

**Statement by PAX
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**Convention on Conventional Weapons Meeting of High Contracting Parties
Geneva
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Dear Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of my organisation PAX, I would like to express my gratitude to Ambassador Biontino for his thorough preparations to enable all of us to get the most out of this week's meeting. Let me say a few words about our expectations for this week's informal meeting.

PAX co-founded the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots due to a range of legal, security and operational concerns but first and foremost because of ethical concerns. For us ethical considerations are the overarching chapeau and all legal, operational or strategic considerations on autonomous weapons can and should always be seen in conjunction with ethics and morality.

As often stated, the issue of LAWS is a game changer: we are asking ourselves questions that previous generations could not even imagine. But we, here at the CCW, have to ask ourselves these questions and moreover come up with answers. PAX continues to welcome CCW talks on this issue, but not indefinitely. The CCW's agreement to consider this matter should lead to new international legislation prohibiting lethal autonomous weapons systems.

A long process does not adequately consider the urgency with which this issue should be addressed. A weak or no result does not do justice to the grave concerns that we have with these systems and moreover the concerns we have with how these systems will destabilize global security even further. We must act now, so that we do not risk taking the human out of the loop and thereby taking humanity out of the loop. We expect that states will work this week towards consensus on a more ambitious mandate aimed at achieving a strong outcome.

Regardless of the various terms we use, be it appropriate judgement, human intervention, human control, human oversight or, what we prefer, meaningful human control, many states agree that humans should be involved in lethal force decisions at some level. The question is at what level and how to make this implicit notion explicit. This week, states should strongly affirm the necessity of meaningful human control over the capacity to select and attack targets.

Outside of the CCW process, the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots calls on all states to develop and articulate national policies on LAWS in consultation with relevant actors, including civil society. In the Netherlands, an independent commission was asked by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence to look into the issue.

And although PAX does not agree with the definitions used within the lengthy report, nor with the positive response by our government to this report, we do welcome the discussions and the elaborate thinking that is spurred by it. PAX calls upon all states to follow suit and start or continue these discussions in capital and urgently develop policies on this issue.

We sincerely hope that this week will encourage states to call for a Group of Governmental Experts that can begin formal negotiations on a new CCW protocol on lethal autonomous weapons systems. And we sincerely hope the CCW lives up to its important task and proves it can act swiftly and effectively to protect civilians and military from autonomous weapons.

Thank you.