Position Paper
Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee
Agenda: Discussing Meaningful Human Control in the Age of Autonomous Warfare: Negotiating a Legally Binding International Framework for Artificial Intelligence-Enabled and Autonomous Weapons Systems.
Country: Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam believes that the topic of AI enabled and Autonomous Weapons is of utmost importance. Autonomous Weapon Systems are weapons which require none or minimal human interference to work. These weapons can automatically track and attack incoming missiles and human beings.

Although these weapons seem great, they have many issues. They cannot differentiate between an enemy and an escaping civilian. These weapons are dangerous to human life. There have been multiple instances where the use of Autonomous Weapon Systems had led to tragic loss of life. One of these is the incident in Libya, where Kargu-2, a lethal autonomous weapon system tracked down and killed retreating enemies itself (1). Another historical proof of automated system failure is the 1991 Dhahran incident during the Gulf War, where a Patriot air-defense system running continuously for over 100 hours suffered a timing calculation error. This caused the system's radar to completely miss an incoming missile, resulting in the tragic deaths of 28 U.S. soldiers and nearly 100 injuries (2). When automation fails with such lethal consequences in semi-autonomous frameworks, deploying fully autonomous weapons or defence systems can and most likely will cause loss of life and violations of human rights.

Viet Nam itself remains in danger of old autonomous weapons with hundreds of mines remaining in our land even decades after wars, claiming tens of thousands of civilian lives decades after conflict ended. Unchecked autonomous weapons risk becoming the modern version of lingering landmines, working without human feelings.

Viet Nam strongly recommends a UN-governed framework, which does not fully ban defensive tech but strictly limits and regulates the use of AI and Autonomous Weapons in warfare through a two-tiered approach. First, we must prohibit fully autonomous systems that operate without human control or fail to distinguish civilians. Second, we must ensure that regulations do not become a technological barrier blocking developing nations from developing advanced technologies for civilians. Through cooperation under the United Nations, we can ensure that future technology saves innocent lives rather than endangering them.

Sources:

1. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3905159?ln=en&v=pdf
2. https://www.gao.gov/assets/imtec-92-26.pdf