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WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL
LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM

WILPF Inputs to the UN Secretary-General's Report on Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain

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On 24 December 2024, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/79/239, "Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security." This resolution requested the UN Secretary-General seek the views of states, international and regional organisations, civil society, the scientific community, industry, and others "on the opportunities and challenges posed to international peace and security by the application of artificial intelligence in the military domain, with specific focus on areas other than lethal autonomous weapons systems, and to submit a substantive report summarizing those views and cataloguing existing and emerging normative proposals, with an annex containing these views, to the General Assembly at its eightieth session."

This submission builds on the previous work that WILPF's disarmament programme Reaching Critical Will has published on this issue and incorporates intersectional, feminist, and antimilitarist perspectives on artificial intelligence in the military domain.[1]

Introduction

WILPF has opposed war and the development of technologies of violence since its founding in 1915. We have consistently condemned military spending and militarism as a detriment to human life and wellbeing. Our concerns with and opposition to artificial intelligence (AI) in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security are grounded within our wider opposition to weapons, war, and violence, as well as our opposition to patriarchal, racist, and colonial power relations that are embedded within AI technology.

While there are many perils of the military use of AI; this submission is focused on the following issues:

1. The need for human emotion, analysis, and judgement in relation to the use of force;
2. The existence of gender, racial, and other bias in AI technology and the implications for digital dehumanisation;
3. The impacts of military use of AI on privacy and personal data;
4. The environmental harms exacerbated by the military use of AI; and
5. The dangers of war profiteering and arms racing.

Due to the concerns raised in this submission and in other spaces, we oppose the military use of AI. This technology, rather than placing limits on violence or harm, expands both. Governance is insufficient in the face of the profits and power the developers of these technologies seek. Prohibition of military use of AI is the only responsible path for human and planetary well-being.

[1] See for example Ray Acheson, *Autonomous Weapons and Patriarchy* and *Autonomous Weapons and Gender-Based Violence*, Reaching Critical Will of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 2020, https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/publications-and-research/publications/14975-feminist-perspectives-on-autonomous-weapon-systems; *WILPF Submission to the UN Secretary-General's Report on Autonomous Weapon Systems*, May 2024, https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/publications-and-research/publications/17181-wilpf-submission-to-the-un-secretary-general-s-report-on-autonomous-weapon-systems; *A WILPF Guide to Killer Robots*, March 2019, https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/publications-and-research/publications/13601-a-wilpf-guide-to-killer-robots.

Emotions versus hallucinations: the need for meaningful human control over the use of force

The use of force has already become too disengaged from human involvement with the use of armed drones and other remote-controlled weapon systems to preserve international peace and security. The use of AI by the military in relation to the use of force will go even further, devolving life and death "decision-making" to software and sensors. AI lacks the inherently human characteristics such as compassion that are necessary to make complex ethical choices. It also lacks the accuracy or ability to rigorously assess, interpret, and comply with international law, including international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL). And, by separating people from the use of force or act of violence, the use of AI in military operations or weapon systems raises serious questions about accountability and justice.

The function of human emotion

Algorithms would create a perfect killing machine, stripped of the empathy, conscience, or emotion that might hold a human soldier back. Proponents of the use of AI in the military domain have argued that lack of emotion is exactly what would make AI "better" than human soldiers. They say machines would do a better job of complying with the laws of war than humans do, because they would lack human emotions. But AI would not possess mercy or compassion. It would not be able to make an ethical calculation or understand the value of human life. AI would not hesitate or challenge a commanding officer's deployment or instruction. It would simply do as it has been programmed to do—until the point where machine-learning functions could even supersede any form of human control and obscure the methods and means by which the system "decided" to take specific actions (known as the "black box" problem with AI; more on this below).

"Emotions are a key part of the human psyche, indispensable for effective and flexible moral evaluation, reasoning, intuition, empathy, self-regulation, and the ability to navigate multiple reasoning systems at once," writes scholar Joanna LD Wilson.[2] Working from this same understanding, retired US Air Force Deputy Judge Advocate General Charles Dunlap has questioned the extent to which an algorithm "could ever substitute for the judgment of the commander," arguing that "the linear, mathematical nature of computer processes may never be able to replicate the nonlinear and often unquantifiable logic of war."[3]

While WILPF opposes war, we also assert that any decision to use force should be made with great care and respect for the value of human life. From a moral perspective, the power to come to such a decision should rest with humans, because they are endowed with reason and possess "prudential judgment," the ability to apply broad principles and past experience to particular situations.[4] The exercise of prudential judgment depends on more than numeric analysis of data about lawful and unlawful attacks; it would be impossible for AI, no matter how much data it could process, to exercise this sort of judgment.

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[2] Joanna LD Wilson, "AI, war and (in)humanity: the role of human emotions in military-decision making," *Humanitarian Law & Policy*, 20 February 2025, https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2025/02/20/ai-war-and-in-humanity-the-role-of-human-emotions-in-military-decision-making.
[3] Charles J. Dunlap Jr., "Organized Violence and the Future of International Law: A Practitioner's View of the Emerging Issues," *Proceedings of the ASIL Annual Meeting* 93 (1999): 6–15.
[4] "Killer Robots and the Concept of Meaningful Human Control," Human Rights Watch, April 2016, https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/11/killer-robots-and-concept-meaningful-human-control.

The challenge of AI hallucinations

Furthermore, AI outcomes are arguably no more predictable, or reliable, than human behaviour—and are likely less so. The "black box"—an AI system whose inputs and outputs are not visible—is one of many concerns raised by engineers and tech workers opposed to the development and use of AI by the military. Machine-learning applications provide systems with the ability to automatically learn and adapt based on experience, without being explicitly programmed. This raises extreme risks if machines are programmed to identify, track, or attack human beings: if a system can change its behaviour, without its programmer or user understanding how or why, the weapon has the potential to do things for which it was not originally programmed.

Former Google engineer Laura Noland has warned, for example, "There could be large-scale accidents because these things will start to behave in unexpected ways."[5] If an AI system confronts unexpected radar, bad weather, or nuanced human behaviour, how will it respond? Its response will be unpredictable, including to the designer and the operator.

Other tech workers have warned about AI hallucinations, misinterpretations, and inaccuracies. AI has been found to be "worse than humans in every way at summarising information,"[6] and the military use of AI raises extreme dangers in this regard. In early 2025, when OpenAI announced that it had signed an agreement with the US National Laboratories, the tech journal *Futurism* expressed significant concerns. It highlighted "plenty of instances of OpenAI's AI models leaking sensitive user data and hallucinating false claims with abandon" and asked how the company could ensure that its "frequently lying AI chatbots won't leak the nuclear codes or trigger the next nuclear war."[7]

As Dan McQuillan, author of *Resisting AI,* has said, "AI weaponisation is dangerous not because AI is all-powerful but exactly because AI is a bit crap. It's doesn't deliver for socially useful production but it's great for violent destruction where collateral damage (false positives/confabulation) is seen as a bonus."[8] Thus, AI systems cannot be relied upon to comply with IHL or IHRL. An AI system charged with identifying targets might accidentally identify civilians by misinterpreting data, or by being programmed with incomplete or biased data. Such systems would also lack the human judgment necessary to evaluate the proportionality of an attack, distinguish civilian from combatant, and abide by other core principles of the laws of war. Bonnie Docherty of Harvard Law School's International Human Rights Clinic has noted:

> Although progress is likely in the development of sensory and processing capabilities, distinguishing an active combatant from a civilian or an injured or surrendering soldier requires more than such capabilities. It also depends on the qualitative ability to gauge human intention, which involves interpreting the meaning of subtle clues, such as tone of voice, facial expressions, or body language, in a specific context.[9]

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[5] Henry McDonald, "Ex-Google worker fears 'killer robots' could cause mass atrocities," *The Guardian*, 15 September 2019.
[6] Cam Wilson, "AI worse than humans in every way at summarising information, government trial finds," *Crickey*, 3 September 2024, https://www.crikey.com.au/2024/09/03/ai-worse-summarising-information-humans-government-trial.
[7] Victor Tangerman, "OpenAI Strikes Deal With US Government to Use Its AI for Nuclear Weapon Security," *Futurism*, 31 January 2025, https://futurism.com/openai-signs-deal-us-government-nuclear-weapon-security.
[8] Dan McQuillan, Bluesky, 17 March 2025, https://bsky.app/profile/danmcquillan.bsky.social/post/3lkl2r2zua222.
[9] *Making the Case: The Dangers of Killer Robots and the Need for a Preemptive Ban*, Human Rights Watch and International Human Rights Clinic, 2016, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/arms1216_web.pdf.

Putting checks on violence

In short, as Wilson writes, “The problems of the human condition cannot be solved by reducing human input.” Instead, she argues, “whatever little humanity might remain on the battlefield must instead be protected and enriched as much as possible, in order to provide as effective protections as possible against human suffering in war.” To this end, human emotion, analysis, and judgement are essential to provide “an important check on violence (and its humanitarian consequences) in complex contemporary battlefield situations, where, for example, the traditional understanding of the principles of distinction and proportionality may be exceedingly difficult to discern and apply.”[10]

This check on violence is imperative to international peace and security. By delegating “decisions” about violence to machines, the military use of AI risks lowering the threshold for war. The implications of having an amoral algorithm determine when to use of force means that we will likely see more conflict and killing, not less.

As we have seen with armed drones, remote-controlled weapons have made war less “costly” to the user of the weapon. Operators safely ensconced in their electronic fighting stations thousands of miles away do not face immediate retaliation for their acts of violence. While this is obviously attractive to advanced militaries, which do not have to risk the lives of their soldiers, it arguably *raises* the cost of war for everyone else. It lowers the threshold for the use of force, especially in situations where the opposing side does not have equivalent systems to deploy in response.

As will be explored further below, the use of AI by militaries is already speeding up decision-making processes and unlawfully, incorrectly, and unethically targeting humans for execution. Right now, the military use of AI is not about an epic battle of robots, in which machines fight machines. Instead, AI is being used to help advanced militaries kill “more efficiently”. The features that might make AI-enabled weapon technology or targeting systems “attractive” to technologically advanced countries inevitably push the burden of risk and harm onto the rest of the world. Countries of the Global South, for example, are not the ones developing or using AI weapons or other AI-enabled military systems, but are already becoming the battlegrounds for the testing and deployment of these technologies. It will be the rich countries using this technology against the poor—and the rich within countries using it against their own poor, through policing, border enforcement, and internal oppression.

The delegation of decisions about the use of force or violence also has implications for accountability and liability. Who is responsible if an AI system leads to the death of civilians or the destruction of houses, schools, and marketplaces? Is it the military commander who ordered its soldiers to use the system? The programmer who designed or installed the algorithms? The hardware or software developers? We cannot lock up a machine for committing war crimes—so who should pay the penalty? This accountability gap would make it difficult to ensure justice, especially for victims.

All of these concerns have serious implications for international peace and security. The bottom line is that AI will expand, not limit, violence. Human emotion, analysis, and judgement are essential limitations to the use of force and must not be replaced or “supplemented” by AI. As Valerie Morkevicius contends, “The awareness of the fragility of life makes us (at least on our better days) consider the killing of another as a morally serious activity, not only for the other,

[10] Wilson, op. cit.

but for ourselves."[11]

Bias and dehumanisation

Human emotion, analysis, and judgement are also relevant when it comes to bias. While bias is human, it is not only replicated but amplified by AI. In this submission, we focus mostly on gender bias, but these arguments are also relevant to bias based on race, ethnicity, religion, disability, and more.

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, and norms attributed to people based on their identity as men, women, trans, nonbinary, or gender non-conforming. Gender differs across time, cultures, and societies, but is always a function of power relations. In many cultures, patriarchy is the dominant social order, which shapes and entrenches gender as a binary cultural construction in which men have supremacy. But patriarchy is intersectional, and also creates hierarchies along the lines of race, sexuality, religion, (dis)ability, and more.

Scholars of gender and technology have long argued that gender relations are "materialised in technology".[12] That is, binary, socially constructed norms of masculinity and femininity are "embedded" in machines. More broadly, these scholars argue that technological products bear their creators' mark—technology is instilled with the framework of thought, knowledge, language, experience, and interpretation of the people who created it. It is important to note that regardless of the gender, race, or other element of identity held by any individual engineer or developer working on a particular project, bias persists due to its dominance in our collective culture and the material realities of our world.

Algorithms used in AI technologies are written by small groups of coders, who are in turn given instructions by an even smaller group of decision-makers. These technologies are largely being developed by people who have particular ideas about how society should operate, ideas that are rooted in capitalist notions of efficiency and privilege, as well as in gender and racial identities and norms. The people developing technology also tend to have ideas about what forms of harm and lethality are permissible. These notions, which are being built into their creations, are overwhelmingly contrary to feminist, egalitarian, and antiracist world views in which people are equal, and peace and justice are deserved by all.

Privacy International notes that technology is usually presented as being "gender neutral"—but the way it is developed and used is not. Surveillance, for example, is itself a tool of patriarchy that controls and limits the exercise of fundamental freedoms of people. While it may be presented as "gender neutral" or "race neutral" it is not—it reinforces and amplifies existing inequalities.[13] As just one example, *WIRED*, which recently tested an AI video generator from OpenAI, found that it "amplifies sexist stereotypes and ableist tropes, perpetuating the same

[11] Valerie Morkevicius, "Tin Men: Ethics, Cybernetics and the Importance of Soul," *Journal of Military Ethics* 13(1): 3–19.
[12] Judy Wajcman (2009: 144), Wajcman (1991: 137) Cynthia Cockburn, *Machinery of Dominance: Women, Men and Technical Know-How* (London: Pluto Press, 1985); Judy Wajcman, "Feminist theories of technologies," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34(1) (2009): 143–152; Judy Wajcman, *Feminism Confronts Technology* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991).
[13] Privacy International, *Challenging Patriarchy Through the Lens of Privacy*, 2017, https://privacyinternational.org/news-analysis/689/challenging-patriarchy-through-lens-privacy.

biases already present in AI image tools."[14] *WIRED* explains:

> Bias has plagued generative AI systems since the release of the first text generators, followed by image generators. The issue largely stems from how these systems work, slurping up large amounts of training data—much of which can reflect existing social biases—and seeking patterns within it. Other choices made by developers, during the content moderation process for example, can ingrain these further. Research on image generators has found that these systems don't just reflect human biases but amplify them.

While some well-meaning organisations or governments have pushed for programmers to account for bias, the world's largest AI producers are working in the opposite direction, to eliminate any accounting for bias. That is, they are not just actively building biased algorithms and technologies but are rejecting any attempts to mitigate such bias.

The US National Institute of Standards and Technology has issued new instructions to scientists that partner with the US Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute that eliminate mention of "AI safety," "responsible AI," and "AI fairness" in the skills it expects of members. In an interview, a researcher at an organisation working with the AI Safety Institute said that ignoring these issues could allow algorithms that discriminate based on income or other demographics to go unchecked. "Unless you're a tech billionaire, this is going to lead to a worse future for you and the people you care about. Expect AI to be unfair, discriminatory, unsafe, and deployed irresponsibly," the researcher warned.[15] Speaking at the Artificial Intelligence Action Summit in Paris on 11 February 2025, US Vice President JD Vance claimed, "The AI future is not going to be won by hand-wringing about safety."[16] The United States (and the United Kingdom) refused to sign the multilateral pledge, endorsed by 60 other governments at the Summit, to "reduce digital divides" and "ensure AI is open, inclusive, transparent, ethical, safe, secure, and trustworthy."[17]

The beliefs and biases programmed into algorithms and AI systems will perpetuate and reinforce existing norms of gender and power, possibly in ways that the engineers of these systems do not anticipate or deliberately programme—and certainly in ways that they do. As Professor Ingvild Bode notes, bias in AI systems can occur within the datasets used for machine-learning models, which can then be amplified during the design and development stage, and finally, entrenched through use. "AI technologies gain new meanings and functions—as well as potentially biases—through being used repeatedly and in an increasingly widespread way," resulting in negative feedback loops that become the basis for future decisions and outputs.[18]

Bias in data sets, design, and use can each lead to violence and harm against groups of people.

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[14] Reece Rogers and Victoria Turk, "OpenAI's Sora Is Plagued by Sexist, Racist, and Ableist Biases," *WIRED*, 23 March 2025, https://www.wired.com/story/openai-sora-video-generator-bias.
[15] Will Knight, "Under Trump, AI Scientists Are Told to Remove 'Ideological Bias' From Powerful Models," *WIRED*, 14 March 2025, https://www.wired.com/story/ai-safety-institute-new-directive-america-first.
[16] Aamer Madhani, "Vance offers an 'America First' argument on AI deregulation in his first foreign policy speech," *Associated Press*, 11 February 2025, https://apnews.com/article/vance-artificial-intelligence-summit-paris-b3c90fe7fae1cabac07f87aa3a077826.
[17] "Paris AI summit: Why won't US, UK sign global artificial intelligence pact?" *Al Jazeera*, 12 February 2025, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/2/12/paris-ai-summit-why-wont-us-uk-sign-global-artificial-intelligence-pact.
[18] Ingvild Bode, "Falling under the radar: the problem of algorithmic bias and military applications of AI," *Humanitarian Law and Policy*, 14 March 2024, https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2024/03/14/falling-under-the-radar-the-problem-of-algorithmic-bias-and-military-applications-of-ai.

Biases in terms of gender, race, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation, religion, and more are known to impact algorithms. Facial recognition software struggles to recognise people of colour; voice recognition struggles to respond to women's voices or non-North American accents; photos of anyone standing in a kitchen are labelled as women; people's bail is denied because a program decided that a woman of colour was more likely to reoffend than a white woman.[19]

Since many of these systems have demonstrated racial bias with lower performance on darker skin," warns the Algorithmic Justice League, "the burden of these harms will once again fall disproportionately on Black people."[20] Recent studies by researchers including Inioluwa Deborah Raji, Joy Buolamwini, and Timnit Gebru shows how facial recognition software exhibits gender and racial bias for gender classification.[21] A key problem is that many "benchmark datasets" are biased—they are composed predominantly of male and lighter-skinned faces.[22] When used by police or military, these types of technologies risk leading to the arrest, incarceration, detainment, or death of individuals on the basis of mistaken identity.

But beyond the horrifying problem that the bias embedded in programming will translate into mistakes in identifying targets, there is also the risk that the machine's bias would not be a mistake at all. It could be deliberately programmed to target people bearing certain "markers" or identities. Trans people have been marked surveillance on the basis of the clothing they wear.[23] Predictive policing software relies on racial profiling, geographic locations, and socioeconomic status to determine criminality.[24]

This kind of cataloguing and processing of human beings relies on the idea that human beings can and should be targeted on the basis of what they could potentially become. This concept of "inherent criminality"—that risk resides within people based on their skin colour, ethnicity, gender, or geography—is problematic and damaging.[25] Criminality, risk, and threat are not states of being. Categorising people as such is done by the most privileged in our societies and is used as a justification for mass incarceration, deportation, and extrajudicial killing. It has led certain governments to develop policies and practices for "hunting" groups of people designated "terrorists," or to target migrants as "inherently criminal elements" that require either complete assimilation or expulsion.

AI that is used to police, surveil, incarcerate, and control people, "reinforces or masks existing structural injustices, expands the reach of carceral systems under the guise of scientific rigor, and interacts in complicated ways with existing legal systems, which are ill-prepared to handle

[19] Joy Buolamwini and Timnit Gebru, "Gender Shades: Intersectional Accuracy Disparities in Commercial Gender Classification," *Proceedings of Machine Learning* 81 (2018): 1–15.
[20] Joy Buolamwini, Aaina Agarwal, Nicole Hughes, and Sasha Costanza-Chock, "We Must Fight Face Surveillance to Protect Black Lives: An urgent letter from the Algorithmic Justice League," *Medium*, 3 June 2020.
[21] Inioluwa Deborah Raji and Joy Buolamwini, "Actionable Auditing: Investigating the Impact of Publicly Naming Biased Performance Results of Commercial AI Products," AIES '19: Proceedings of the 2019 AAAI/ACM Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society, January 2019, pp. 429–435.
[22] Joy Buolamwini, "Response: Racial and Gender bias in Amazon Rekognition—Commercial AI System for Analyzing Faces," *Medium*, 25 January 2019.
[23] Toby Beauchamp, "Artful Concealment and Strategic Visibility: Transgender Bodies and U.S. State Surveillance After 9/11," *Surveillance & Society* 6(4): 356–366.
[24] Julia Angwin, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu, and Lauren Kirchner, "Machine Bias," ProPublica, 23 May 2016, https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing; Tim Lau, "Predictive Policing Explained," Brennan Center for Justice, 1 April 2020, https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/predictive-policing-explained.
[25] Micah Herskind, "Three Reasons Advocates Must Move Beyond Demanding Release for 'Nonviolent Offenders'," *Medium*, 14 April 2020.

the changes introduced by such technology."[26] Even where AI is ostensibly meant to mitigate harm, it has instead facilitated it—for example, algorithms that "score" how likely victims of domestic violence are to be abused again have failed to adequately predict harm, leading to devastating abuse and even fatalities among those assessed by the software.[27]

Bias and military use of AI

The above context is relevant for the military use of AI. Such systems will inevitably be programmed in ways that simultaneously reinforce bias and cause grave, intersectional harm based on gender, race, disability, immigration status, religion, and more.

If we look at how armed drones are used and thought about now, we can see that the development of military applications for AI will generate similar, and aggravating, risks. The arguments in favour of remote-controlled weapons, autonomous weapons, or AI-enabled weapon systems are similar: they are all described by their proponents as weapons that can limit casualties for the deploying force, by keeping their human soldiers out of harm's way; and that can limit civilian casualties in areas where they are used because they will be more precise. Those using these types of weapons can deploy violence without fear of facing physical danger themselves; and in turn argue that it will result in less harm to civilians.

Yet as we have seen with drones, the later argument is far from the case. The tools and procedures used for drone strike targeting shows the fallibility of this argumentation and the direction of travel for increasingly autonomous or AI-enabled weapon systems.

In particular, the practice of "signature strikes" has resulted in thousands of civilian casualties in drone strikes. Documents leaked to *The Intercept* in 2015 show how armed drone attacks are generally conducted on the basis of "intelligence" collected from video feeds, email, social media, spy planes, and mobile phones. This information is analysed for patterns using algorithms.[28] People—individuals or groups—are then attacked on the basis of observed characteristics, with no substantial intelligence regarding actual identity or affiliations.[29] They are attacked based on "packages of information that become icons for killable bodies on the basis of behavior analysis and a logic of preemption."[30] As Kyle Grayson explains, signature strikes depend on the identification and surveillance of a target, but these processes are underpinned with cultural dispositions that determine what is seen and how it is seen.[31]

The same risks apply to weapon systems using AI. If weapons are programmed to target and attack people using software and sensors, the risks of mistaken identity or unlawful attack run high. It is not at all clear to tech workers, scientists, academics, or other experts that these kinds of weapons will be able to comply with international humanitarian law.[32] With AI systems, the

[26] Dasha Pruss et al, *Prediction and Punishment: Critical Report on Carceral AI*, 2024, https://www.carceral-ai.com.
[27] Adam Satariano and Roser Toll Pifarré, "An Algorithm Told Police She Was Safe. Then Her Husband Killed Her." *The New York Times*, 18 July 2024, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/07/18/technology/spain-domestic-violence-viogen-algorithm.html.
[28] For details of these processes, see Cora Currier, "The kill chain: the lethal bureaucracy behind Obama's drone war," *The Intercept*, 15 October 2015.
[29] Kevin Jon Heller, "'One Hell of a Killing Machine': Signature Strikes and International Law," *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 11, no. 1 (2013): 89–119.
[30] Lauren Wilcox, "Embodying algorithmic war: Gender, race, and the posthuman in drone warfare," *Security Dialogue,* 48, no. 1 (2017): 6.
[31] Kyle Grayson, "Six Theses on Targeted Killings," *Politics* 32, no. 2 (2012): 120–128.
[32] See for example Bonnie Docherty, *Heed the Call: A Moral and Legal Imperative to Ban Killer Robots*, Human

"cultural dispositions" used in signature strikes could be programmed right into the machine. That is, targets—based on the "signatures" of human beings—will be written into algorithmic code, which the weapon system will then use to execute its mission with minimal or no human intervention or guidance.

AI systems will likely establish "target profiles," which could include infrared emissions, shape, or biometric information.[33] This will actively reduce human beings to objects—into ones and zeroes—marked by sensors and software for death or detainment on the basis of their gender, race, age, or other physiological or sociological characteristics. AI will be used essentially a categorisation machine, sorting human beings into "classifications" that are patriarchal and racist and will further embed discriminatory politics—both explicitly and inadvertently—within the weapon system. In that sense, patriarchy and racism will be given persistence within the technology.

These are not hypothetical concerns; AI is already being used in this way. The use of AI systems such as Lavender by Israel to conduct its genocide in Gaza has led to the marking of tens of thousands of Palestinians as "terrorist" suspects that are turned into "legitimate" targets for assassination. Meanwhile, AI systems such as "Where's Daddy?" have been used to track the marked individuals and carry out bombings, including in apartment buildings and houses, leading to the deaths, injury, and displacement of countless others who were not the intended, and already illegitimate, target. As an investigative report by *+972 Magazine* and *Local Call* found, the only human supervision over the AI targeting systems amounted to checking to see if the selected target was male—a check that one source said took about 20 seconds and was essentially just a stamp of approval on the AI system's choices.[34]

AI and gender-based violence

Turning the assumption that all cisgender men are militants into policy is an act of gender-based violence. In conflict, civilian men are often targeted—or counted in casualty recordings—as militants only because they are men of a certain age. While men are not necessarily targeted solely because they are men, taking gender as a key signifier as identity and exacting harm on that basis constitutes gender-based violence. That is to say, if someone uses gender as a basis for assessing whether or not a person is targeted, or if an attack is allowed (are only men present?), or in determining the impact of an attack later (i.e. during casualty recording), then they are using the gender of that person not as the motivation for the attack but as a proxy for identifying militants, or "acceptable targets". This erodes the protection that civilians should be afforded in conflict and violates many human rights, including the right to life and due process.[35]

This form of gender-based violence also has broader implications in the reinforcement of gender norms, including militarised masculinity. Assuming all military-age men to be potential or actual militants or combatants entrenches the idea that men are violent and thus targetable. This devalues men's lives—it suggests men are relatively more expendable than women, nonbinary, or gender non-confirming people. It increases the vulnerability of men, exacerbating other risks

Rights Watch, 21 August 2018, https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/08/21/heed-call/moral-and-legal-imperative-ban-killer-robots.

[33] *Killing by machine: Key issues for understanding meaningful human control*, Article 36, April 2015, http://www.article36.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/KILLING_BY_MACHINE_6.4.15.pdf.

[34] Yuval Abraham, " 'Lavender': The AI machine directing Israel's bombing spree in Gaza," *+972 Magazine*, 3 April 2024, https://www.972mag.com/lavender-ai-israeli-army-gaza.

[35] Ray Acheson et al, *Sex and drone strikes: gender and identity in targeting and casualty analysis*, Reaching Critical Will and Article 36, October 2014, http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/sex-and-drone-strikes.pdf.

adult civilian men face such as forced recruitment, arbitrary detention, and summary execution.[36]

More broadly, the reinforcement of gender norms through targeting men as militants works against the establishment and sustainment of a more equitable society. Framing men as the militants, as the "protectors" of their communities willing to take up arms, in turn reinforces notions of women and others as weak, as needing this protection. This continues to enable the exclusion of women and LGBTQ+ people from authoritative social and political roles. It also reinforces the binary between women and men as weak and strong, as passive and violent, and refuses to acknowledge other identities and experiences that do not conform to this binary. Reinforcing militarised masculinities also reproduces the power asymmetries and gendered hierarchies that underpin many acts of gender-based violence against women, LGBTQ+ people, or gender non-conforming people.

It's also important to note that the risk of gender-based violence is also heightened during and after conflict. War destabilises communities and exacerbates already existing gender inequalities and oppression of women, girls, LGBTQ+ people, and others who do not conform to societies' standards of gender norms. Thus, when analysing the potential of a weapon system or a technology contributing to or facilitating gender-based violence, it is essential to consider the ways in which it might lower the threshold for the use of force or an act of violence, leading more and more communities into situations where gender-based violence, including sexual violence, is likely to increase throughout society at large.

In this expansive view, then, the military use of AI threatens to exacerbate gender-based violence and discrimination, and to reinforce the culture of militarised masculinities and the associated subordination of women and LGBTQ+ people, racialised people, people with disabilities, and others. The ways in which technologies of remote violence such as drones and surveillance already impact upon the lives of marginalised and oppressed people need to be considered in an assessment of the military use of AI. The development and use of weapon systems that enable governments, non-state armed groups, or others to programme a machine to target people based on gender will lead to GBV. It will also further entrench gender essentialisms and intersectional discrimination. In this way, the military use of AI will not only facilitate physical violence against certain individual people or groups but will also exacerbate structural violence against women, LGBTQ+ people, Black, Indigenous, other people of colour, people with disabilities, and more.

Thus, the implications of military AI for international peace and security go beyond the immediate impacts of the use of AI for categorising, targeting, and killing people. By automating violence, AI expands violence, and by expanding violence, AI implicates more and more people in the destabilising effects and aftershocks of violence and to the amplification of underlying structural discrimination and inequalities. Furthermore, the increasing use of AI to "discover" targets as well as track and attack them, will "increase suspicion, enmity and will strain relations, not mitigate them," warns academic Elke Schwarz. "And this is precisely where we are right now with expanding and escalating tensions across the globe."[37]

[36] R. Charli Carpenter, "Recognizing Gender-Based Violence Against Civilian Men and Boys in Conflict Situations," *Security Dialogue* 37(1), March 2006.
[37] Elke Schwarz, "The (im)possibility of responsible military AI governance," Humanitarian Law & Policy, 12 December 2024, https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2024/12/12/the-im-possibility-of-responsible-military-ai-governance.

Privacy and data

The military use of AI also extends beyond the direct use of force. Militaries are also using this technology to "predict" operations of their "adveraries," determine resource allocation and streamline supply chain management, conduct surveillance, and more. The duty of care mandated by IHL, argues law professor Asaf Lubin, "is triggered by a broad range of military *activities*, not just attacks."[38]

In the context of the military use of AI, this includes a duty of care in relation to "all informational operations supporting military activity," such as intelligence gathering, data collection, and management activities, "regardless of the actor involved (private contractors or civilian intelligence agencies), and as long as these activities are intended to advance combat." Compliance with IHL means more than preventing physical harm to civilians and civilian objects; it is about sparing civilians from the "ravages of war". In the context of military AI use, this includes "protecting against dignitary harms and rights violations in the digital realm, such as privacy breaches, loss of anonymity, and freedom of expression infringements."[39]

A former Technical Sergeant in the US Air Force, Lisa Ling, has argued that military access to private data is a mounting concern. She has noted that this is exacerbated by private civilians connected to technology companies making their way into governments. This is allowing individuals and their companies to gain access to private data they should not be able to disclose or transmit for unintended purposes without notice. "A line that was once drawn in the sand protecting individuals right to privacy is now blurred in favor of privatization and data extraction," she warns. "In the framework of future war, this data can be loaded into targeting systems similar to those we saw used against Palestinians."[40]

Similarly, Heidy Khlaaf and Sarah Myers West from the AI Now Institute and Meredith Whittaker, President of Signal, argue that personal data embedded within existing commercial "foundation models" positions AI "as a link between commercial personal data and automated weapons' target lists and surveillance capabilities." They contend that "no effective approaches exist that reliably prevent personal data exposure in current foundation models, from contributing to (intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance) ISTAR capabilities."[41]

The intertwining of technology companies, governments, and militaries means loss of privacy, threats to freedom of speech, and other human rights violations. In addition, it can lead to the use of private, personal data for warfighting, policing, and repression. In the context specifically of military use of AI, it will lead to "big data, big compute, and civilian owned cloud technologies being used to grow and expand the existing Network Centric Warfare frameworks," writes Ling. This will increasingly "allow for allied western countries to surveil, and share data, bypassing state oversight processes that protect individual privacy." Meanwhile, she notes:

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[38] Asaf Lubin, "Lieber Studies Big Data Volume—Algorithms of Care: Military AI, Digital Rights, and the Duty of Constant Care," Lieber Instute West Point, 13 February 2024, https://lieber.westpoint.edu/algorithms-care-military-ai-digital-rights-duty-constant-care.
[39] Asaf Lubin, op. cit.
[40] Lisa Ling, "The New Military Tech Gold Rush," Nomos Foundation, 2 April 2025, https://www.nomosfoundation.co.uk/post/the-new-military-tech-gold-rush.
[41] Heidy Khlaaf, Sarah Myers West, Meredith Whittaker, *Mind the Gap: Foundation Models and the Covert Proliferation of Military Intelligence, Surveillance, and Targeting*, AI Now Institute, 15 November 2024, https://ainowinstitute.org/news/researchers-sound-alarm-on-dual-use-ai-for-defense.

> The technology once used to prosecute remote extrajudicial killings both inside and outside of designated war zones is expanding while (former) venture capitalists are being appointed to high positions within the U.S. government, military and intelligence establishments. The character of war is forever changed, the brutal violence of war is not. Placing Silicon Valley venture capitalists in positions of power and influence within our government almost guarantees that these technologies are not going to deter war but encourage it. This will not deter grift, but it will enable it.[42]

Environmental damage

The military use of AI also has severe environmental impacts. Data centres, which are required for the use of AI, consume enormous amounts of energy and water. According to an analysis by *The Guardian*, from 2020 to 2022 the real emissions from the company-owned data centers of Google, Microsoft, Meta, and Apple are about 662 per cent higher than officially reported.[43] And this was before the AI boom began.

AI is far more energy-intensive than typical cloud-based applications. According to a study by Goldman Sachs, a ChatGPT query needs nearly ten times as much electricity to process as a Google search, and data centre power demand will grow 160 per cent by 2030.[44] Morgan Stanley has projected data centre emissions globally to accumulate to 2.5 billion metric tons of CO_2 equivalent by 2030.[45]

Furthermore, as Greenpeace has documented, “Microsoft, Google, and Amazon all have connections to some of the world’s dirtiest oil companies for the explicit purpose of getting more oil and gas out of the ground and onto the market faster and cheaper.”[46] In other words, writes scholar and physicist M.V. Ramana, “the business models adopted by these tech behemoths depend on fossil fuels being used for longer and in greater quantities.”[47] In addition, data centres require enormous amounts of water to function. A group of academic researchers have found that operating data centres need water both for cooling and to produce electricity, which contributed to water scarcity where they are located.[48]

With the public exposure of their astronomical energy consumption, Microsoft, Google, and Amazon announced they were going to invest in nuclear power as a “green” source of energy. But nuclear power is not green, emission free, or environmentally friend. Its use can result in catastrophic accidents, as seen with Chernobyl and Fukushima, and its every day operation results in environmental contamination and extreme water consumption. Additionally, nuclear

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[42] Lisa Ling, op. cit.
[43] Isabel O’Brien, “Data center emissions probably 662% higher than big tech claims. Can it keep up the ruse?” The Guardian, 16 September 2024, https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/sep/15/data-center-gas-emissions-tech.
[44] “AI is poised to drive 160% increase in data center power demand,” Goldman Sachs, 14 May 2024, https://www.goldmansachs.com/insights/articles/AI-poised-to-drive-160-increase-in-power-demand.
[45] “Global data center industry to emit 2.5 billion tons of CO2 through 2030, Morgan Stanley says,” Reuters, 3 September 2024, https://www.reuters.com/markets/carbon/global-data-center-industry-emit-25-billion-tons-co2-through-2030-morgan-stanley-2024-09-03.
[46] “Greenpeace Report: Oil in the Cloud,” Greenpeace, 19 May 2020, https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/oil-in-the-cloud.
[47] M.V. Ramana, “Dangerous Hype: Big Tech’s Nuclear Lies,” *CounterPunch*, 1 November 2024, https://www.counterpunch.org/2024/11/01/big-techs-nuclear-lies.
[48] Md Abu Bakar Siddik, Arman Shehabi, and Landon Marston, “The environmental footprint of data centers in the United States,” *Environmental Research Letters* 16(6).

power requires uranium mining, fuel processing, and radioactive waste storage—each of which brings its own harms to local communities and the planet. Uranium mining and waste storage are usually imposed upon Indigenous Peoples, often without their knowledge or consent, leading to contamination of traditional food, water sources, and impacting culture, land use, and the health of humans and animals.[49]

Beyond the harms generated by nuclear power, it is also not a "green" solution to climate change. First, nuclear energy is not carbon-neutral—all the processes to generate nuclear power use other sources of energy and consume vast amounts of water. Emissions from nuclear are lower than fossil fuels but much higher than renewables when life cycle and opportunity cost emissions are considered. In addition, nuclear reactors frequently face shutdowns, meaning they are not always producing the promised amount of energy.

Second, the timelines for building and bringing nuclear power reactors online (upwards of a decade) are beyond the timelines for addressing climate change.[50] Small modular reactors are yet to be proven—everywhere they have been tried they have resulted in unplanned shutdowns or reduced power outputs, or have used chemically corrosive materials leading to other environmental harms. As Ramana argues,

> Because nuclear power has been portrayed as clean and a solution to climate change, announcements about it serve as a flashy distraction to focus public attention on. Meanwhile, these companies continue to expand their use of water and draw on coal and especially natural gas plants for their electricity. This is the magician's strategy: misdirecting the audience's attention while the real trick happens elsewhere. Their talk about investing in nuclear power also distracts from the conversations we should be having about whether these data centers and generative AI are socially desirable in the first place.[51]

All of these environmental harms are related to commercial use of AI. Military use of AI will only exacerbate the situation. The US military is already the largest carbon emitter on the planet.[52] Within the US government, the Pentagon is already among the top users of computing power. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace notes that the The Pentagon's IT arm, the Defense Information Systems Agency, "manages 40,000 servers containing 38 petabytes of storage and serves millions of users."[53] The more AI the military uses, the more data centres it will need to build, the more energy these centres will require for construction and operation, the more water they will consume, and the more harm they will cause to the planet and local communities. As activist Koohan Paik-Mander writes, "It's Manifest Destiny for data."[54]

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[49] For details on these and other harms of the nuclear industry, please see Ray Acheson, "Nuclear Industry," in *'Petrobromance,' Nuclear Priesthood, and Police Repression* (New York: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 2024), pp. 16–60, https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/publications-and-research/publications/17206-petrobromance-nuclear-priesthood-and-police-repression-feminist-confrontations-of-violent-industries-and-movements-to-abolish-them.

[50] M.V. Ramana, "Continued Propaganda About AI and Nuclear Power," *CounterPunch*, 13 March 2025, https://www.counterpunch.org/2025/03/13/continued-propaganda-about-ai-and-nuclear-power.

[51] M.V. Ramana, "Dangerous Hype: Big Tech's Nuclear Lies," op. cit.

[52] Neta C. Crawford, *Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change, and the Costs of War*, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Brown University, 12 June 2019, https://home.watson.brown.edu/news/2019-07-01/pentagon-fuel-use-climate-change-and-costs-war.

[53] Daniel Nasaw, "The Promises and Perils for Sustainability in the U.S. Military's Adoption of AI," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 29 May 2024.

[54] Koohan Paik-Mander, "As China and the U.S. Race Toward A.I. Armageddon, Does it Matter Who Wins?" *CounterPunch*, 7 February 2025, https://www.counterpunch.org/2025/02/07/as-china-and-the-u-s-race-toward-a-i-armageddon-does-it-matter-who-wins.

This, too, has grave implications for international peace and security. As environmental and ecological damage increase and the climate crisis intensifies, armed violence and conflicts are raging globally. Conflicts over water, land, and food security are increasing; and as people flee regions facing climate disasters, food shortages, and armed violence, they are met with violence at the borders of the countries most responsible for generating this harm in the first place. The "expanding and escalating tensions across the globe" highlighted in the previous section are only aggravated by environmental harms from the military use of AI.

War profiteering and arms racing

The expansion of war, violence, and harm facilitated by AI is one of its inevitable features.[55] As Schwarz points out, "AI is, in its technological foundations, expansionist."[56] This is true of the data AI needs to consume in order to operate, the tasks it will be used for, and the profits it generates for those who produce it. Thus, AI in the military domain needs to be examined within the broader context of AI development and use—which includes expanding violent projects of policing, border enforcement, deportation, surveillance, and increasingly, war.

Schwarz quotes philosopher Günther Anders, who argues, "Every machine is expansionistic, that is to say, imperialistic; each creates its own service—and colonial empire. And they demand from this colonial empire that it is on hand to work to the same standards as the machine does..... The machine's hunger for accumulation is insatiable."[57]

Moreover, the hunger of the companies building the machines is insatiable. The production and proliferation of new technologies of violence means money for corporations and their shareholders.

The use of AI in weapons and warfighting must be seen in the context of power and profit. In the United States, AI technologies are already being used to "predict" crime or criminal behaviour,[58] monitor and track migrants,[59] and surveil activists. It's now also going to fuel deportation and could be used soon to surveil online "sentiment" about government policies.[60] The implications of this are profound for the constitutional right to freedom of speech, as are the use of AI to crackdown on protestors—including the use of facial recognition to identify them and threats to deport them.[61] "Without democratic approval or public debate," notes journalist Malcolm Harris, "a Silicon Valley cabal is cobbling together the kind of security apparatus that has given human society collective nightmares for as long as the computer has existed."[62]

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[55] Much of this section is drawn from Ray Acheson, "The Tech Broligarch Nightmare," *CounterPunch*, 16 February 2025, https://www.counterpunch.org/2025/02/16/the-broligarch-nightmare.
[56] Schwarz, op. cit.
[57] Schwarz, op. cit., quoting Günter Anders, *Wir Eichmannsöhne* (C. H. Beck, 2001).
[58] Tim Lau, "Predictive Policing Explained," Brennan Center for Justice, 1 April 2020, https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/predictive-policing-explained.
[59] Leeza Garber and Gail Gottehrer, "AI's impact on the Trump Mass Deportation Plan Will Be Significant and Controversial," *Newsweek*, 6 February 2025, https://www.newsweek.com/ais-impact-trump-mass-deportation-plan-will-significant-controversial-opinion-2027382.
[60] Sam Biddle, "ICE wants to know if you're posting negative things about it online," *The Intercept*, 11 February 2025, https://theintercept.com/2025/02/11/ice-immigration-social-media-surveillance.
[61] Jack Poulson, "'Operation Wrath of Zion' Aims to Dox and Deport Pro-Palestinian Protestors in New York City," *Drop Site News*, 30 January 2025, https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/israel-palestine-dox-new-york-facial-recognition-ai.
[62] Malcolm Harris, *Palo Alto: A History of California, Capitalism, and the World* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2013), p. 610.

But the use of AI to suppress dissent won't stop at silencing activists, deporting migrants, or criminalising people of colour. Its expansive violence leads inevitably to systems that create targets, track them, and kill them.

This trajectory is well demonstrated by the startup Anduril. As Michael Klare explains, Anduril began in 2017 with border security contracts, installing AI-enabled perimeter surveillance systems at US military bases in Japan and the United States. Later, it was awarded a contract to build surveillance towers on the US-Mexican border. After that, contacts for surveillance and attack drones started rolling in, and the company is now developing a prototype for the Air Force's proposed Enterprise Test Vehicle, a medium-sized drone intended to launch salvos of smaller surveillance and attack drones.[63] Most recently, Anduril announced that it is building a new billion-dollar factory that could "eventually produce tens of thousands of autonomous systems and weapons each year."[64]

The violent technologies produced by these companies can be applied to borders, policing, and war—and as long as the shareholders are making a profit, it seems there is no line they won't cross. In fact, many of the tech firm celebrate the violence of their products. At a conference sponsored by Palantir in May 2024, the top weapon manufacturers and technology companies gathered for the inaugural "AI Expo for National Competitiveness." Palantir's CEO Alex Karp justified Israel's war crimes in Gaza and blasted the student encampments for Palestine, asserting, "The peace activists are war activists," while those providing the weapons "are the peace activists."[65] Similarly, Anduril's co-founder Trae Stephens has said that he believed his company's products are "just and moral" and that, like Oppenheimer, he is "accepting the fate of the divine in the execution of justice."[66]

The "fate of the divine," it seems, is about money. AI-producing companies have increasingly received military funding over the past six years. The Costs of War project found that from 2021 through 2023, venture capital firms reportedly pumped nearly 100 billion USD into military tech startup companies.[67] And according to the nonprofit research organisation Tech Inquiry, three of the world's biggest tech corporations were awarded approximately 28 billion USD from government military budgets from 2018 to 2022, including Microsoft (13.5 billion USD), Amazon (10.2 billion USD), and Alphabet, which is Google's parent company (4.3 billion USD).[68]

This building of the tech-military-industrial complex is deliberate. After leaving Google, its former CEO, Michael Schmidt, led a "campaign to revamp America's defense forces with more engineers, more software and more A.I." and installed "himself as the prime liaison between

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[63] Michael Klare, "A New Military-Industrial Complex Arises," *TomDispatch*, 9 February 2025, https://tomdispatch.com/a-new-military-industrial-complex-arises.
[64] Cade Metz and Eric Lipton, "A.I. Military Start-Up Anduril Plans $1 Billion Factory in Ohio," *The New York Times*, 16 January 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/16/technology/anduril-factory-columbus-ohio.html.
[65] Caroline Haskins, "'I'm the new Oppenheimer!': my soul-destroying day at Palantir's first-ever AI warfare conference," *The Guardian*, 18 May 2024, https://www.theguardian.com/technology/article/2024/may/17/ai-weapons-palantir-war-technology.
[66] Emma Goldberg, "Seeking God, or Peter Thiel, in Silicon Valley," *The New York Times*, 11 February 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/11/business/silicon-valley-christianity.html.
[67] Roberto J. González, "How Big Tech and Silicon Valley are Transforming the Military-Industrial Complex," Cost of War Project, Brown University, 17 April 2024, https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/2024/SiliconValley.
[68] Jack Poulson, "Militaries, Intelligence Agencies, and Law Enforcement Dominate U.S. and U.K. Government Purchasing from U.S. Tech Giants," Tech Inquiry, 5 September 2022, https://techinquiry.org/docs/InternationalCloud.pdf.

Silicon Valley and the national security community."[69] Notably, Google recently dropped its pledge not to build AI for weapons or surveillance,[70] while Microsoft has been exposed as a major provider of AI and cloud services for the Israeli military, despite the International Court of Justice ruling that Israel is plausibly committing genocide.[71] Amazon and Google provide similar services to Israel.[72]

At Israel's first DefenseTech Summit in December 2024, participants celebrated "a new and unrestrained era of techno-militarization inaugurated by Donald Trump's re-election." Palantir's Noam Perski put it, "All these people who used to be tech bros are now defense tech bros," while VC funder Lorne Abony said, "The next few years will be a renaissance for Israel. We have all the pieces in place in the [U.S.] Department of Defense."[73]

Of course, this is not just about the US and Israel. Many other countries are investing in AI for military use.

France is working hard to become a "leader" in military AI. It established the French AI agency, AMIAD, in 2024 with an annual budget of 300 million EUR and more than 100 employees. At AMIAD, "Engineers work on issues ranging from anti-drone warfare to the development of large language models to summarize hundreds of pages of documents and help with military planning." The director of the agency, Bertrand Rondepierre, said France will design its own algorithms. To this end, AMIAD is collaborating with French startup Mistral. Rondepierre noted that Mistral gives AMIAD access to technology, and the agency gives Mistral access to the military. "We no longer have this separation between tech and defense," he said, "whereas before, putting [them] in the same sentence was a bit of a heresy."[74]

Mistral is also working with Helsing, the European military technology company, to jointly develop next-generation AI systems for military use in Europe. This project will combine Helsing's work on AI-powered armed drones, which have been deployed in Ukraine, with Mistral's generative AI models, "to enhance human-AI collaboration on the battlefield" and enable weapon systems "understand their environment," communicate with operators, and speed up "decision-making".[75]

In the Republic of Korea, Hanwha, Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI), and HD Hyundai have been increasing investments in AI software for weapon systems. Hanwha Aerospace recently invested in Shield AI, a US technology startup specialising in AI-powered military systems, including autonomous flight for drone and fighter jets. KAI is working to develop a fully autonomous AI pilot system. Hyundi is working with Palantir to co-develop TENEBRIS, an

[69] Kate Conger and Cade Metz, "'I Could Solve Most of Your Problems': Eric Schmidt's Pentagon Offensive," *The New York Times*, 2 May 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/02/technology/eric-schmidt-pentagon-google.html.
[70] Maxwell Zeff, "Google removes pledge to not use AI for weapons from website," *TechCrunch*, 4 February 2025, https://techcrunch.com/2025/02/04/google-removes-pledge-to-not-use-ai-for-weapons-from-website.
[71] Ryan Grim and Waqas Ahmed, "The Israeli Military Is One of Microsoft's Top AI Customers, Leaked Documents Reveal," *Drop Site News*, 23 January 2025, https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/microsoft-azure-israel-top-customer-ai-cloud.
[72] Yuval Abraham, "'Order from Amazon': How tech giants are storing mass data for Israel's war," *+972 Magazine*, 4 August 2024, https://www.972mag.com/cloud-israeli-army-gaza-amazon-google-microsoft.
[73] Sophia Goodfriend, "With Gaza war and Trump's return, Silicon Valley embraces a military renaissance," *+972 Magazine*, 31 December 2024, https://www.972mag.com/gaza-war-trump-silicon-valley-military.
[74] Laura Kayali, "France wants its own military AI algorithms," *Politico*, 7 February 2025, https://www.politico.eu/article/france-wants-its-own-military-ai-algorithms.
[75] "Helsing and Mistral announce strategic partnership in defence AI," Helsing Press Release, 9 February 2025, https://helsing.ai/newsroom/helsing-and-mistral-announce-strategic-partnership-in-defence-ai.

uncrewed surface vessel for maritime use.[76]

India and the United States have launched an Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance to develop and build AI-enabled drones. Anduril and Mahindra Group will collaborate on the project. The initiative is part of the broader "US-India COMPACT (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) for the 21st Century" that was announced by Trump and Modi in February 2025.[77]

In the United Kingdom, Faculty AI, a company that has worked with the UK government on health and education is also developing AI for military drones. The company is working with UK startup Hadean on "subject identification, tracking object movement, and exploring autonomous swarming development, deployment and operations."[78]

In China, AI development receives substantial government support and its weaponisation is reportedly a key component of its plans to contest US military dominance. "China's huge investment in lethal autonomous weapons predates other militaries, and its military theorists are ahead of the rest of the world in building futuristic "intelligentized" models of human-machine operations," writes Matt Bartlett.[79] He notes that China is also seeking to profit from its autonomous weapons programmes, marketing it as a new export product. In 2020, a senior executive at Norinco, China's third-largest weapon company, predicted that as early as 2025, "There will be no people fighting in battlegrounds."

While this prediction has not come to fruition, the use of AI and other autonomous technologies in warfighting in Ukraine as well as by Israel in Gaza shows the harm that is generated by these technologies already. And while corporations and governments used to at least pretend to care about compliance with international humanitarian law and protecting civilians from harm, the tides are clearly turning away from the "rules-based international order" back towards "might makes right".

Discussions about the potential "governance" of the military use of AI must consider this broader context, as it has grave implications for international peace and security and the well-being of all people and the planet. Technologies designed for fascist purposes cannot be re-tasked for peace and justice.

As *WIRED* reported in the context of its reporting on the use of AI to dismantle the US government under the current presidency, the men involved in this project all "display a childish hunger for power." *WIRED* argued, "This hunger is childish in that there remains no conception of the other. Our lives do not matter to these people—in the adolescent sense of superiority that pervades the tech robber baron class we are lesser beings, therefore undeserving of say in the world they childishly believe they created." These men "act as greedy children, dumping billions into an AI industry that sucks up our water, backing Trump and fossil fuel extraction, and attacking any semblance of democracy." Within this wreckage, "there isn't space for most of us in the world that will result from their actions. They'd prefer to replace workers with robots and

[76] Kim Nam-hee and Lee Jae-eun, "South Korean defense giants bet big on AI-powered military tech," The Chosun Daily, 12 March 2025, https://www.chosun.com/english/industry-en/2025/03/12/QHC7AJBE3ZAFFIAAD2T3VSJAUI.
[77] Jon Harper, "Trump, Modi announce new US-India autonomous systems partnership," *DefenseScoop*, 14 February 2025, https://defensescoop.com/2025/02/14/trump-modi-announce-us-india-autonomous-systems-industry-alliance.
[78] Jasper Jolly, "British AI startup with government ties is developing tech for military drones," *The Guardian*, 7 January 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/jan/07/uk-government-ai-military-drones-faculty-ai-artificial-intelligence.
[79] Matt Bartlett, "The AI Arms Race in 2020," *towards data science*, 16 June 2020.

AI, with no plan for the billions of angry people who will remain except violence."[80]

And they will provide the violence through their own machines. The same technologies they used to build their world; they will oppress the rest of us with it. We can see it in the US, in Israel, and spreading elsewhere. International peace and security, and the well-being of most people on the planet, are under grave threat. The time to stop the military use of AI is now.

Recommendations

In light of the concerns raised in this submission and the implications for international peace and security, WILPF urges states:

- To refrain from using AI in the military domain and to develop national laws and regulations to this end;
- To pursue a global prohibition on the military use of AI;
- To not develop autonomous weapon systems or AI-enabled weapon systems, including those that can be used to target human beings;
- To ensure protection of personal data from use by militaries, police, border enforcement, and private companies and contractors collaborating with these institutions;
- To uphold human rights and dignity online and offline; and
- To address the environmental harms generated by data centres, cloud computing, and AI by reducing the number of these centres and energy consumption and water use, which will include reducing the overall use of AI.

WILPF also urges:

- Technology companies, tech workers, scientists, engineers, academics, and others involved in developing AI or robotics to pledge to never contribute to the development of AI technologies for military use;
- Financial institutions such as banks and pension funds to pledge not to invest money in the development or manufacture of AI for military use; and
- Activists, academics, affected communities, and others concerned about privacy rights, digital dehamanisation, environmental and climate justice, gender-based violence, and other issues to collaborate and strategise to oppose the development and use of AI in the military and other domains.

[80] Vittoria Elliot and Tim Marchman, "The Recruitment Effort That Helped Build Elon Musk's DOGE Army," *WIRED*, 8 February 2025, https://www.wired.com/story/elon-musk-doge-recruiting-palantir.