weapons. Therefore, the goal of the meeting was to foster transparency, accountability, and international cooperation on this issue.

May, 2023

A political declaration highlighting the principles to responsible use of military AI was launched by the U.S State Department. Over 50 countries have now endorsed this declaration which shows the growing global consensus on this issue.

Relevant UN Resolutions and Treaties

In this section, you should list the names of significant United Nations resolutions. These may be presented in bullet-point format. Each bullet point must include the full title of the document, followed by a description of what the resolution was targeting and how it is connected to this issue. (Please delete this paragraph when completed.)

- Lethal autonomous weapons systems 22 December 2023 (**A/RES/78/241**)

This resolution acknowledges the growing concern of AI usage in the military domain and agrees with the urgency that this issue necessitates to be solved. The resolution calls for international cooperation to further discuss and reach a consensus. The resolution explains that a substantial number of member states wish for the usage of autonomous weapons to be annexed.

- Lethal autonomous weapons systems 12 October 2023 (**A/C.1/78/L.56**)

This resolution discusses more specifically on the growing concerns surrounding the development of lethal autonomous weapons. It also emphasizes the importance of aligning the emerging technology with international human law.



- Lethal autonomous weapons systems 2 December 2024 (A/RES/79/62)

This resolution calls for an increase of human regulation on the development of lethal autonomous weapons. The resolution wishes for transparency, accountability, and responsibility especially in the development phases of LAWS to ensure that there is adequate governance.

- Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Morris Tidball-Binz 16 April 2024 (A/HRC/56/CRP.5)

This resolution focuses on the human rights implications of lethal autonomous weapons. It warns and brings out concern that the development of these weapons threaten human dignity, lacks human control, and lacks accountability. The resolution highlights unjustified killings of previous operations using lethal autonomous weaponry.

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Attempt 1: United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Meetings on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS)

The United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has hosted multiple meetings of government experts to discuss the implications of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) since 2014. These sessions have brought together UN member states, international organizations and military advisors to evaluate potential definitions, ethical guidelines and regulatory laws. However the process has not yielded any concrete results, and a handful of nations have advocated for a legally binding band while major military powers like the USA and Russia and China have opposed such measures. These divisions have stalled negotiations and the CCW is widely considered unsuccessful.

The 2021 UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence

In November 2021, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence. This was the first global normative instrument on the subject. While not focused solely on military applications, it explicitly calls for protection of human rights, accountability and more. Signed by 193 countries, the recommendation



shows the consensus of all countries on the importance of ethical AI, however since it is non-binding, no true regulations have been set. This has been considered partially successful.

Possible Solutions

Possible Solution

First and foremost, it is necessary to recognize whether or not it is ethical to allow machines to make life-or-death decisions. After defining a morale framework, then it is possible to propose and implement solutions to help the issue at hand. An obvious yet effective solution is to implement a legally binding international treaty that either bans or regulates lethal autonomous weapons. As for specific logistics, establishing an international AI weapons regulatory body to monitor, inspect, and verify AI development and deployment should be extremely effective. This corresponds towards the “regulating” aspect of autonomous weapons as it secures safety protocols with existing AI military technology. Another way to ensure that there still is human control is installing a mechanism that requires human authentication even in AI powered weapons. This ensures that humans can retain control over the actual targeting. Lastly as a risk assessments test, mandatory ethical impact assessments should be deployed in all military operations including autonomous weapons.

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