A. Letter From Secretary General

Dear Delegates and most esteemed participants,

As the Co-Secretary Generals of the BJK Kabataş Foundation Schools Model United Nations Conference, it is our distinct honor to welcome you to our traditional conference, now in its second annual iteration this year.

We are delighted to collaborate with the diligent academic and organizational teams, whose dedication is truly commendable. We have worked extensively with our academic team to prepare engaging crisis and procedural committees where significant global issues will be discussed worldwide. Simultaneously, our organization team has tirelessly prepared to ensure the best conference experience for you, which will enchant these 3 days.

Delegates will have access to a wide variety of committee types and topics. Among these diverse options, delegates will have the opportunity to find a committee that aligns with their interests and select one that fits their preferred style of debate. With such broad spectrum, delegates can explore committees that resonate with their passions and engage in debates that suit their preferred style of discourse.

We aspire for this conference to act as a driving force, broadening your horizons, sparking fresh concepts, and propelling you toward greater strides in your pursuit of global leadership.

Sincerely,

Berra Gümüşler & Dila Bengisu

B. Welcome Letter from the Student Officer

Dear Delegates,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you to the Disarmament and International Security Committee at BKVMUN'25. My name is Neris, and I am a junior at Kabataş Erkek High School. I am looking forward to working with all of you as we navigate important discussions on global security challenges.

DISEC plays a crucial role in addressing international threats, fostering cooperation among nations, and ensuring stability in an ever-changing world. As delegates, you will be expected to engage in meaningful debates, collaborate with your fellow delegates, and propose innovative yet practical solutions to complex issues. Your ability to think critically and negotiate effectively will be key in shaping productive discussions and resolutions.

This conference is not just an opportunity to sharpen your diplomatic and public speaking skills but also a chance to gain new perspectives, build friendships, and develop a deeper understanding of global affairs. I strongly encourage you to come prepared, stay open to different viewpoints, and actively contribute to the discussions.

If you have any questions or need guidance, please feel free to reach out.

Best regards,

Z. Neris Bahrioğlu

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C. Introduction to the Committee

The Disarmament and Security Council (DISEC) is the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, established as such with the creation of the United Nations in 1945. DISEC mainly deals with the broad issues of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, outer space, conventional weapons, regional disarmament and security, other disarmament measures, and international security. DISEC has had a few landmark resolutions, including the first General Assembly resolution (Establishment of a Commission to Deal with the Problems Raised by the Discovery of Atomic Energy) in 1946.

D. Introduction to the Agenda Item

Autonomous weapon systems (AWS) are defined as machines that independently identify and engage with targets. The rapid development of these technologies has ignited global debate over ethics, security, and the future of warfare. Advancements made in these technologies create debates on critical elements of combat such as accountability, humanitarian values, and international law. While some countries argue that regulated AWS use might improve target precision on the battlefield, others are concerned over elements such as moral responsibility and escalating the destruction caused by war. Despite discussions made globally, conclusions remain vague. This uncertainty in international politics and rapidly developing AI technologies highlight the urgent need for dialogue to resolve technological threats with universal consensus.

Autonomous weapons make decisions in milliseconds without human control, creating an ambiguity about who to hold accountable. The dual-use nature of AI complicates oversight, potentially leading to misuse by state or non-state actors. Easy and accessible AI development risks unchecked AWS development, possibly enabling access to high-end weapons like AI-driven drones to aggressive groups. Without global regulations, the world inches closer to a reality where technology escalates violence.

As AI evolves, so do the dangers of autonomous weapons. Future systems might be able to operate with total independence, handing vital decisions to algorithms that are vulnerable to things such as bias, hacking, or malfunction. International decisions must establish rules ensuring transparency, human oversight, and accountability. AWS risks normalizing tools that dehumanize conflict and undermine global stability. This is not just a policy challenge but it is a moral imperative to safeguard humanity’s future in an age of autonomous warfare.

E. Key Terms

Autonomous Weapon Systems (AWS): Weapon systems that select targets and apply force without human intervention.

Dual-Use Technology: Technology that can be used for both civilian and military applications.

Lethal Autonomous Weapons (LAWS): A subset of AWS, LAWS refers specifically to weapons designed to independently use lethal force. Unlike remotely operated drones, these systems can identify, track, and strike targets without human confirmation, raising questions about the ethical implications of fully autonomous warfare.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL): Also known as the Law of Armed Conflict, IHL controls the conduct of war, aiming to limit human suffering and protect civilians. The regulation of autonomous weapons and dual-use technologies falls under IHL, as their use must comply with principles such as proportionality and distinction.

F. General Overview

Autonomous weapons are systems capable of identifying, selecting, and engaging with targets without direct human intervention, utilizing artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and sensor technologies to operate independently. The term refers to devices such as drones, robots, or missile systems that can analyze data, adapt to different environments, and execute lethal force based on algorithms or real-time decision-making.

A major problem with autonomous weapon systems is attributing accountability for war crimes or unlawful use of force under international law. Current legal frameworks such as the Geneva Conventions presume human decisions in using force. However AWS fundamentally works without human oversight, and the final decision to use lethal force is made by a preprogrammed algorithm or AI. This ambiguity in the attribution of responsibility asks us the question of who should be punished in a case where a war crime is committed. Legal scholars question whether liability would fall on developers for flawed algorithms, military commanders for deploying the system, or political leaders for authorizing its use. Existing legal mechanisms lack clear pathways to hold non-human factors culpable for violations which might lead to accountability gaps, enabling state or non-state actors to evade potential

crimes. Without clear guidelines for responsibility in autonomous weapons, legal procedures will conflict with the current foundational principle of individual responsibility in international humanitarian law, leaving victims without recourse and perpetuating cycles of impunity.

Whether autonomous robots should be able to apply lethal force to humans is a question to tackle on its own. While some argue that maintaining the human "in the loop" of the machine preserves ethical judgment, practical limitations undermine this assurance. Human operators, particularly in dicey and time-sensitive scenarios, may lack the capacity to meaningfully oversee the systems' decisions, effectively reducing the human role to passive approval of the weapons' own decisions. Autonomous weapons are not equipped with the ability to understand elements critical to ethical warfare; such as civilian presence, cultural significance of sites, or surrender signals. Moreover, decreasing operators' exposition to the physical battlefield risks desensitizing the gravity of lethality, fostering a simplification of using excessive force and potentially creating a "push-button warfare". Delegating life-and-death judgments to algorithms could normalize violence and erode the moral agency that underpins just war principles.

Autonomous weapon usage risks escalating global conflict and triggering arms races, as states rush to acquire the latest technology in a fairly new and rapidly developing industry. Without established rules set specifically for them; autonomous weapons risk being designed, developed, and manufactured without global oversight, potentially causing cheap and effective weaponry leading to escalating conflicts. Due to the nature of autonomous weapons, these systems could compress decision-making speed during crises, increasing the likelihood of miscalculation, and the potential risk of overuse of lethal force thus escalating the overall damage caused by the conflict. Moreover, the current lack of legal frameworks for developing and deploying AWS might cause even minor skirmishes to spiral into full-scale warfare before international law can intervene.

Equally alarming is the proliferation of autonomous systems to non-state actors because unlike nuclear weapons, which require rare materials and infrastructure, AI-driven tools often rely on commercially available components, making them easier to develop. Terrorist groups or rogue states could deploy autonomous drones for targeted assassinations or swarm attacks, which was already seen in Libya back in 2020, where Turkish-made Kargu-2 drones allegedly hunted human targets without manual input. It is also crucial to notice that such proliferation could render international humanitarian law unenforceable, as non-state groups operate outside accountability frameworks.

As of 2025, international efforts to regulate AWS remain gridlocked within the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), despite over a decade of debates. Since 2014, the CCW on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) has convened annually, but a consensus on binding rules has not been reached. This is due to the still relevant division between a coalition of over 100 countries that advocate for a legally binding treaty to ban systems that lack "meaningful human control" over lethal decisions, and the opposition mostly including major military powers such as the U.S., Russia, and India reject preemptive bans, arguing existing humanitarian law suffices and that autonomy could enhance precision in the battlefield. Recent CCW meetings have focused on vague "guiding principles," such as human accountability and compliance with international law, but this mere talk without a set direction lacks a clear answer to the problem. Without progress toward a treaty, the CCW risks becoming a forum for "dialogue without direction".

G. Timeline of Key Events

1940s (WWII) – Early concepts of automated defense systems emerged during WWII, such as radar ballistics and anti-aircraft technology.

1970s – The U.S. developed the Phalanx Close-In Weapon System (CIWS), an early automated system capable of targeting without human control.

2001 – The U.S. deployed armed Predator drones in Afghanistan, sparking debates about remote-controlled and autonomous weapons.

2012 – Human Rights Watch released "Losing Humanity", a report calling for a preemptive ban on fully autonomous weapons.

2013 – Campaign To Stop Killer Robots publicly launched this year, being the major NGO advocating a ban on AWS.
The UN also held its first formal talks on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). CCW gathered every year in order to discuss AWS from this point on.

2015 – Over 1,000 AI researchers and experts signed an open letter urging a ban on offensive autonomous weapons, citing ethical risks.

2018 – CCW talks failed to reach consensus on regulating AWS, but agreed to continue discussions and adopted 11 non-binding guiding principles.

2019 – UN Secretary-General António Guterres called for a ban on "killer robots," emphasizing the need for human control over lethal force.

2021 – The U.S. updated its Department of Defense Directive 3000.09, mandating human judgment for "use of force" but allowing autonomous defenses.

2023 – Global "REVIVE" coalition formed to push for binding treaties, while the UN adopted a resolution to study LAWS risks and regulations.

H. Major Parties Involved

Belgium:

Belgium supported a proposal to begin multilateral talks on lethal autonomous weapons systems in November 2013. It says that "from an ethical and humanitarian point of view," it "fully shares the concerns on the possible risks and dangers" posed by such weapons. In Belgium's view, killer robots raise several problems for international law, particularly the notion that "humans would not intervene in the final decision to be taken with lethal consequences." In July 2018, Belgium's national parliament adopted a resolution endorsing a ban on the use of lethal autonomous weapons. Belgian officials have not explicitly proposed negotiating new international law, but in November 2019 acknowledged the need for international support to prohibit lethal autonomous weapons. Belgium also adopted a policy supporting a legal framework to ban fully autonomous weapons in 2021.

Brazil:

Brazil expressed several concerns over lethal autonomous weapons systems at the Human Rights Council in May 2013, including "the consequences of a lowered human cost of conflicts like the trivialization of war" and "uncertainties surrounding the accountability for killings committed by autonomous weapons." Brazil has warned that "technology is not always the best solution for our challenges" and has raised ethical, legal, moral, and other serious objections to killer robots. Brazil called for a ban on fully autonomous weapons in November 2017, stating that certain weapons systems with autonomous capabilities "will

prove to be incompatible with international humanitarian law and international human rights law."

Canada:

Canada supported a proposal to begin multilateral talks on lethal autonomous weapons systems in November 2013. It says it has "no plans to ever acquire" such weapons systems, but Canadian officials have not supported calls to negotiate a new international treaty. The Canadian Armed Forces say they are "committed to maintaining appropriate human involvement in the use of military capabilities that can exert lethal force." In December 2019, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau instructed his Minister of Foreign Affairs, François-Philippe Champagne, to advance international efforts to ban fully autonomous weapons systems.

France:

At the Human Rights Council in May 2013, France stated: "It does not possess and does not intend to acquire robotized weapons systems with the capacity to fire independently." It considers killer robots as: "weapon systems that have no human supervision once they are activated." France acknowledges that removing human control from the use of force raises complex ethical, legal, operational, and technological concerns. It has affirmed that "humans must retain the ability to take the final decision over the use of lethal force." In April 2019, however, Minister of Defense Florence Parly rejected calls to ban "weapons systems which would be able to act without any form of human supervision," while also stating that "France refuses to entrust the decision of life or death to a machine that would act in a completely autonomous manner and would be beyond any human control."

Germany:

At the Human Rights Council in May 2013, Germany urged states to be transparent concerning their development of new weapons technologies. In Germany's view, it is "indispensable to maintain meaningful human control over the decision to kill another human being." The last two German government coalition agreements have committed to work toward a ban on weapons systems that lack human control. In September 2018, Germany's foreign minister, Heiko Maas, called for a ban on fully autonomous weapons. However, German officials have not supported proposals to launch treaty negotiations.

Italy:

In April 2018, it said that "existing automated weapons systems are not lethal" and asserted that "weapon systems do not present accountability gap issues, as long as responsibility for their effects can be ascribed to the human operators who decided to field and activate them."

In October 2019, Italy emphasized that "any existing or future weapon system must be subject to human control, particularly concerning the ultimate decision to use lethal force." Italy has not acknowledged ethical and moral concerns over removing human control from the use of force or supported proposals to ban fully autonomous weapons.

Japan:

Japan regards killer robots as weapons systems that, "once activated, can effectively select and engage a target without human intervention." Japan urges the peaceful use of robotics and says it has "no plan to develop robots with humans out of the loop, which may be capable of committing murder." Japan has recently adopted a firm policy against the development of fully autonomous lethal weapons, asserting that such arms should never be allowed worldwide.

China:

At the Human Rights Council in May 2013, China supported beginning multilateral talks on lethal autonomous weapons systems, which it described as "highly complex." China has highlighted the potential for fully autonomous weapons to upset the international strategic balance and affect arms control. In December 2016, China said that such weapons "present considerable uncertainties" for compliance with international humanitarian law and expressed its desire for precautionary measures, highlighting the precedent provided by the ban on blinding lasers. In April 2018, China called for a ban on fully autonomous weapons but later clarified its call was limited to use only and not development and production. Since then, China has not explicitly repeated its call for a new international treaty to ban fully autonomous weapons.

India:

At the UN General Assembly in October 2013, India supported a proposal to begin multilateral talks on lethal autonomous weapons systems. India has stated several times that challenges over such weapons must be resolved "in a manner that does not further widen the technology gap between states or encourage the use of lethal force to settle international disputes." India has expressed concern that using the concept of meaningful human control could risk legitimizing such weapons systems. In March 2019, India said that "responsibility for development, production and deployment" of lethal autonomous weapons systems "should rest with the concerned state" but also said that "associated risks as regards

proliferation (including to non-state actors), need to be covered under dual responsibility of the state and by strengthening international regulations." India is investing in the development of various autonomous weapons. However, in September 2019, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh reportedly stated that "the final attack decisions should be made by humans in the military, not by artificial intelligence."

Iran:

Iran opposes a ban or new regulations on autonomous weapons, asserting that existing international humanitarian law (IHL) is sufficient and that preemptive restrictions infringe on states' rights to develop defensive technologies. In a 2023 CCW meeting, Iran argued that "new legally binding instruments are unnecessary", aligning with states like Russia and India favoring non-binding guidelines.

Israel:

In November 2013, Israel said that lethal autonomous weapons systems "do not exist currently." It has urged states to keep "an open mind regarding the positive capabilities of future lethal autonomous weapons systems," as it finds they "might ensure better compliance with the laws of armed conflict in comparison with human soldiers." Israel has rejected calls to negotiate a new international treaty to ban or restrict fully autonomous weapons. Israel is developing, testing, producing, and using weapons systems with autonomous functions.

United Kingdom:

In 2011, the UK Ministry of Defence said it has "no intention to develop systems that operate without human intervention in the weapon command and control chain, but it is looking to increase levels of automation where this will make systems more effective." With this being said, at the Human Rights Council in May 2013, the United Kingdom said it considers existing international humanitarian law to be "sufficient to regulate the use" of lethal autonomous weapons and "therefore has no plans to call for or to support an international ban on them." The UK is actively developing various weapons systems with autonomous functions.

United States of America:

A 2012 Department of Defense policy directive on autonomy in weapons systems was renewed without substantive amendments in 2018 for another five years. The policy permits the development of lethal autonomous weapons systems, but the US insists that "it neither encourages nor prohibits the development of such future systems." In August 2019, the US warned about prejudices against lethal autonomous weapons systems because, it said, they "can have military and humanitarian benefits." The US regards proposals to negotiate a new

international treaty on such weapons systems as “premature” and argues that existing international humanitarian law is adequate. The country is investing heavily in military applications of artificial intelligence and developing air, land, and sea-based autonomous weapons systems.

I. Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW): Since 2013, the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) within the CCW framework has debated AWS regulation. However, due to disagreements among member states, no legally binding resolution has been passed. The GGE continues to discuss ethical, military, and humanitarian concerns.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots: A coalition of NGOs, activists, and humanitarian organizations advocating for a preemptive ban on fully autonomous weapons. This campaign has pushed governments to recognize the risks of AWS and supports binding regulations.

The European Parliament Resolution on Autonomous Weapons: The EU Parliament passed a non-binding resolution urging the international community to prohibit LAWS, emphasizing human control and ethical concerns.

J. Relevant UN Treaties, Resolutions, and Events

- UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/36 (2018) – Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems Debate: Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security
- The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) (1980) – Ongoing UN Group of Governmental Experts on AWS: Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects
- UN Secretary-General’s Disarmament Agenda (2018) – Securing Our Common Future
- The Geneva Conventions (1949) – International Humanitarian Law (IHL)
- UN Human Rights Council Resolution 41/11 (2019) – Human Rights and AI in Armed Conflict
- The Arms Trade Treaty (2013) – Regulation of AWS Components

- The Outer Space Treaty (1967) – Preventing AI Weaponization of Space

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