

Canada's Views on Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain and its Implications for International Peace and Security

Resolution 79/239, "Artificial Intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security", is an important mechanism to emphasize the risks and benefits that AI can have on international peace and security. It also establishes the need for collaborative efforts to ensure that a global baseline of responsible governance is agreed and implemented. This will both mitigate the inherent risks associated with AI technology and prevent misuse, including by hostile actors.

AI has the potential to deliver global benefits to humanity. However, there is also a risk that it may widen the divide between those able to access the technology and those who are not, potentially exacerbating global inequality, which could in turn negatively impact peace and security. From the perspective of military adoption, there is also a risk that while most states will adopt and adhere to international norms and guardrails for acceptable use, others may not, potentially heightening the risk of an asymmetric AI arms race.

With these challenges in mind, Canada welcomes Resolution 79/239's recognition of the importance of international law to AI in military contexts, including, where applicable, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We believe in the necessity of carefully balancing the protection of sensitive military technologies with the promotion of more widespread use of commercial AI capabilities, underpinned by internationally agreed responsible governance standards.

While recognizing the challenges with the development and use of AI, including unintended bias concerns, if implemented according to responsible standards integrated into AI design and development, AI application in a military context has the potential to deliver outputs that enhance the ability to comply with applicable laws and regulations, and to better inform decisions in a way that positively impacts peace and security by minimizing human error. For instance, AI tools can be used to better predict and manage responses to fire and flood events, map food insecurity, mitigate against civilian casualties during conflict, and predict population displacements due to conflict or natural disaster.

Canada's approach to AI in military contexts emphasizes the importance of respecting human dignity in all circumstances, and approaches AI enablement as a human-centered enterprise, including through appropriate oversight and assurance mechanisms, and ensuring compliance with applicable international law, especially international human rights law, and international humanitarian law.

Canada recognizes the need for lawfulness, accountability, transparency, reliability, governability and equity throughout the AI life cycle (from concept design, through development, testing and evaluation, deployment, use, and decommissioning), as well as the centrality of maintaining human control and oversight to ensure responsible and ethical use of the technology. This comprehensive approach to system design will ensure compliance with applicable national and international law, applied and enforced through appropriate legislation, policy, strategies, norms, and measures.

The rapid pace of AI development and adoption poses challenges, as states race to deploy new military AI capabilities in a normative and legal environment that may struggle to keep pace with the rate of technological innovation. In today's geopolitical environment, collaboration between

allies and partners is of strategic importance to deliver effective and interoperable military capabilities at the pace of relevance.

Emphasis on adherence to common standards and collaborative approaches between allies and partners is crucial to ensure the development of capabilities that adhere to internationally agreed norms, burden share costs, protect sensitive capabilities, and ensure the development of trustworthy and reliable AI systems in the military domain.

With considerable AI expertise residing in the private sector and academia, the involvement of a diverse set of stakeholders, including civil society, humanitarian organizations, academia and industry groups, will help development of a common understanding of the opportunities and risks posed by AI use in military contexts.

Building on the strong foundation laid by Resolution 79/239, we hope that future resolutions will go further in addressing the importance of the ethical considerations and risks of automation bias and of overreliance on AI by human operators. We further believe that future resolutions should elaborate the need to balance the positive effects of sharing innovative technology with protecting sensitive capabilities that could be used by adversaries and hostile actors.