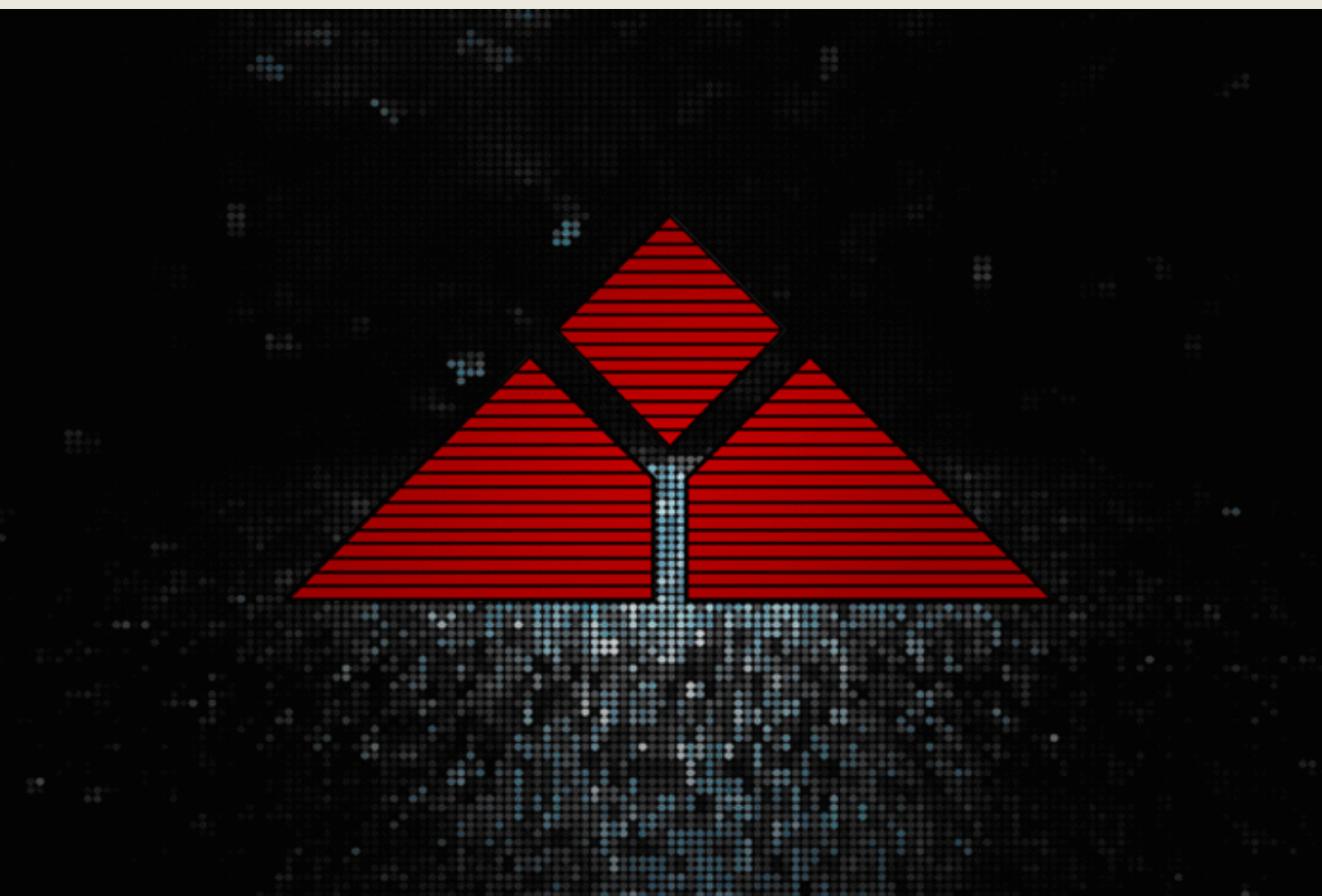


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WHILE A FEW COUNTRIES CONTROL THE CCW, WE RISK LOSING CONTROL OVER WEAPONS

Ray Acheson | Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Wednesday's meeting on autonomous weapons, the final for this session of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) group of governmental experts, lasted until 03:08 on Thursday. The two day meeting resulted in the adoption of a final report, but this report's disappointing content is only matched by its unambitious process for the way ahead. If we are to have any chance at preventing the development and use of weapons that kill without human control, we need to seriously—and urgently—step up our game.

The bottom line

While the CCW's meeting of high contracting parties in November 2019 will have the final say, the group's report indicates that it will meet in 2020 and 2021 to continue discussions on autonomous weapon-related issues, after which it might consider or develop "aspects of the normative and operational framework" on emerging technologies in the area of autonomous weapons. The group will report its recommendations back to the CCW high contracting parties in 2020 and 2021. From there, it

is unclear in what direction things might go.

Two decisions have been pushed to the meeting of high contracting parties. These include the number of days that the GGE will meet over the next two years—20? 25? 30?—and the wording around what states might do with the outcomes of those meetings over the next two years—will they develop aspects of a framework, or consider aspects of one, or ... nothing?

These are the practical aspects of the decisions and non-decisions made last night. But what's equally important as what is in the report (and what has been left to decide until November) is what is not in the report.

The final report does not refer to human control. It does refer to ethics and international law, which were both contested at various points by one or two states, but it does not mention human rights or human dignity. It does mention possible bias in data sets used in algorithmic-based programming, but the final report does not include previous language highlighting that such bias "may diminish,



perpetuate or amplify social biases, including gender and racial bias.”

The final report also does not include any guidance for the three streams of work identified by the group as needing further consideration, including legal, technological, and military aspects of autonomous weapons. Previous iterations of the text outlined possible subjects to be explored within each of these work streams, but that was stripped from the document sometime Tuesday night.

Overall, what the report does not offer is any sense that this process at the CCW is going anywhere. It has recommended two more years of talking. It has not set out any definitive direction for work after those two years, setting the stage for Russia, the United States, and the handful of other pro-killer robot governments to continue to block restrictions or prohibitions on the development of this technology. The report does not categorically preclude meaningful work from taking place, but by excluding the most important concept for these discussions—the concept of human control—the report has shown as clearly as ever that the interests of the most militarily powerful governments in the world will continue to override the interests of the rest of the world. It also demonstrates once again that for the most part, governments are not acting with the urgency necessary to prevent a disastrously violent future in which machines are programmed to kill people based on sensors and software. This is a future without meaningful human control over the use of force, most likely resulting in more war, more violence, more repression, more death and destruction.

The key issues

Over the course of the past two and a half days of discussion, participating states had plenty of disagreements. But the most important continue to surround the concept of human control over the use of force and over weapons, and characteristics of autonomous weapon systems.

The United States, along with most vocally the France, Russia, and United Kingdom, objected to any and all references to human control. In the

context of the final report in particular, they did not want it included in the new “guiding principle” that the GGE identified (adding to the ten guiding principles they agreed upon in 2018). These delegations “allowed” references to “consideration of the human element” to appear in the final report but rejected the term human control itself. In the early hours of Thursday, the US delegation insisted it would be open to engaging in discussions on human control in the future, which Austria, Germany, Brazil, Chile, and others said means they expect this will be a key focus of the GGE’s deliberations next year. Regardless of this late-night offer, the US delegation continues to say it finds the concept of human control extremely problematic and has been consistent in rejecting the term throughout the work of this body.

The reason for these governments to oppose the concept of human control and other key issues related to autonomous weapons is because they are already “investing significant funds to develop weapons systems with decreasing human control over the critical functions of selecting and engaging targets,” as noted by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots.¹ Just a week ago, the UK government put out a call for proposals to develop “the capability of unmanned autonomous military systems to operate in challenging environments.”² In the United States, Pentagon officials have made it clear that they are pursuing the development of weapons that operate “without having a person following through on it.”³

Perhaps most interesting is France’s rejection of the term human control at the GGE, particularly in light of the French Minister of the Armed Forces’ comments earlier this year that “France refuses to entrust the decision of life or death to a machine that would act fully autonomously and escape any form of human control.”⁴ If a state’s Minister of the Armed Forces is using the term human control, and favourably, it seems strange for its UN ambassador to say the term is unacceptable in a report from a meeting about autonomous weapons.

The rejection of the term human control, and also Russia’s rather surreal insistence that autonomy is not a central characteristic of autonomous weapon systems, points to the crux of the problem with international work on this issue so far: a handful

of countries want to develop these weapons. They are already developing these weapons. They are determined to continue in that endeavour, and thus are stalling, thwarting, or hijacking the intergovernmental process that might seek to restrict, limit, or prohibit the development of these weapons. The easiest way to prevent progress in this regard is to not even allow discussion over the most relevant concepts: if we cannot talk about human control, if we cannot agree that autonomy is critical to autonomous weapons, if we cannot develop any concrete outcomes from the work of the GGEs, then work on autonomous weapons can continue unfettered. These same countries tried to prevent and shut down discussions about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons because they knew it would lead to a prohibition of these weapons—which it did. They tried to prevent discussion over the indiscriminate effects and human suffering caused by antipersonnel landmines and cluster bombs because they knew it would lead to a prohibition of these weapons—which it did. And so the game is once again afoot: they are trying to prevent discussion of the crucial aspects of autonomous weapons in order to try to prevent a prohibition of these weapons.

This brings us to:

The problem with the process

The problem with the CCW process on this issue (or any other) is ultimately consensus. Each and every state has an absolute veto over each and every decision. This means that even though the vast majority of governments support the need for meaningful human control over weapon systems, one country can prevent this from being reflected in the report of the meeting.

But there is another, arguably even more insidious problem with the process, and that is bias. There is a bias towards the “military powers” in that their interests and positions are generally taken more seriously than those of other countries. This can be seen, felt, and heard in conference rooms—when they speak, everyone listens intently, and the facilitator or chair generally tries to find ways to accommodate their views. A good example from this most recent GGE session was that when Russia insisted on changing words in every

single paragraph of the draft conclusions and recommendations, the document was projected on a screen and track changes were employed to capture the proposals. In contrast, when Ireland and South Africa asked why the useful language on algorithmic bias was removed from the document—even though no one had objected to its inclusion—their question was dismissed without any interaction or consideration.

There is also bias privileging western states over the rest of the world. This can be seen in how western countries' positions are better reflected and defended in draft texts. For example, in this round of negotiations over the final report, both human control and legal weapon reviews came under attack. But the Chair argued that weapon reviews had lots of support and had undergone a lot of discussion and thus must stay in the document. The centrality of weapon reviews has been posited mostly by western European countries. Human control, meanwhile, has arguably had even less divergence of views, in that the vast majority support some formulation of the concept. Yet it was removed early from the draft text and despite valiant efforts from the likes of Austria, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and South Africa, it was never reinserted.

Consensus and bias are thus serious problems preventing the development of international law on autonomous weapon systems. These are not unique to the CCW, but they manifest dangerously in this body. The mandate of the CCW is to protect human beings from “excessive suffering” from the means and methods of war. But its processes privilege the countries that prioritise their ability to wage war and to develop new means and methods of war over the lives and dignity of human beings.

Where to go from here

This is why the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots is working with governments, tech workers, academics, scientists, students, and anyone else who actually wants to prevent human suffering. After Jordan indicated its support for a prohibition on killer robots at this GGE session, 29 states have supported this position.⁵ Many others support the negotiation of some kind of new international law restricting or prohibiting these weapons. If the CCW

wants to lock itself into two more years of chats that lead us straight back into a Russian-American black hole of late-night report drafting sessions instead of negotiating treaties or other concrete outcomes, that's fine. Governments that are serious about preventing the development and use of machines that kill without human control can do this work elsewhere, just as they did to prohibit nuclear weapons, cluster bombs, and landmines; as they did to put limits on the international arms trade; as they are about to do to stop the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

The CCW will meet again on this issue, and we will be there to hold governments to account—but in the meantime, we are also working closely with those who are responsible for designing and building the technology that is necessary for autonomous weapons to try to prevent the weaponisation of their products. We are working with experts and activists across many fields to help develop better understandings of the risks and problems with pursuing these weapons. We are working with parliamentarians, politicians, and diplomats to build the case and the capacity to take real action now, before it's too late.

A future of artificial intelligence-enabled killing machines, of targeting profiles designed to eliminate people of colour or of a certain sex or identity, and of life and death decisions executed by algorithms and computer chips, is not inevitable. The development of much of this technology is underway, and we know that a handful of governments are racing against the UN clock to deploy these systems before they are prohibited. But this does not mean those on the side of humanity have lost. It means, as it always does, that we are up against a vast complex of economic, political, and military power. We confront this system time and again, because the alternative is giving up and giving in. And if we are to survive, as human beings with dignity and morality, that is not an option.

1. "Russia, United States attempt to legitimize killer robots," Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, 22 August 2019, <https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/2019/08/russia-united-states-attempt-to-legitimize-killer-robots>.
2. Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Defence and Security Accelerator, Notice: Competition document: autonomy in challenging environments, 14 August 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/competition-autonomy-in-challenging-environments/competition-document-autonomy-in-challenging-environments>.
3. Marcus Weisgerber, "The US Military's AI Can't Find Targets On Its Own - Yet, Top USAF General Says," Defense One, 20 August 2019, <https://www.defenseone.com/technology/2019/08/ai-cant-find-targets-their-own-yet-top-usaf-general-says/159313>.
4. France will not develop "killer robots" - Speech by the Minister of the Armed Forces on AI, 5 April 2019, <https://cd-geneve.delegfrance.org/France-will-not-develop-killer-robots-Speech-by-the-Minister-of-the-Armed>.
5. https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/KRC_CountryViews21Aug2019.pdf

NEWS IN BRIEF

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This is a summary of key points of debate in the discussion of the draft recommendations and of the discussion and adoption of the final report. It is not a detailed description of the negotiation process nor does it capture every statement or position.

Discussion of the draft recommendations in the Chair's non-paper, 21 August, morning

General

- Canada, Poland, Belgium, Republic of Korea (ROK), Japan, Algeria, Finland, Australia, the United Kingdom (UK), Ireland, Germany, and Pakistan generally welcomed revised draft recommendations. Russia said it was a good foundation to finding compromise.
- France and the Netherlands, amongst others, preferred the previous draft.

Operationalisation

- Brazil said that references to operationalisation should be kept. France argued that it was important to keep the idea of operationalisation as it is precisely what the GGE's mandates requires. The UK, Japan, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, and the United States (US) had similar views.
- The UK suggested "practical implementation at national level" instead of "operationalisation". Austria and Australia supported this.
- Chile, Peru, South Africa, Switzerland, and Mexico argued that the GGE has not yet reached sufficient maturity for operationalisation to take place.
- Chile expressed concern at the inclusion of operationalising the guiding principles in paragraph 24(d) and would like to see this reference deleted as it is reflected in other paragraphs. Costa Rica, Peru, Mexico, and Algeria would also like to see "operationalisation" deleted in the same paragraph.

- Pakistan, Algeria, South Africa, and Costa Rica opposed the inclusion of "operational" in paragraph 24(e).
- India said that operationalisation is within the domain of the high contracting parties (HCP), and that it is not for the GGE to develop operational frameworks.
- Cuba, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, and Chile suggested deleting language after "2021 Sixth Review Conference," with Cuba arguing that it is too ambitious to have specific recommendations for national implementation.
- Russia suggested the deletion of the reference to "together with specific recommendations" in the last part of paragraph 24(e). Poland supported this as it sounds like a commitment to work out another set of recommendations. Germany supported retention of this language.
- Mexico said that if the term "development" ahead of "operational" is kept in paragraph 24(e), it could accept the reference to "operational framework," as it provides for different possible views. Peru said it could accept "development" although it would have preferred "negotiate". Russia suggested to replace "development" in the last part of paragraph 24(e) with "consideration".
- The US reiterated that it did not accept a focus on a singular outcome of normative framework but notes that the proposed language focuses on a variety of different actions and constitutes a compromise. Australia noted that by seeking to narrow the focus of the Group's work on one single framework it would risk prejudging the outcome Group's work.
- Jordan, among others, noted that the multiplicity of meetings and concentrated discussions should lead to a legally binding instrument to control autonomous weapon systems (AWS).

Human control

- Russia, India, and China argued that in terms of paragraph 24(d), all agenda items should be discussed in an equal manner without giving priority to any one specific agenda item. Russia noted that the question of AWS is comprehensive and all aspects should be discussed in an equal manner.
- Russia suggested the following changes to paragraph 24(d): To delete the part from “to explore and agree....systems,” and to replace this with “is to continue to consider, in the context and objectives of the Convention, the agenda items as reflected in paragraph 11 and Annex I.” Brazil suggested to add “to promote common understandings of...” and continue with “the agenda items,” as suggested by Russia.
- In the same paragraph, Russia suggested deletion of “seeking to” before “further”.
- Cuba, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, South Africa, Jordan, Algeria, and Chile preferred the term “human control” instead of “human-machine interaction”. France, the US, Switzerland, and the UK said that reference to “human-machine interaction” was a good compromise. Russia suggested to delete the reference to “in particular by pursuing common understandings on elements of human-machine interaction that are needed to ensure compliance with IHL.”
- Costa Rica expressed concern that much of the substance of the cross-cutting issue of human control was lost in paragraph 24(d).
- Cuba and Mexico recommended to replace “in particular” with “inter alia.”
- Ireland and Belgium suggested the inclusion of references to “human control and characteristics, elements,” in addition to human-machine interaction in paragraph 24(d).
- Chile suggested following language on paragraph 24(d): “inter alia elements of human control and human-machine interaction.” Similarly, Austria suggested, in the spirit of compromise, to rephrase this part into “understandings of elements of human-machine interaction, including human control”.

Ecuador said this proposal may help to find agreement.

Ethical considerations

- Canada was not opposed to discuss ethical considerations in a legal context but cautioned that the two themes need to be differentiated. ROK expressed support.
- Canada, Poland, Brazil, Peru, Belgium, ROK, Austria, Algeria, and Chile supported the reference to ethical considerations as is.
- Cuba stressed that ethical questions should be considered in all three work streams so not “to dilute this extremely important question.”
- India said there was no need for a separate reference to ethical considerations.

Working methods

- Costa Rica reiterated that informal meetings aren’t appropriate as there are no records; they are discriminatory as small delegations cannot participate; and they prevent delegations from speaking in their native languages. It argued that it was difficult to have a balanced, inclusive, and constructive dialogue. France and Austria voiced similar concerns. Canada agreed that work needs to be conducted in all official UN languages.
- Costa Rica, Peru, Austria, Switzerland, and Mexico supported the inclusion of language to ensure the submission of an interim report to the 2020 meeting of HCPs.
- Germany suggested not to adopt a formal report in 2020 but to replace a formal report by the Chair’s report on progress achieved in the GGE, to then have a formal report adopted in 2020. Finland supported this.
- Latvia suggested that the 2020 report be a draft of the final report to be adopted in 2021, which would already outline agreed areas and outline brackets that need further work in 2021. Austria, Switzerland, and Japan supported this.
- France, Switzerland, and Austria reiterated that 30 days was the absolute minimum for GGE meetings in 2020–2021. Finland and

Belgium expressed disappointment at the proposal of 25 days. Costa Rica, the UK, and France supported 30 days of meetings. Poland said that 25 days of work was a reasonable approach in light of the Convention's financial difficulties. Ireland, Japan, Jordan, and Peru said they could accept 25 days. Canada said it was flexible on the days allocated for meetings, being open to 20, 25 or 30 days. Russia reiterated that 20 days overall, with 10 days for 2020 and 2021, respectively, would be sufficient to have a "focused and results-oriented discussion".

- Russia was against suggestions for the new Chair to make use of "friends of the Chair" as it perceives this as being too prescriptive. Poland and South Africa agreed and said this should be deleted. Portugal argued that the language on the friends of the Chair just opens the possibility to make use of this suggestion and doesn't see a problem here. Ireland suggested the deletion of "who are experts... matters" and just continue with "to facilitate" in paragraph 24(e). Austria, Belgium, and the US supported this.
- Ireland proposed to remove "geographic" for equitable representation, so to also include gender considerations and to make it more inclusive. The US, Belgium, and Finland supported this.
- Russia suggested adding to the chapeau of paragraph 24(e): after "consider" to include "in the context of the objective and purpose of the Convention, agenda items in paragraph 11 and annex 1, including as appropriate..."
- Cuba would like to see the inclusion of "and for international cooperation on that matter," after "systems" in the last part of paragraph 24(e).
- Pakistan suggested the deletion of "possible" before recommendations in paragraph 24(d).
- Pakistan suggested the addition of "policy" before "options" in paragraph 24(d). South Africa and Belgium suggested the same.

Work streams

- Russia suggested deletion of references to work streams and did not support separate work streams. It suggested to include

instead "by pursuing complex legal, military and technological expertise" after "ethical considerations". Russia suggested therefore to also change the language in paragraph 24(e) (ii) accordingly.

- Poland, Finland, and Germany supported the three proposed work streams. Canada supported the suggested focus on legal, technological, and military aspects, provided that they inform each other.
- Portugal and Belgium preferred the earlier draft language on the work streams. Belgium regretted the removal of references to the work stream on characteristics of AWS.
- Canada argued that AWS may have the potential to strengthen states' implementation of international law as they may be more accurate, reminding of the track record of humans in implementing IHL, which is "not a great one". But it argued that technology cannot be an excuse for not implementing international law.
- Canada said it was pleased to see legal weapons reviews in the conclusions part but would prefer to have a reference to weapons reviews in the recommendations part as was in the previous version. Portugal had similar observations.

Other

- Pakistan expressed surprise that references to the potential effects in international peace and security were removed in the conclusions section. The Chair clarified that those were removed after informal consultations on Monday, to which Pakistan noted that it could not attend this meeting and that it did not accept the removal without having discussed this in a formal meeting. Cuba supported Pakistan.
- Pakistan suggested the inclusion of language in paragraph 24(d) after "ethical considerations" to read: "as well as effects on regional and global security and stability, and on the threshold for armed conflicts." Mexico, France, and Austria supported this.
- Canada was cognisant of financial challenges of the CCW and said that states paying their

dues would be a direct way to express their commitment to the Convention.

Negotiation of the final report, CRP.1, CRP.1/Rev.1, and CRP.1/Rev.2

Conclusions

- Costa Rica, South Africa, and France made a general comment in the context of references to the informal GGE sessions convened by the Chair, noting that these types of meetings set the wrong precedent because not all states have capacity to attend or contribute, including for reasons of language.
- Russia reiterated its reservation about the term “emerging technologies in the area of LAWS” and requested deletion throughout the report. It explained that this is for reasons of accuracy because on the battlefield, technologies are not being used but specific weapon systems are. Chile acknowledged this as accurate but there was not support for the change.
- Costa Rica urged changing the reference to the guiding principles in the first sentence of the chapeau of paragraph 15 as having been “agreed” rather than “affirmed,” although affirmed was included in the 22 August version of the Report.
- It was decided that an eleventh guiding principle on human-machine interaction, contained in para 15a (para 16a of the 22 August version), would be “identified” by the Group. The US asked if the Group has authority to adopt the new guiding principle; it was ultimately included in Annex IV with other guiding principles seeking and put forward for endorsement at the annual meeting of HCPs.
- Brazil, with support from Bulgaria, Austria, South Africa, Chile, Mexico, Algeria, and Costa Rica, proposed to add “including human control” in paragraph 15(a) to give context to the reference to human-machine interaction, make the link with international humanitarian law (IHL), and reflect the importance accorded to this concept by a majority of states. The US and France opposed the proposal, although the US later said that if there is not enough support for this within the new guiding principle, it could be retained in other ways. Germany agreed that this may not be right for a guiding principle; Austria reminded that human control was identified as a core concept in the 2018 chair’s summary report.
- China asked about replacing “must” with “should” in para 16(a) in relation to ensuring IHL compliance. The ICRC noted that weapons used in armed conflict must always be used in compliance with international law in particular IHL.
- The references to “command and control,” “means and methods,” and “human operators and human commanders” in paragraphs 16(d) and (e) were discussed at length following concerns posed by various states: the Netherlands (to specify operators and commanders is too limited and overlooks other actors); Russia (consistency with language found in Article 57 of AP1 of the Geneva Conventions); Israel (the role of the operator within the chain of command and control, and actual practice of national weapons reviews); among others.
- Discussion occurred on human judgement, following adjustments to para 16(f) and in particular a new sentence proposed by Chile on Tuesday, stating that “human judgement cannot be replaced by machines”. The US, France, and Israel opposed including this sentence on the grounds of needing further time to review it. China suggested an alternative formulation (“judgement of humans”). Costa Rica suggested re-ordering this sub-paragraph. The sentence was not included in the final version of the report.
- Russia opposed the inclusion of references to legal weapon reviews that would prescribe what a national weapon review should include in paragraph 16(j). Pakistan and India expressed similar views. Switzerland, the Netherlands, Mexico, and others would have liked to keep stronger language, describing legal weapon reviews as “essential”. The final report references weapon reviews as “a useful tool” to assess emerging technologies in the area of LAWS.
- Russia argued that there is no consensus of views on autonomy as a central characteristic

of weapon systems being considered by this GGE. There was broad opposition to Russia's view, including from Ireland, Belgium, Costa Rica, South Africa, Austria, Germany, Bulgaria, Brazil, and others. Many of these states reiterated that discussing the autonomy of weapon systems is the "essence of what we're doing here," as stated by Germany. Austria wondered where the common ground was at this GGE if Russia does not see autonomy as a central characteristic. Language in the final report reflects a proposal made by the US: "the role and impacts of autonomous functions in identification, selection and engagement of a target are among the essential characteristics".

- South Africa and Ireland preferred language of a previous draft report from 21 August on possible bias in data sets "that diminish, perpetuate or amplify social biases, including gender and racial bias." South Africa wondered why the latter part was deleted as no opposition had been expressed. The Chair said he simplified it to get agreement. The language on race and gender was not included in the final report.
- There were long discussions around states' willingness to say if human involvement in the development stage of AWS will not be, or may not be, sufficient to ensure compliance with IHL. The US reiterated its point that it could not support any reference to human control.
- Paragraph 22(c) was subject to extensive disagreement. France, the UK, Japan, and the US expressed support for the paragraph and agreed it enjoyed consensus. Most delegations, however, said that there is no agreement on either the risks or potential benefits of the use of AWS. Austria, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, and others suggested to delete the second sentence of the paragraph about the possibility that AWS may be useful in enhancing the implementation of IHL. They suggested moving this part to the Chair's summary. Based on suggestions by the UK and Pakistan the entire paragraph was moved to the section "that may benefit from additional clarification or review."
- Under the agenda item on the review of potential military applications, as captured in paragraph 23, Australia sought to push back on Israel's suggestion to replace "persons" and "objects" protected under IHL with "civilians" and civilian objects". Israel's suggestion was included.
- India felt that the reference to the possible effects of AWS on regional and global security and stability in paragraph 22(c) is inappropriate and suggested finding another format for this point. Pakistan responded to say this is included in the draft because it is based on a list of issues included that the Group was mandated to consider by the Fifth Review Conference and is not articulated in a way that expresses judgement.
- Russia felt that the issues of divergence listed in paragraph 23(a) should be reformulated in a more descriptive way as topics requiring further clarity or review, rather than being points of disagreement. A few states registered concern that the divergent views described in the second half of this sub-paragraph are framed as "doubts". This paragraph was reformulated to indicate that the two groupings of states indicated in this paragraph each "argued" their views. The US explained it views the chapeaus of paragraphs 17, 19, and 23 as being a "bigger tent" for addressing aspects that were considered but not resolved.
- Austria noted the Group's work and state views on possible options was not reflected in the draft report as of 21 August, prompting inclusion of new paragraph 25 in the final version of the report, which also highlights the risks and challenges posed by AWS.

Recommendations

- The Group agreed to leave it to the meeting of HCPs in November to decide on the number of days for meetings in 2020 and 2021, based on Russia's continued opposition to the Chair's proposal of a total of 30 days and compromise suggestion of 25 days.
- Russia said it preferred the term legal, military, and technological "aspects," instead of "dimensions". The final report adopted Russia's proposed language.

- There was a discussion around the types of experts that should be included to GGE meetings. The US argued that it wanted to preserve the idea that legal, technological, and military experts should come from states parties. The US' concern, and Russia's request for further clarification of previous language led the following wording, "Delegations are encouraged to include legal, technological and military experts."
- Brazil suggested the inclusion of a reference to "opportunities for international cooperation" in paragraph 24(d). The US wasn't clear about the meaning of international cooperation in this context. The reference was not included in the final report.
- Russia argued against the inclusion of "development" in the last part of paragraph 24(e), which would allow for the possibility to develop "aspects of the normative and operational framework" of AWS. It argued that "development" was not part of the Group's mandate. Mexico, Ecuador, Germany, Chile, Austria, Brazil, and South Africa observed that they already showed great flexibility in accommodating Russia's concerns in other areas. Germany, Chile, and Brazil affirmed that the mandate was broad enough not to rule out the development of operational and normative frameworks. The Chair suggested to change it into "possible development" as compromise, which Russia did not accept. Russia proposed to replace "development" with "exploration." This didn't find acceptance. To compromise, the US suggested "identification," the Netherlands "evolving," the UK "elaboration," and Poland "progress on aspects of possible development". States couldn't agree on any of these suggestions, and following Austria's proposal, agreed to leave "development" in brackets, to be discussed at the meeting of HCPs in November.
- There was a discussion if a report with square brackets could be adopted. India cautioned that this would set a precedent for future meetings and other fora. The final report was adopted as a whole with square brackets around the amount of days scheduled for the 2020 and 2021 meetings, as well as the term "development" of normative and operational frameworks.



CCW REPORT

Reaching Critical Will is the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the oldest women's peace organisation in the world. Reaching Critical Will works for disarmament and the prohibition of many different weapon systems; confronting militarism and military spending; and exposing gendered aspects of the impact of weapons and disarmament processes with a feminist lens. Reaching Critical Will also monitors and analyses international disarmament processes, providing primary resources, reporting, and civil society coordination at various UN-related forums.



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