



JUNIOR ACADEMY MODEL UN XII

DISEC

TOPIC GUIDE

Tanisha Modi
Matteo Serrano

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JUNIOR ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS

- Twelveth Annual Conference -

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Hi Delegates!

My name is Tanisha Modi, and I am so excited to be chairing the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) for JAMUN XII! I am currently a freshman at Bergen County Academies in the Academy for Engineering and Design Technology. At school, I enjoy working on hands-on projects and exploring how ideas can turn into real world solutions. I am a marketing officer for the TEDx chapter at BCA, and I am also a member of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE). In my free time, I have a hobby of photography, I love capturing unique moments through a lens and I am always down for hanging out with my friends.

I actually started Modern UN back in middle school after participating in JAMUN last year, and it has been such an amazing experience ever since. This year, I have had the chance to attend several conferences such as DEMUN, HOMMUNC, PMUNC, YMUN, and WAMUNC. I will be honest, at first, everything felt a little overwhelming! But with every conference, I have gotten way more confident in speaking, debating, and working with new people. Model UN has shown me the importance of listening to different perspectives and working together to develop thoughtful and effective solutions.

I know DISEC can seem a little intimidating at first, but don't stress! Everyone starts somewhere, and no one expects you to be perfect. Just focus on getting involved, sharing your thoughts, and working with the people around you. Some of the best moments in committee come from collaboration and trying out new ideas. Most importantly, have fun with it! Talk to new people, get into the debate, and make the most of the experience! I am very excited to meet all of you and see what you bring to the committee! If you have any questions feel free to email me or Matteo!

Sincerely,

Tanisha Modi
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Hey Delegates!

My name is Matteo Serrano, and I will be chairing JAMUN XII's Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)! A little bit about me, I am currently a sophomore at Bergen County Academies, studying in the Academy of Business and Finance. At school, I enjoy participating in Model UN, DECA, the entrepreneurship club, and playing on my school's soccer team. Outside, I enjoy listening to music and hanging out with friends.

My Model UN journey started in middle school after I participated in JAMUN. I had a ton of fun collaborating with others and working together to find a solution, which is how I knew I wanted to continue MUN in high school. I have been in the Model UN club at BCA for two years now, and I enjoy learning new skills and developing my public speaking, problem-solving, and leadership. MUN is a great way to have intellectual discussions in a setting with your peers, which is why I love it. This is my first time chairing a conference, so I am very excited to share my love for Model UN with you all!

JAMUN is a wonderful opportunity to grow your communication and collaboration skills, but please remember to have fun, relax, and enjoy the experience. I am especially looking forward to hearing your unique perspectives and creative solutions in committee, and I hope JAMUN inspires you to pursue Model UN further. As your chair, I recommend you talk to others, make friends, and be creative! I am looking forward to meeting you all, and please contact Tanisha or me if you have any questions.

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INTRODUCTION

Around the world, defense technology is constantly evolving in order to make warfare more efficient. The world is beginning to see defense technology manifest in the form of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWs). LAWs are AI-powered drones, which, for the first time in history, can autonomously search for, identify, and destroy targets [1]. This represents a significant departure from traditional warfare, where human military operators analyzed data and made final decisions, raising profound ethical and strategic implications [3]. The emergence of LAWs brings forth two primary concerns that demand urgent attention. First, there is no form of accountability of the decisions made by LAWs[4]. Second, there is a moral concern regarding the decision to allow machines to make decisions [2]. Moreover, the diverse strategic objectives of each country complicate the establishment of a unified international policy framework for LAWs [5]. Each country's unique strategic objectives compounds the challenge of crafting an international policy framework that addresses LAWs. The development of LAWs underscores the urgent need for a global arms agreement that prioritizes civilian protection by addressing the ethical and operational challenges posted by autonomous weaponry [3][5]. Delegates in this committee will be expected to debate the responsible use of artificial intelligence in warfare and strike a balance between its benefits and risks.

TOPIC: Addressing the Regulation of the Deployment of Lethal Autonomous Weapons in Warfare

Topic History.

To understand the trajectory towards Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS), it is essential to first examine the rise of remotely piloted armed drones in warfare, a closely linked technology. Before the September 11 attacks, drones were mainly used for intelligence, observation, and surveillance purposes. For instance, in the 1982 Lebanon War, Israel was a pioneer in drone warfare. Israel deployed drones such as the IAI Scout and Tadiran Mastiff for surveillance in battle, allowing them to obtain live video feeds of Syrian troop movements and destroy Syrian missile systems[12]. Similarly, during the Gulf War in 1990, the United States extensively used drones such as the Pioneer RQ-2 to identify targets for marine artillery, detect Iraqi high-speed boats in the water, and even facilitated the surrender of Iraqi soldiers, marking the first time humans have surrendered to a drone in combat[11].

However, following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the use of drones in warfare increased significantly[6]. The drones were fitted with lethal payloads and utilized to attack global terrorist targets, dramatically shifting from their original use. For example, counterterrorism operations saw the U.S. deploying armed drones such as the MQ-1 Predator and its successor, the MQ-9 Reaper. These drones were utilized to carry out

personalized executions of high-ranking Taliban and al-Qaeda targets [6]. It is estimated that from 2010 to 2020, the US initiated over 14,000 drone strikes across Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen[6].

It's important to note that human operators were crucial to the success of these operations. However, as artificial intelligence and military technology evolved in the 2010s, militaries started discussing the possibility of removing human soldiers from the decision-making process entirely. With humans completely out of the loop, concerns arose about who is responsible when a machine takes a human life.

These concerns were at the forefront of discussions after what was possibly the very first deployment of LAWS in an active battlefield. In March 2021, a UN Panel of Experts on Libya reported the use of a drone to “attack targets without requiring data connectivity between the operator and the munition” in an armed conflict the previous year[10]. The article specifically named the type of weapon used, the STM Kargu-2. The Kargu-2 is a drone developed by Turkish company STM, with fully autonomous capabilities via machine learning algorithms. While it is uncertain if the drone directly caused any human deaths, the use of the drone in warfare helped accelerate debates about international regulation regarding LAWS.

Topic History (continued)

The first major address on the regulation of LAWS was from Human Rights Watch and Harvard Law School’s International Human Rights Clinic (IHRC). In November 2012, they published a 50–page report entitled *Losing Humanity: The Case against Killer Robots*, emphasizing the dangers of removing human input from military weapons[7]. Specifically, they mentioned the threat to civilian lives who may be mistaken as a target or caught in an explosion. They also mentioned the ambiguity of who to hold responsible for ethical and legal violations by the machines. Therefore, Human Rights Watch and the IHRC argued that fully autonomous weapons cannot fulfill the requirements of international humanitarian law, imploring nations to articulate an international legally binding treaty to ban the development and production of these weapons. In 2013, Christof Heyns, then the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, submitted a report to the UN Human Rights Council warning about LAWS[8]. Similar to the IHRC report, Heyns questioned the ability of these weapons to be programmed within the confines of international humanitarian law and the lack of accountability associated with LAWS. Heyns called for a temporary suspension of development and called for the establishment of a panel to create policies for the new technology. The same year, the Convention on Certain Conventional

Weapons (CCW)—a UN treaty that restricts weapons causing unnecessary suffering—agreed on a mandate to convene an informal Meeting of Experts to discuss the implications of LAWS[9]. After these meetings were convened three times, in 2014, 2015, and 2016, high contracting parties of the CCW agreed to establish a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on LAWS, which would take over the work accomplished in the previous meetings and build off it at yearly conventions in Geneva. In the meetings, divisions on LAWS already emerged between smaller nations like Pakistan[13], pushing for a legally binding treaty, and larger militaries like the U.S. and Russia supporting voluntary guidelines instead.

GGE ON LAWS Guiding principles	
International humanitarian law applies fully to all weapons systems, including the potential development and use of LAWS.	Human responsibility for decisions on the use of weapons systems must be retained since accountability cannot be transferred to machines. This should be considered across the entire life cycle of the weapons system.
Human-machine interaction should ensure that the potential use of weapons systems based on LAWS is in compliance with applicable international law, in particular IHL. In determining the quality and extent of human-machine interaction, a range of factors should be considered including the operational context, and the characteristics and capabilities of the weapons system as a whole.	Accountability for developing, deploying and using any emerging weapons system must be ensured in accordance with applicable international law, including through the operation of such systems within a responsible chain of human command and control.
In the study, development, acquisition, or adoption of a new weapon, means or method of warfare, determination must be made whether its employment would be prohibited by international law.	When developing or acquiring new weapons systems based on emerging technologies in the area of LAWS, physical security, appropriate non-physical safeguards (including cyber-security against hacking or data spoofing), the risk of acquisition by terrorist groups and the risk of proliferation should be considered.
Risk assessments and mitigation measures should be part of the design, development, testing and deployment cycle of emerging technologies in any weapons systems.	In crafting potential policy measures, emerging technologies in the area of LAWS should not be anthropomorphized.
Consideration should be given to the use of emerging technologies in the area of LAWS in upholding compliance with IHL and other applicable international legal obligations.	Discussions and any potential policy measures taken within the context of the CCW should not hamper progress in or access to peaceful uses of intelligent autonomous technologies.

Extract from the 2019 report (advanced version) of the GGE on LAWS.

[9]

Current Situation

Recently, the regulation of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems has gained more attention from the international community as technological advancements continue to outpace attempts to govern them. The GGE on LAWS has entered the final stretch of its current mandate, with two sessions held in 2025 and the first of two in 2026 completed. In these meetings, the main goal was to further develop and intensify the Chair’s rolling text, which contains agreed-upon elements that can serve as the foundation for an international treaty[18]. At the September 2025 meeting in Geneva, discussions were productive. Reportedly, 42 states, including Brazil, Spain, and France, delivered a joint statement declaring they are “ready to move ahead towards negotiations based on the current rolling text”[17]. This marks a significant step forward, but debates are still ongoing regarding numerous aspects of LAWS. In order to get closer to an international regulation governing LAWS, nations must agree on multiple aspects of LAWS, including what exactly constitutes LAWS, how to define “lethal”, and how to maintain human accountability of the machines[15]. Due to these disputes, the Member States agreed to meet twice more in 2026, failing to meet the UN Secretary-General’s target of having a legally binding instrument on LAWS by 2026[15][16]. In the near future, the Chair announced plans to submit a final report to the CCW’s Seventh Review Conference in November 2026.

In November 2025, the United Nations General Assembly First Committee (DISEC) adopted Resolution L.41, addressing the risks of LAWS. The resolution passed by a vote of 156 in favor, 5 against, and 8 abstentions, showing the strong consensus by nations to regulate LAWS, and further encouraging the GGE to come up with a solution[22]. Looking at the members voting against the resolution, namely Israel, the United States, and Russia, the disagreement between large military powers and other nations is clearly shown.

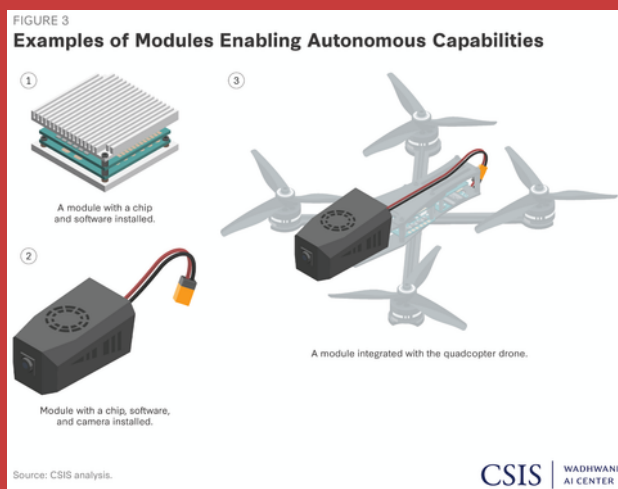


[22]

Meanwhile, AI-enabled weapons are already being deployed on active battlefields. In the Gaza war, the Israeli military has deployed AI-enhanced weapons such as Habsora and Lavender, enabling Israel to reduce human intervention during the planning and execution of attacks[20]. Reportedly, the Lavender system uses machine learning to automate the process of finding human targets, assigning each person a probability score relating to the likelihood of being a member of an armed group[21]. Likewise, AI-enabled drone

Current Situation (continued)

warfare is being used significantly in the Ukraine–Russia war, due to its ability to conserve limited human resources. In Ukraine, autonomous navigation raises the engagement success rate from 10–20 percent to around 70–80 percent, since the skill level required by the operator is significantly lower[19]. Due to these benefits, Ukraine is rapidly developing AI-enabled autonomous systems to integrate into the war and compete with Russia’s superior human resources.



[19]

With the global advanced military technology market projected to grow to \$38.10 billion by 2034 from \$22.17 billion in 2025, nations are looking to balance financial opportunities with international obligations. Member nations must act swiftly and diligently to articulate an international treaty on LAWS, as the technology controlling these systems continues to advance.

Country Policies

Anti-Regulation Major Military Powers

Among global powers, the United States, Russia, China, and India lead in both deploying and producing drones, regarding autonomous weapons as vital tools in warfare [23], [25]. Despite concerns raised elsewhere, these countries resist full prohibitions on such systems, believing current humanitarian rules already cover how they should be used during conflict [23], [24], [25]. Rather than accept new legal frameworks, they argue established laws offer enough guidance under present conditions [24]. Preferring fewer restrictions, they aim to speed innovation while preserving strategic superiority through rapid advancement [23]. Still, human oversight remains a shared principle across their doctrines, ensuring responsibility can always be traced clearly [26]. Alongside them stand Israel, South Korea, Turkey, and Belarus, nations similarly invested in advanced arms technologies [35]. Their stance aligns closely, avoiding tight international limits that might slow progress or weaken operational readiness in modern combat environments.

Supporters of Rules in the West

Some countries including the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, Poland, Estonia, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Canada, Italy, Norway, and Sweden, oppose an outright ban on LAWS yet express uneasiness regarding risks to human rights [27], [28], [29]. Despite offering views on prohibition, attention

County Policies (continued)

remains fixed on shaping strong oversight mechanisms so deployment follows strict responsibility measures [28]. Human judgement, they argue, must steer critical choices involving life and death, placing emphasis on sustained command by people rather than machines [27], [29]. Rather than reject advancement, their focus leans toward structured dialogue under agreements like the CWW, where they believe that rules would emerge through a shared understanding [28].

Nations Supporting Prohibition

Among those urging an outright prohibition on lethal autonomous weapons systems are Austria, Palestine, Iraq, Belgium, Bolivia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Vatican City, Ireland, New Zealand, Switzerland, Chile, Argentina, Luxembourg, Peru, and Ghana [30]. Because such devices lack the capacity for ethical judgement, allowing them to decide who lives or dies is considered unacceptable by these countries [31], [33]. Without a clear chain of liability, these nations warn that deploying fully automated combat tools risks undermining established frameworks of international law [32]. They believe that since current regulations prove insufficient when applied to machine led violence, a fresh legal agreement appears necessary to many governments [30], [33]. To preserve basic principles of humane conduct during conflict, talks about a binding

worldwide ban have gained quiet momentum across diplomatic channels [31], [32].

Global South and Non Aligned Nations

Across the Global South, countries like the Philippines, South Africa, and Indonesia focus on how LAWS could affect national authority [30], [35]. Sovereignty stands at the center of their concern when powerful states deploy self operating weapons near or within their borders [35]. Instead of a unified consensus, positions differ: Some demand firm rules, others stay silent [30]. Human oversight in warfare gains verbal backing, yet attendance at global talks shows inconsistency [35]. Iran, despite concerns about outside intrusion, avoids clear stances due to its active drone sector [34], [36]. Rather than aligning openly, it chooses absence from decisions that might restrict arms output [34]. Pakistan, along with North Korea, paces weight on sovereign defense planning [35]. Because of this, both approach Western driven regulations with hesitation. Their responses emerge slowly, shaped more by strategic caution than outright rejection. Uganda, Algeria, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, and Colombia reflect mixed patterns engaged rhetorically, selective in practice [30]. National interest guides each step, not collective pressure.

Potential Solutions

Solving difficult issues tied to self operating weapons demands careful alignment of defense progress with public protection. A potential path forward involves setting clear standards for real human oversight. These standards would dictate that any device can only apply force if a person approves the action, which would prevent systems from making life or death decisions independently. In addition, instead of full prohibition or unchecked growth, layered rules may bridge opposing views. One example would be defining defense focused automation, such as intercepting hostile projectiles, and allowing them to continue under supervision, while strictly prohibiting the automation of other capabilities.

Clear rules may be necessary, since they help safeguard small nations while reducing risk of uncontrolled military competition. One method to achieve this would be to establish a shared international record of systems, supported by routine checks that assess whether machines can accurately recognize combatants apart from non-combatants. Another approach would be to mandate that responsibility must rest with the people directing operations or developing these systems, not the devices themselves. Apart from these solutions, oversight mechanisms can also be developed and implemented, which

could include automatic halts embedded within each system. These systems can require robots to halt operations if it disconnects from its operator or experiences sensor failure.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the definition of a lethal autonomous weapon? What is the key difference between these types of weapons and other military systems?
2. How much human involvement is necessary in the decision to use lethal force?
3. Should life and death decisions in war be made by autonomous systems?
4. Are current international laws sufficient in responding to the moral implications raised by lethal autonomous weapons?
5. Who should bear responsibility if an autonomous weapon behaves in a manner contrary to its developers' intentions?
6. Should there be a worldwide ban on lethal autonomous weapons?
7. In what ways would such weapons affect the probability or frequency of armed conflicts?
8. What are the possible dangers of autonomous weapons if they are hacked or get into the wrong hands?
9. How does intensifying global competition in arms development impact attempts to regulate autonomous weapons?

Questions to Consider **(continued)**

10. What moral standards should be considered when developing and using AI in warfare?

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