

**Question for written answer P-007397/2017
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

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Subject: VP/HR - The EU's position on lethal autonomous weapon systems

The UN CCW Group of Governmental Experts is currently negotiating the UN's approach to lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS).

After four years of negotiations, most states are calling for a legally binding instrument on LAWS, while 22 countries support a global ban.

LAWS would remove human responsibility for the battlefield, with weapon systems making lethal decisions of their own accord. If widely spread, this would entail the largest military technological leap since the invention of nuclear weapons, creating existential risks for international peace and the future of humankind.

Leading experts argue that LAWS should be prohibited internationally before they become widespread¹. Since 2014, the European Parliament has repeatedly called for a ban².

Even so, the EU's position on LAWS is unclear. In its statement to the UN meeting, the EEAS, speaking on behalf of the EU, encouraged 'all States to conduct reviews to ensure that any new weapon, means or methods of warfare comply with International Humanitarian Law'³. This begs the following questions:

- What is the Commission's position on an global ban of LAWS through the CCW Convention?
- Will the Commission act in any way to stop Member States from investing in the development of LAWS?

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/aug/20/elon-musk-killer-robots-experts-outright-ban-lethal-autonomous-weapons-war>

² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+MOTION+P7-RC-2014-0201+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

³ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/36078/meeting-high-contracting-parties-convention-certain-conventional-weapons-ccw-eu-statement_en