

**Forum:** Economic and Social Council - ECOSOC

**Question of:** Tackling the dispute of robotic combat systems

**Submitted by:** United States of America

**Co-submitted by:** Argentina, Australia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



- 1 The Economic and Social Council,  
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3 *Reaffirming* the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,  
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5 *Guided* by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular Article  
6 2, paragraph 4 thereof,  
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8 *Bearing in Mind* the Geneva Convention of 1949 and its predecesing documents,  
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10 *Further bearing in mind* the statements on unmanned unarmed aerial vehicles and unmanned  
11 armed aerial vehicles by the United Nations Secretary General on September 13th 2013,  
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13 *Fully aware* that an internationally accepted legal framework regarding robotic combat systems  
14 is necessary to ensure that international law and the law of war are respected in combat,  
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16 *Keeping in mind* the resolutions A/RES/68/178 and A/HRC/25/L.32 adopted by the General  
17 Assembly and the Human Rights Council respectively,  
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1. **Regrets** all civilian casualties resulting from the deployment of remote-controlled robotic systems;
  2. **Encourages** peaceful conflict management to every country;
  3. **Emphasizes**, however, that robotic combat systems are an important tool to fight the threat of terrorism all over the world;
  4. **Further emphasizes** that persons who authorize the use of, direct the use of, or operate remote-controlled robotic systems must do so with appropriate care and in accordance with the law of war, applicable treaties, weapon system safety rules, and applicable rules of engagement, and are in accordance with the chain of command;
  5. **Recommends** that in order to avoid confusion and to ensure a functioning legal framework for remote-controlled robotic systems a separated legal framework for the following should be created:

- 29 a. Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles hereafter also referred to as UCAVs,  
30 b. Unmanned Ground Vehicles hereafter also referred to as UGVs,  
31 c. Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicles hereafter also referred to as ROVs,  
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- 33 **6. Defines** semi-autonomous weapons as robotic combat systems able to investigate terrain,  
34 strategical targets, etc. autonomously, however not able to engage them autonomously;  
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- 36 **7. Calls for** an international conference on the definition of a legal framework for robotic  
37 combat systems at the UN Headquarters in New York City at which:  
38 a. representatives of all member states of the United Nations as well as scientific  
39 experts are invited to be present,  
40 b. the problems are discussed as described in clause 4,  
41 c. a legal framework for the use of UCAVs would be encouraged, which would:  
42 i. pay special attention to the fact that UCAVs are an effective weapon  
43 against terrorism,  
44 ii. acknowledge the fact that UCAVs-have been a tool to limit especially  
45 military casualties,  
46 iii. bear in mind that UCAVs are no tools for intelligence and that therefore  
47 unmanned unarmed aerial vehicles serving for intelligence purposes are  
48 not affected by the agreements made at this conference,  
49 iv. define certain criteria (ensuring the presence of targets attributed with high  
50 value and confirming this by multiple sources of information), when  
51 fulfilled, encourage or restrain the use of UCAVs,  
52 d. a legal framework for the use of UGVs would be encouraged, which would:  
53 i. stress the importance of UGVs as tools during wartime avoiding the risk  
54 of human casualties during logistic missions,  
55 ii. acknowledge their potential during asymmetrical warfare often applied by  
56 terrorist organisations endangering the crew of conventional vehicles  
57 during combat,  
58 iii. define certain criteria (ensuring the presence of targets attributed with high  
59 value and confirming this by multiple sources of information), when  
60 fulfilled, encourage or restrain the use of UGVs,  
61 e. a legal framework for the use of ROVs would be encouraged, which would:  
62 i. respect that ROVs are extensively used for rescue missions and mine  
63 neutralization,  
64 ii. define certain criteria (ensuring the presence of targets attributed with high  
65 value and confirming this by multiple sources of information), when  
66 fulfilled, encourage or restrain the use of ROVs,  
67 f. a legally binding document could be passed regulating the trade with robotic  
68 combat systems or software linked to robotic combat systems in a way that  
69 would:  
70 i. limit the trade to state-approved transactions of robotic combat systems,  
71 software linked to robotic combat systems and plans of robotic combat

72 systems in order to avoid the possibility of technology and products to be  
73 obtained by unauthorized parties,  
74 ii. ensure that all states are committed to monitor any transactions and share  
75 their data on this matter with the organisation described in clause 7;  
76 g. classify different robotic combat systems according to seize, purpose and  
77 functionality;

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79 **8. Requests** the establishment of the UN Autonomous and Semi-Autonomous Weapons  
80 Systems Monitoring Organization (UNAWASMO) which shall:

- 81 a. monitor the use of robotic combat systems in combat and army manoeuvres,  
82 b. develop a test and evaluation system for robotic combat systems which,  
83 i. allows states to test and evaluate their robotic combat systems according  
84 to this system,  
85 ii. ensures that robotic combat systems function as anticipated in realistic  
86 operational environments against adaptive adversaries and unintended  
87 engagements or the loss of control of the system to unauthorized parties  
88 are avoided,  
89 c. oversee the adherence to the possibly made agreements at the conference  
90 mentioned in clause 5,  
91 d. monitor any trade of robotic combat systems and software linked to robotic  
92 combat systems and parts of robotic combat systems,  
93 e. gain their data through contributions by the UN member states,  
94 f. be based at the UN Headquarters in New York City, NY;

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96 **9. Proposes** further training programs for operators of robotic combat systems developed by  
97 UN-ASAWSMO, which would:

- 98 a. generally sensitize operators for their work and responsibility,  
99 b. brief operators with reference to already existing laws, the international  
100 humanitarian law and ethical issues,  
101 c. stronger train operators to deal with stressful situations to:  
102 i. maintain the health of operators and avoid PTSD,  
103 ii. especially avoid missteps and therefore collateral damage during stressful  
104 operations;

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106 **10. Proclaims** that in order to comply with the law of war all parties to a conflict must ensure  
107 that any possibly deployed robotic combat systems are controlled, operated or supervised  
108 by human combatants and only controlled and operated by human combatants if lethal  
109 strikes are to be conducted;

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111 **11. Further proclaims** that operators of remote-controlled robotic weapon systems shall be  
112 defined as combatants as in the Geneva Conventions;

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- 114 **12. Urges** that an additional protocol is added to the Geneva Conventions of 1949  
115 characterized by the proclamation made in clauses 9 and 10 and further elaborating on it;  
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- 117 **13. Requests** that seeking prior approval by the relevant authority, i.e. the department of  
118 defence or comparable institutions would become necessary when employment of robotic  
119 combat systems is to be conducted on sovereign grounds different from the force  
120 employing the asset, except for emergency cases where immediate reactions are  
121 necessary;  
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- 123 **14. Recommends** that in order to identify the parties to a strike by robotic combat systems  
124 these have to carry a clear identification of the deploying country;  
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- 126 **15. Encourages** the United Nations to involve robotic combat systems into peacekeeping  
127 missions in order to:  
128 a. enhance the security of troops,  
129 b. improve capabilities of surveillance and reconnaissance in crisis areas,  
130 c. therefore, minimize civilian victims;  
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- 132 **16. Further recommends** an International Convention for the Use of Robotic Combat  
133 Systems (ICURCS) which would:  
134 a. Be signed by every country ,that actively uses robotic combat systems or  
135 possesses corresponding technologies,  
136 b. generally recommend to ban LAWs,  
137 c. presume human intervention before every kind of armed attack of robotic combat  
138 systems;  
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- 140 **17. Proposes** the implementation of the Robotic Combat Control Organization (ROCCO),  
141 which:  
142 a. is to be recognized by all member states,  
143 b. acts independently and is not to be influenced by a nation’s personal interest,  
144 c. invites all members to provide the organization with incriminatory evidence about  
145 misuse of drones in combat:  
146 i. is therefore a portal opened for any person to give evidence anonymously,  
147 d. is funded through regular payments by all UN Member States,  
148 e. is staffed with own analysts to control drone activity in combat,  
149 f. publishes its reports once a year to ensure transparency and proper work of the  
150 organization,  
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154 **18. Urges** for further financial investments in the sector of non-lethal drones through the  
155 establishment of a fund, which:

- 156 a. Benefits and promotes developers of new technologies,
- 157 b. Is financed by private and official investments by governments,
- 158 c. Financially supports training programs as mentioned in the resolution,
- 159 d. Supports developing countries in implementing the given guidelines,
- 160 e. Offers financial support for developing countries,
- 161 f. Financially supports programs for economical and developmental cooperation  
162 among developing countries;

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164 **19. Encourages** scientific development of robotic combat systems by authorized parties, in  
165 order to:

- 166 a. reduce the collateral damage caused by attacks of robotic combat systems,
- 167 b. ensure better communication between parts of the army and controllers of robotic  
168 combat systems to, during missions, prevent:
  - 169 i. targeting non-combatant parties,
  - 170 ii. by accident targeting combatant parties other than originally intended by  
171 the controlling party,
- 172 c. lessen the number of controllers of robotic combat systems having PTSD and  
173 other health issues,
- 174 d. prevent robotic combat systems from being hacked, hijacked and/or by any other  
175 way being stolen by unauthorized parties from authorized parties;

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177 **20. Recognizes** the will of a considerable amount of UN member states to ban drones with  
178 the ability to kill and maim human beings;

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180 **21. Decides** to remain actively seized on the matter.