

SECURING OUR COMMON FUTURE

An Agenda for Disarmament

New challenges

As advances in science and technology revolutionize our lives, and make our world ever more complex, we have to be careful to make sure we use these developments for good. New technologies pose new challenges to legal, humanitarian and ethical norms, to non-proliferation, to international stability, and ultimately to people's lives and peace and security.

Some of these include:



Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) and uses of AI

Roboticians, technology entrepreneurs, humanitarian actors, civil society and many Governments have raised alarms over the implications posed by the development of lethal autonomous weapon systems. While the technology exists today to deploy weapons with such capabilities, there are very real doubts about whether they could be used in any circumstance in conformity with international humanitarian law. Beyond the legal aspects, concerns have also been raised over the moral and ethical issues raised by endowing machines with the discretion and power to end human life.



Encouraging responsible innovation and application of new technologies

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Ensuring peace and stability in cyberspace

Recent threats emanating from the use of digital technologies span a wide spectrum, including the manipulation of information with malicious intent and cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, such as hospitals and electrical grids, which can result in human casualties. Determining attribution and responsibility for cyberattacks raises real challenges for peace, security and international stability. Misattribution is a real possibility and can carry serious consequences for international relations, peace and security.

What can be done?

- Foster a culture of accountability and adherence to norms, rules and principles for responsible behaviour in cyberspace.
- We must meet existing commitments: legal, humanitarian and ethical norms with new weapons.
- We must take greater steps to encourage responsible innovation by industry, engineers and scientists.
- In the face of the growing automation of weaponry, new measures are necessary to ensure humans always maintain control over the use of force.
- Several private sector companies have made statements of principle with regard to their conviction that the technology they employ and host should be used only for peaceful purposes. The Secretary-General supports these efforts and a more inclusive role for industry and academia in policymaking processes related to ensuring the peaceful use of technology.

