

ID:	Is anonymous?	Is organisation?
353	Yes	Yes
Is form complete:	Organisation name:	
Yes	Together First	
Global catastrophic risks mitigated	Risk multipliers managed	Implementation timeframe
Unknown risks	Institutions that lack inclusivity or accountability	Short
The threat from new and emerging technology	Conflict or political violence	
Weapons of Mass Destruction		

A ban on killer robots

From mustard gas to cluster munitions our international system has a long history of prohibiting forms of warfare that society deems too barbaric and dangerous. As the 1995 Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons shows, it is not necessary to wait until new dangerous technologies are in use before banning them.

DETAILS

Further information is contained in the linked submissions

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

Enhancing inclusivity and accountability in national and global governance

A small group of states are consistently thwarting progress towards a treaty under the auspices of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). If they are allowed to thwart the clearly expressed views of the majority of member states, civil society and the Secretary-General it will be indicative of a serious issue with the inclusivity and accountability of our weapons governance mechanisms.

THEORY OF CHANGE

What if political will does not exist yet

An incredibly effective and powerful coalition of civil society organisations have come together to campaign for a legally binding treaty banning killer robots. Furthermore, 30 states have explicitly called for such a treaty, and there is general agreement among more than 80 countries on the need to retain meaningful human control over the use of force. The UN Secretary-General has made campaigning for a ban on killer robots a defining element of his term of office.

However, a small group of states are consistently thwarting progress towards a treaty under the auspices of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). As a consequence it is likely that, as with landmines and cluster munitions, the prohibition treaty may need to be developed by supportive member states meeting as part of a

separate process.

Decision makers and implementers

The Secretary-General is determined to do what he can to establish a new treaty banning killer robots. He has the opportunity to push for it through the UN75 process, through the UN Panel on Digital Cooperation, and through any follow up mechanism either process establishes. With the support of a powerful coalition of states and civil society organisations he will not fail.

MITIGATING RISKS

Mitigating the threat from new and emerging technology

Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, or “killer robots” are an emerging area of serious risk. By taking meaningful human control out of the decision to take away life we create all sorts of dangerous and undesirable effects. At the most extreme end there is a risk of such technology running out of control and causing major unintended loss of life. And even if this is avoided, the technology poses multiple grave threats to our mechanisms of accountability and our ability to prevent war crimes, as well as enabling dangerous and discriminatory practices of war. Given the pace of military technology it is imperative that the international community negotiate a treaty to ban them before it's too late.

Mitigating unknown risks

In addition to the proposal's own merit, it could demonstrate the efficacy of the model of treaty based prohibitions, for the better management of global risks through treaty processes and the establishment of international standards.