Resolution on autonomous weapon systems

2018/2752(RSP) - 12/09/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 566 votes to 47 with 73 abstentions a resolution on autonomous weapon systems.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA, GUE/NGL, and EFDD groups.

Parliament called for the adoption of an **EU common position** on lethal autonomous weapon systems that ensures **meaningful human control** over the critical functions of weapon systems, prior to the November 2018 meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. It noted that an unknown number of countries, publicly funded industries and private industries are reportedly developing lethal autonomous weapon systems, which are weapon systems without meaningful human control over the critical functions of selecting and attacking individual targets. Such weapons systems range all the way from missiles capable of selective targeting to learning machines with **cognitive skills** to decide whom, when and where to fight. Parliament considered that human involvement and oversight are central to the lethal decision-making process, and stressed the fundamental importance of preventing the production of any lethal autonomous weapon system lacking human control in **critical functions** such as target selection and engagement. It also noted that such systems could malfunction on account of badly written code or a cyber-attack perpetrated by an enemy state or a non-state actor. In August 2017, 116 founders of leading international robotics and artificial intelligence companies sent an open letter to the UN calling on governments to prevent an arms race in these weapons.

Parliament recalled its position of 13 March 2013 on the Regulation on the European Defence Industrial Development Programme, and underlined its willingness to adopt a similar position in the context of the upcoming defence research programme, the defence industrial development programme and other relevant features of the **post-2020 European Defence Fund.**

It underlined the fact that none of the weapons or weapon systems currently operated by EU forces are lethal autonomous weapon systems. Members called for the **expansion of the EU's role** in global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, and stressed the need for the EU to speak in relevant forums with **one voice** and share best practices on the matter of lethal autonomous weapon systems, and garner input from experts, academics and civil society.