

SUPPORT THE INVESTOR STATEMENT ON REGULATING AUTONOMOUS WEAPON SYSTEMS



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Stop Killer Robots coalition and Etica Funds – Responsible Investments urge institutional investors to support the Investor Statement on regulating autonomous weapons systems.

This Statement aims to oppose digital dehumanisation and reduce automated harm

Digital dehumanisation is the process whereby humans are reduced to data, which is then used to make decisions and/or take actions that affect their lives. This process can deprive people of dignity, demean their humanity, and remove or replace human involvement or responsibility with automated decision-making technology.

Automated harm occurs when such decision-making systems negatively impact human safety. The potential automated harm arising from autonomous weapons includes injury or death. As such, the digital dehumanisation caused by autonomous weapons is at the severe end of the scale of harm caused by automated decision-making or autonomous technologies.

The adoption of an international treaty to prohibit and regulate autonomous weapons systems will be a crucial step towards supporting the development of legal and other norms to ensure meaningful human control over the use of force, oppose digital dehumanisation, and reduce automated harm.

INVESTOR STATEMENT

We the undersigned, as investors, asset owners, and asset managers, are deeply concerned about the ethical, legal, and humanitarian risks posed by the development and use of autonomous weapons systems.

We call on government leaders around the world to launch negotiations for a new international treaty on autonomous weapons systems to ensure human control in the use of force and to prohibit machines that target people, reducing us to objects, stereotypes, and data points. Machines should not make life and death decisions.

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What should be the basis of an international treaty on autonomous weapons systems?

A new treaty should apply to the range of weapons systems that detect and apply force to a target based on sensor inputs, rather than an immediate human command. In these systems, after activation by a person, there is a period of time when the weapon system can apply force to a target without additional human approval.

This means the specific object to be attacked, and the exact time and place of the attack, are determined by sensor processing, not by humans. This range of systems is what we call 'autonomous weapons'.

Within that broad scope of technologies, a new legal treaty should combine prohibitions and regulations

A new treaty should prohibit:

- autonomous weapon systems that do not allow for meaningful human control. Examples include autonomous weapon systems where the location or duration of their functioning cannot be limited, or weapon systems where mission parameters (e.g. time and space of operation or type of target) could change during an operation without human approval.
- autonomous weapon systems that would target humans, even when used with human control. By processing people through sensors, such systems reduce people to objects and so dehumanise civilian and military victims alike. They also pose other moral, legal and practical problems. We reject the automated killing of people.

A new treaty should regulate:

systems that are not prohibited, but that must still be used with meaningful human control. To ensure this, the treaty should include what are called 'positive obligations', i.e. rules on the design, development and use of other autonomous weapons systems. Together, these rules should require that system users understand the way the weapons system works and understand the specific context in which it might be used. These understandings are vital for a user to predict the effects they will create, and so to make real moral and legal judgements.

With the rapid speed of development in technological applications in the defence sector, it is now more urgent than ever to regulate autonomous weapons systems.



The Stop Killer Robots campaign is an international coalition of over **270 non-governmental organisations** in over **70 countries** that seeks to counter threats to humanity and human dignity through the adoption of a new international treaty to **prohibit and regulate autonomous weapons systems (AWS)**. We support the development of legal and other norms that ensure meaningful human control over the use of force, counter digital dehumanisation, and reduce automated harm.

www.stopkillerrobots.org



Etica Funds is an Italian asset management company that exclusively offers **ethical and responsible mutual funds** designed to "represent the values of ethical finance in financial markets and focus the attention of the public on socially responsible investment and corporate social responsibility" (Art. 4 of Etica Funds articles of association). **Etica Funds was founded in 2000** based on the belief that analyzing issuers (businesses and countries) from an ESG viewpoint can deliver value in terms of risk adjusted performance.

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