



Kingdom of the Netherlands

National contribution to SG report

Resolution 79/239 “Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security”

NEW YORK, 7 April 2025

The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the opportunity to submit its views, in accordance with resolution 79/239, adopted by the General Assembly on 24 December 2024, on the challenges and opportunities posed by artificial intelligence (AI) in the military domain to international peace and security.

The Netherlands recognises the potential military applications of AI and is committed to the responsible development, deployment and use of AI in the military domain. The fundamental position of the Netherlands is that the application of AI in the military domain must be in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

On 15 and 16 February 2023 the Netherlands hosted the first Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (REAIM) Summit. Since then, REAIM has provided a multistakeholder platform for representatives of governments, knowledge institutions, think tanks, industry and civil society organisations to discuss the key opportunities and challenges associated with military applications of AI. REAIM serves as an incubator for stakeholders to exchange ideas and best practices and to develop a common international understanding on the responsible application of AI in the military domain. Discussion takes place annually at global level and throughout the year during regional REAIM events hosted, so far, by Singapore, Kenya, Türkiye, Chile and the Netherlands.

At the REAIM 2023 Summit, the Netherlands and 57 other countries agreed a joint Call to Action on the responsible development, deployment and use of AI in the military domain. In 2024 the Netherlands endorsed the REAIM Blueprint for Action, which was agreed during the REAIM 2024 Summit hosted by the Republic of Korea and co-hosted by the Netherlands. In addition, the Netherlands has endorsed the US Political Declaration on Responsible Military Use of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy.

During the 2023 REAIM Summit, the Netherlands launched the Global Commission on Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (GC REAIM) and tasked it with identifying short- and long-term recommendations for governments and the wider multi-stakeholder community. The Netherlands is awaiting the publication of the Global Commission's strategic guidance report in September 2025.

The section below further summarises the Dutch position and sets out key issues requiring further consideration.

Opportunities for international peace and security

From a military perspective, AI's primary benefits are speed and scale. AI technology enables much faster processing and analysis of data, which provides a comprehensive and often real-time overview of on-the-ground activities and long-term developments. AI-driven scenario development and decision support systems also help commanders formulate courses of action. This improves strategic insight and the ability to respond to threats promptly and effectively.

The Netherlands believes that AI can also contribute to international peace and security by providing greater insight, improving connectivity, enhancing protection of civilians and reducing risks during front-line operations.

- AI-driven analysis and decision support systems enhance commanders' information position, with regard to both the situation on the ground and long-term strategic developments. This helps improve insight into civilian population dynamics within conflict zones, climate security challenges, gender-based violence in conflict zones and behavioural patterns of terrorist organisations, for example. This information can in turn be used to improve risk and conflict management, thereby contributing to international peace and security.

- The Netherlands sees value in the application of AI in the military domain to improve connectivity between defence forces, and between defence forces and other actors such as humanitarian assistance actors, monitoring organisations and local governments. Data can be exchanged among a large number of users, creating 'single sources of truth' with 'smart' sensors that operate in a secured, networked environment. AI agents can also be used to share data at increasingly high speeds. Improved connectivity through improved higher-speed data sharing benefits international peace and security by enhancing communication, information sharing and international cooperation, for example on early warning systems and crisis management.
- The Netherlands attaches great importance to AI's potential for protecting civilians. AI can recognise patterns and deviations in large volumes of data, which can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the civilian environment. This increased understanding can reduce the risk of misidentification, collateral damage and civilian casualties. More broadly, AI offers the potential to improve the identification of possible threats to civilians and civilian objects, enabling armed forces to respond quickly and appropriately. AI can also assist in optimising humanitarian assistance efforts such as providing food, shelter and medical care in areas of conflict. Lastly, AI can improve investigations into civilian casualties by gathering and analysing data and evidence, in order to determine the cause of harm and ensure those responsible can be held accountable.
- AI reduces risks for front-line military personnel, since AI-driven autonomous systems may replace humans in certain activities in difficult or dangerous terrain. Examples include underwater surveillance and support search-and-rescue operations under extreme weather conditions. AI may also help reduce medical and rehabilitation costs by reducing exposure of military personnel to high-risk environments.

Challenges for international peace and security

The Netherlands identifies various risks to international peace and security arising from the application of AI in the military domain:

- The Netherlands is concerned that AI could be used to amplify, improve and automate cyberattacks and the manipulation of information, both of which undermine international peace and security. With the rise of generative AI, information manipulation and automated cyberattacks are increasingly easy to carry out. When deployed in the military domain, they disrupt operational communication lines and complicate decision-making. In the long term, widespread dissemination of disinformation and automated cyberattacks could erode trust in military lines of communication. They could also affect trust between states, thereby potentially further damaging fragile relationships, especially between nations that are already on the brink of potential conflict.
- The risks associated with the application of AI in the military domain could lead to inadequate systems that potentially violate international law. These inadequacies could occur due to insufficient adaptation to context, data and military jargon, and in turn lead to an oversimplification of military decision-making or disregard for specific operational contexts, for example. States could also potentially violate international legal obligations if an application behaves unpredictably, produces discriminatory outcomes based on irrelevant characteristics, or proposes unlawful courses of action. Due to the increased prevalence of AI, the impact of automation bias, bias in datasets and human decisions based on inadequate AI systems could create significant challenges for assigning responsibility and ensuring accountability and appropriate remediation. Importantly, AI applications cannot be expected to reason or function in the same way humans do. In specific contexts of use, their deployment could therefore constitute a violation of international law.
- The risk of AI-driven escalation poses potential risks to international peace and security. As AI accelerates the OODA loop by increasing speed and scale capabilities, misperceptions may arise due to discrepancies between military intentions and the analyses produced by AI-driven systems. In other words, AI could unintentionally contribute to escalation. Because AI systems are capable

of identifying possible targets at greater speed and scale than humans, their use may also increase the intensity and lethality of conflicts for combatants.

- As a consequence, the creation of robust defensive systems is an increasingly significant challenge. The speed at which new AI applications are emerging makes it difficult to implement strategies and tactics for effectively countering and defending against them in a military context. This specific consequence of the increasing use of AI systems could potentially favour offensive actions, and therefore negatively influence international peace and security.
- As terrorist organisations, organised crime networks and other non-state actors gain access to military AI capabilities, destabilisation is a further concern. In this context, the Netherlands is concerned that AI could make the production of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons more accessible to these actors.

Given the rapid evolution of AI technologies, the Netherlands acknowledges that challenges and opportunities around international peace and security cannot be entirely foreseen at present. Some are entirely new, while others exist already but may be exacerbated by the application of AI. Ongoing international dialogue on this issue is essential in order to ensure responsible application of AI in the military domain by all states.

Responsible application of AI in the military domain

In order to ensure that AI is applied responsibly in the military domain, context-appropriate human judgment and control must be retained. Humans must remain responsible and accountable. However, it is important to note the following:

1. More human control does not ensure more responsible AI

The Netherlands believes that there is no one size fits all method to integrate sufficient human judgment and control in AI applications. Human judgement and control range from direct human control to higher levels of automation and autonomy, depending on a number of factors. The required degree of human judgement and control humans should exercise over AI-driven applications and systems must therefore be decided on a case-by-case basis. This is the only way to account for multiple factors such as the operational context, the impact on the technology's ability to operate autonomously in hostile environments, systems parameters and human-machine interaction.

2. Research and development (R&D) is key for the responsible deployment of AI applications in the military domain

The Netherlands believes in the importance of Research and Development (R&D). States must adequately assess whether their AI applications acts the way they are designed to and can be deployed in a specific-use context. This is especially necessary during combat and in other high-stakes environments. Through R&D in a general sense, and through proven and reliable testing, evaluation, verification and validation (TEVV) procedures for specific AI applications, potential issues can be discovered and eliminated or mitigated before deployment. In addition, it is important that military personnel are adequately trained and familiarised with AI applications before these applications are deployed, to ensure they understand the applications' capabilities and limitations. This is particularly important given the rapid technological developments around AI applications and the fact that they are becoming less expensive to use.

3. International governance of military AI should be flexible, inclusive and realistic

With regard to international governance around AI in the military domain, the Netherlands recognises the need for a flexible, balanced and realistic approach. First, governing frameworks need to be flexible in order to keep up with rapid technological and battlefield developments. Second, parties need to work towards a shared understanding of AI in the military domain and the opportunities, risks and potential solutions that accompany it. This will require an inclusive global dialogue and the active involvement of all stakeholder groups, including states, knowledge institutions, civil society and industry. Third,

states should focus on establishing safeguards for the responsible application of AI in the military domain, for example, with a focus on issues such as ensuring traceability or understandability. Fourth, international governance of military AI deployment must take account of states' different views on regulation. Within the parameters of existing legal obligations, international governance of AI in the military domain should not hamper states' abilities to innovate.

Discussion on autonomous weapon systems

As AI has a significant potential for operating autonomous weapon systems, there are clear parallels between the broader discussion on its use in the military domain and the discussion about the regulation of autonomous weapons systems. The Netherlands regards the international discussions on these two topics as complementary and mutually beneficial.