

FUTURE WAR

SAT 12TH NOV 2022

PROGRAMME

10.00	Registration opens	
10.30	Chair's welcome, sessions outlined	Chris Cole and Carol Turner
10.40	Video interview	
	Likely causes of future wars	Paul Rogers
11.00	Opening panel	Tom Unterrainer, Chair
	Technology: empowering or enslaving?	Kate Hudson Laura Nolan Anuradha Damale-Day Lucas Wirl
12.30	Lunch break	
13.30	AI & Killer robots	Peter Burt, Chair
PARALLEL SESSIONS		Ben Donaldson Laura Nolan
	The information war	Pat Gafney, Chair
		Matt Kennard Mil Rai
	Militarisation of space	Dave Webb, Chair
	Jill Stuart Melusine Lebret	
14.30	AI & Killer robots	Peter Burt, Chair
PARALLEL SESSIONS		Ben Donaldson Laura Nolan
	The information war	Pat Gafney, Chair
		Matt Kennard Mil Rai
	Militarisation of space	Dave Webb, Chair
	Jill Stuart Melusine Lebret	
15.30	Refreshment break	
15.45	Closing plenary	Carol Turner, Chair
	Turning learning into action	Stuart Parkinson Lindsey German Jeremy Corbyn MP
16.30	Close of conference	

ORGANISED BY:



AUTONOMOUS WEAPONS: AN INTRODUCTION



The term “autonomous weapon system” means any weapon system that has autonomy in the critical functions of selecting and attacking targets: in other words, force may be used without the involvement of a human decision maker.

Autonomy is a capability: autonomous weapons can take any physical form: flying drones, stationary weapons such as sentry guns, land-based vehicles such as tanks, as well as boats and submarines. Automated target recognition and automatic target engagement features are now to be found in a variety of weapons being produced by a number of manufacturers.

Autonomy in weapons systems is not completely new. However, previous generations of weapons systems which incorporated autonomy tended to operate in a fixed location where human operators were present (for example, C-RAMs - counter rocket, artillery, and mortar systems). Physical presence meant that operators had high awareness of the surrounding environment, as well as the ability to physically turn off the weapon if necessary. Target profiles for such systems were restricted to military targets, such as incoming missiles.

The emerging new generation of autonomous weapons is different. Weapons are independently mobile, and are designed to operate against a broader variety of targets, including human beings and other non-exclusively military objects. These weapons are systems of much higher complexity than previous generations of autonomous weapons systems (such as C-RAMs). The fact that weapons are mobile means that the variety they may encounter in the environment is much greater than fixed systems. These factors mean a much higher potential for such weapons to display unpredictable behaviour.

A number of concerns arise in relation to autonomous weapons, including:

- Can military commanders (or weapons manufacturers) be held accountable for unlawful acts carried out by autonomous weapons?
- Is the use of force without human control consistent with the public conscience? In polls, a majority say it is morally unacceptable.
- Does proliferation of autonomous weapons pose a threat to stability?

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots has called for new international law to address the problems that increasing autonomy poses. The first element of a new international law is an obligation to maintain meaningful human control over the use of force (‘meaningless’ human control is also possible, for instance if the human operator does not have sufficient time to make a decision). The Campaign also calls for an explicit ban on autonomous weapons systems that target human beings, as well as any weapon that cannot be meaningfully controlled (e.g. where the behaviour of the system is unpredictable).

ABOUT OUR SPEAKERS

PETER BURT

works at Drone Wars UK on the role of artificial intelligence and autonomy in the development of drones. Peter has authored a number of ground-breaking studies on the military applications of new and emerging technologies. He is a Trustee of the Nuclear Education Trust and a former Nuclear Information Service Director.

CHRIS COLE

is founder of Drone Wars UK. A long-time anti-war activist and formerly a local co-ordinator at Campaign Against Arms Trade, Chris regularly blogs at dronewars.net and has contributed to the Guardian and other publications.

JEREMY CORBYN MP

is a former leader of the Labour Party. A life-long nuclear disarmament and international solidarity campaigner, he is a former Vice Chair and current Vice President of CND. In 2021, Jeremy founded Peace and Justice Project, which campaigns for social and economic justice, peace and human rights in Britain and globally. He is currently its Co-Director with Baroness Christine Blower

ANURAHA DAMALE-DAY

is a Policy Fellow and Programme Manager at the British-American Security Information Council, where she researches on responsibility in outer space. Anu is the Director of the UK branch of Women of Colour Advancing Peace and Security. She is a board member of JustSpace Alliance and an advisory board member of dEd, Demilitarise Education.

BEN DONALDSON

is United Nations Association UK's Head of Campaigns and leads its policy work on arms control and disarmament and represents UNA UK on ICAN and other bodies. Ben is a member of Saferworld's UK Working Group on Arms and a Council Member of Rethinking Security.

PAT GAFFNEY

is a Council Member of Drone Wars. She is a former General Secretary of Pax Christi UK, and continues to be involved in the International Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, Pat is a member of Women in Black and campaigns on Palestine solidarity.

LINDSEY GERMAN

is a founder member and National Convenor of Stop the War Coalition who broadcasts and writes extensively on anti-war issues including co-authoring Stop the war: The story of Britain's biggest mass movement. Lindsey is a Lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire and author of How a century of war changed the lives of women.

KATE HUDSON

is General Secretary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, a leading anti-nuclear and anti-war campaigner nationally and internationally, and author of CND at 60: Britain's Most Enduring Mass Movement. Before taking up her CND post, Kate was Head of Social and Policy Studies at London South Bank University. An historian, she is the founding editor of Contemporary Politics journal and currently an editorial board member of Transform journal.

MATT KENNARD

is an investigative journalist and author. He is Chief Investigator at Declassified UK, which shines a light on Britain's military and intelligence agencies, its most powerful corporations and its impact on human rights and the environment. Matt is a former Director at the Centre for Investigative Journalism and staff writer at the Financial Times. He has written extensively on the US military and its conduct during the War on Terror.

MELUSINE LEBRET

is a graduate student at LSE. She is a member of the Youth Fusion team which produces a podcast series, Outer Space for Peace. Mélusine was the 2020 winner of University College London's

statistics competition with a project on the probability of space explorations. This led to her selection as a presenter at the 2020 ExploreEcon Conference.

LAURA NOLAN

is an elected Trinity scholar, a software engineer of 20 years standing most recently having worked at Google, Ireland. She was a signatory to an open letter, Cancel Maven, which called on Google to withdraw from involvement in the US Department of Defence's Malvern project on the use of artificial intelligence technology to analyse drone surveillance. Laura subsequently left Google and founded TechWontBuildIt Dublin, a network of workers concerned about the ethical implications of big tech.

STUART PARKINSON

is Executive Director of Scientists for Global Responsibility, and co-ordinates its work on the military influence on science and technology. He is co-author of UK nuclear weapons: a catastrophe in the making? and has written/edited many SGR publications. Stuart has worked at the University of Surry's Centre for Environmental Strategy (CES) and has been an expert reviewer for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) advising UK negotiators to the UN climate change convention.

MILAN RAI

is a writer and anti-war activist. He is Co-Editor of Peace News and has written extensively on the danger of nuclear weapons and western military imperialism, as well on Noam Chomsky.

PAUL ROGERS

is Emeritus Professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University and an Honorary Fellow of the Joint Service Command and Staff College (JSCSC). An international security specialist, he is a regular broadcaster on TV and radio. Paul has written/edited numerous books and papers, including Losing Control: Global Security in the 21st Century and Irregular War: New Threats from the Margins. He writes a weekly column on international affairs for Open Democracy.

JILL STUART

teaches at the London School of Economics and Political Science and researches the politics, law, theory, and governance of outer space. Jill is the long-time Editor in Chief of the journal Space Policy, the pre-eminent academic publication on the topic. She is the recipient of the prestigious 2015 British Science Association Margaret Mead Award Lecture, in recognition of her cutting-edge research, and is a member of the Board of Directors of METI International, Messaging Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence.

CAROL TURNER

is a Co-Chair of London Region CND and a member of CND National Council. She is a Labour CND activist and a member of Stop the War's National Officer Group. Formerly a Senior Lecturer in International Politics and Social Research Methods, Carol is a long-time anti-war and peace campaigner with extensive experience in parliamentary and international campaigning. She was a Socialist Campaign Group News journalist and is author of Corbyn and Trident: Labour's continuing controversy and Walter Wolfgang: a political life.

TOM UNTERRAINER

is Chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. He works for the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and co-edits The Spokesman journal.

DAVE WEBB

is Emeritus Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at Leeds Beckett University, where he was Head of the Centre for Applied Research in Engineering and Director of the Praxis Centre. He is the chair of Yorkshire CND, and a former Chair of national CND. Dave is the Convenor of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and a former Vice President of the International Peace Bureau (IPB).

LUCAS WIRL

is Executive Director of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA), and Treasurer of the International Peace Bureau (IPB). He is Berlin-based where he works as Programme Director of the International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES).