



Killer Robots: Still No International Laws To Govern Their Use

Technocrats in militaries around the world are in a pitched arms race to develop fully autonomous killer robots. Proponents claim that it will make warfare more efficient and yet more 'humane' because fewer people would be killed.

This is insane thinking. The risk of misuse by rogue and authoritarian government and terrorists is 100 percent. However, Technocrats invent because they can, not because there is a demonstrated need to do so. □

TN Editor

Countries are rapidly developing "killer robots" - machines with artificial intelligence (AI) that independently kill - but are moving at a snail's pace on agreeing global rules over their use in future wars, warn technology and human rights experts.

From drones and missiles to tanks and submarines, semi-autonomous weapons systems have been used for decades to eliminate targets in

modern day warfare - but they all have human supervision.

Dramatization/Simulation

Nations such as the United States, Russia and Israel are now investing in developing lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) which can identify, target, and kill a person all on their own - but to date there are no international laws governing their use.

“Some kind of human control is necessary ... Only humans can make context-specific judgements of distinction, proportionality and precautions in combat,” said Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

“(Building consensus) is the big issue we are dealing with and unsurprisingly, those who have today invested a lot of capacities and do have certain skill which promise advantages to them, are more reluctant than those who don’t.”

The ICRC oversaw the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions that define the laws of war and the rights of civilians to protection and assistance during conflicts and it engages with governments to adapt these rules to modern warfare.

AI researchers, defence analysts and roboticists say LAWS such as military robots are no longer confined to the realm of science fiction or video games, but are fast progressing from graphic design boards to defence engineering laboratories.

Within a few years, they could be deployed by state militaries to the battlefield, they add, painting dystopian scenarios of swarms of drones moving through a town or city, scanning and selectively killing their targets within seconds.

Death by Algorithm

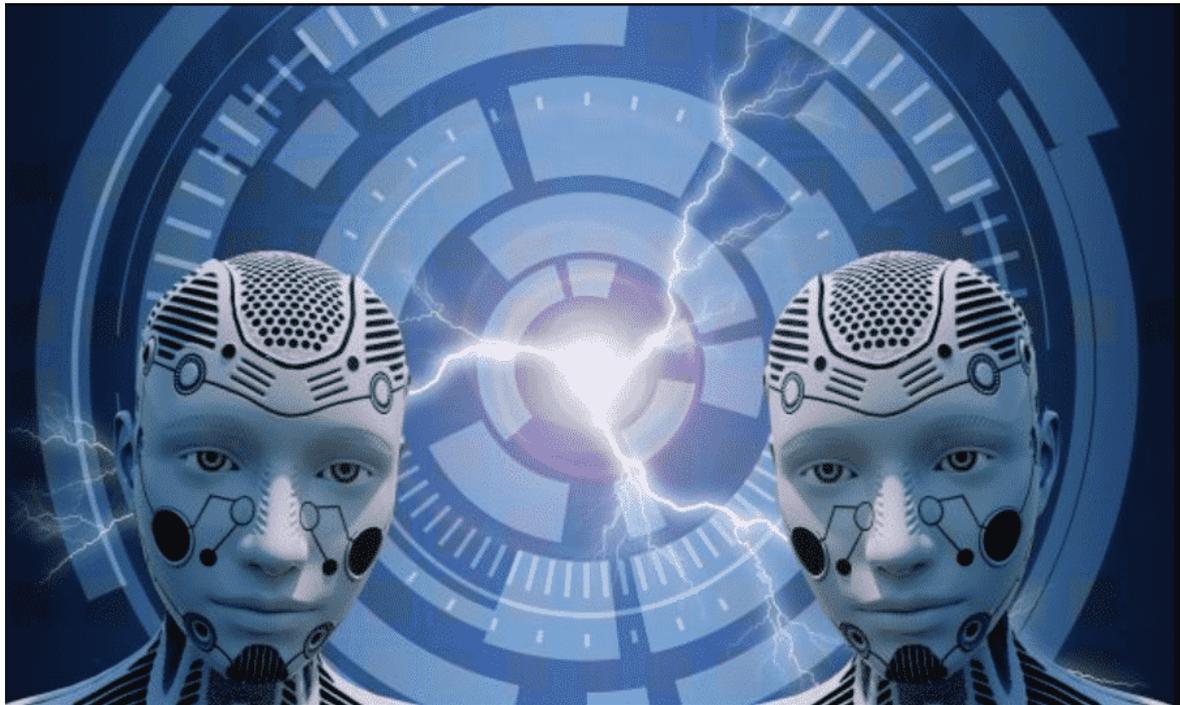
This has raised ethical concerns from human rights groups and some tech experts who say giving machines the power of life and death violates the principles of human dignity.

Not only are LAWS vulnerable to interference and hacking which would result in increased civilian deaths, they add, but their deployment would raise questions over who would be held accountable in the event of misuse.

“Don’t be mistaken by the nonsense of how intelligent these weapons will be,” said Noel Sharkey, chairman of the International Committee for Robot Arms Control.

“You simply can’t trust an algorithm - no matter how smart - to seek out, identify and kill the correct target, especially in the complexity of war,” said Sharkey, who is also an AI and robotics expert at Britain’s University of Sheffield.

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Middle Class Increasingly

Hollowed Out As Robots Take Millions Of Jobs

Machine automation is driving down the value of human labor, and humans cannot possibly “compete” their way out of it. Lower skilled workers feel the pain first as their jobs are most easily automated.

Presidential candidate and Technocrat Andrew Yang is the only politician talking about Universal Basic Income as a means to pacify the growing class of “unemployables” who may never see work again. This is not welfare or unemployment payments, but rather outright support for the rest of your life. Once locked into this class, it will be virtually impossible to ever rise above it. □ TN Editor

When we get to a point where literally just about everything can be done more cheaply and more efficiently by robots, the elite won't have any use for the rest of us at all. For most of human history, the wealthy have needed the poor to do the work that is necessary to run their businesses and make them even wealthier. In this day and age we like to call ourselves “employees”, but in reality we are their servants. Some of us may be more well paid than others, but the vast majority of us are expending our best years serving their enterprises so that we can pay the bills. Unfortunately, that paradigm is rapidly changing, and many of the jobs that humans are doing today will be done by robots in the not too distant future. In fact, millions of human workers have already been displaced, and as you will see below experts are warning that the job losses are likely to greatly accelerate in the years to come.

Competition with technology is one of the reasons why wage growth has been so stagnant over the past couple of decades. The only way it makes sense for an employer to hire you is if you can do a job less expensively than some form of technology can do it.

As a result, close to two-thirds of the jobs that have been created in the United States over the past couple of decades [have been low wage jobs](#), and the middle class is being steadily hollowed out.

But as robots continue to become cheaper and more efficient, even our lowest paying jobs will be vanishing in enormous numbers.

For example, [it is being reported](#) that executives at Walmart plan to greatly increase the size of their “robot army”...

Walmart Inc.’s robot army is growing. The world’s largest retailer will add shelf-scanning robots to 650 more U.S. stores by the end of the summer, bringing its fleet to 1,000. The six-foot-tall Bossa Nova devices, equipped with 15 cameras each, roam aisles and send alerts to store employees’ handheld devices when items are out of stock, helping to solve a vexing problem that costs retailers nearly a trillion dollars annually, according to researcher IHL Group.

In addition to scanning shelves, Walmart already has a whole host of robots doing such things as [scrubbing floors, unloading trucks and gathering grocery orders](#)...

The new robots, designed by San Francisco-based Bossa Nova Robotics Inc., join the ranks of Walmart’s increasingly automated workforce which also includes devices to scrub floors, unload trucks and gather online-grocery orders.

Meanwhile, Walmart has been testing “a new employee structure” which is intended to [“cut down the size of its store management staff”](#)...

Walmart is testing out a new employee structure within its stores in an attempt to cut down the size of its store management staff.

The nation’s biggest employer is looking to see if it can have fewer midlevel store managers overseeing workers, with these managers seeing both their responsibilities and their pay increase.

So the employees that survive will get a “pay increase” to go with a huge increase in responsibility, but what about all the others that are having their jobs eliminated?

Don’t worry, because in an interview about this new initiative one Walmart executive assured us that their employees [“like smaller teams”](#)...

“Associates like smaller teams, and they like having a connection with a leader. They want something they can own and to know if they are winning or losing every day. And today that does not always happen,” Drew Holler, U.S. senior vice president of associate experience, said in an interview.

Today, Wal-Mart is the largest employer in the United States by a wide margin.

But these coming changes will ultimately mean a lot more robot workers and a lot less human workers.

Of course countless other heartless corporations are implementing similar measures. And considering the fact that one recent survey found that [97 percent](#) of U.S. CFOs believe that a recession is coming in 2020, we are likely to see a “thinning of the ranks” in company after company as this year rolls along.

Sadly, even if there was no economic downturn coming we would continue to lose jobs to robots. According to one study, a whopping [45 percent](#) of our current jobs “can be automated”...

Here’s the truth: Robots are already starting to take jobs from hourly human workers, and it’s going to continue. Research from McKinsey found that 45% of current jobs can be automated. We need to stop avoiding the situation and create real solutions to help displaced workers.

In this day and age, no worker is safe.

I know someone that gave his heart and soul to a big corporation for many years, and then one day he was called into the office when he arrived for work and he was out of a job by lunch.

He hadn’t done anything wrong at all. It is just that his heartless corporate bosses had decided to eliminate his position throughout the entire company.

If you think that they actually care about you, then you are just fooling yourself.

Unfortunately, the job losses are just going to keep accelerating. In fact, it is being projected that approximately 20 million manufacturing jobs around the globe could be taken over by robots [by the year 2030](#)...

Robots could take over 20 million manufacturing jobs around the world by 2030, economists claimed Wednesday.

According to a new study from Oxford Economics, within the next 11 years there could be 14 million robots put to work in China alone.

And as wealthy executives lay off low wage workers in staggering numbers, that will make the growing gap between the rich and the poor [even worse](#)...

“As a result of robotization, tens of millions of jobs will be lost, especially in poorer local economies that rely on lower-skilled workers. This will therefore translate to an increase in income inequality,” the study’s authors said.

The good news is that the full extent of this ominous scenario is not likely to completely play out. The bad news is that this is because our society is rapidly moving toward [complete and utter collapse](#).

I wish that there was an easy solution to this growing problem.

In a free market system, should anyone be trying to mandate that employers must hire human workers?

But if millions upon millions of men and women can’t feed their families because they don’t have jobs, that will create the sort of social nightmare that we cannot even imagine right now.

This is something that all of the 2020 presidential candidates should be talking about, because this is a crisis that is spinning out of control, and it is getting worse with each passing day.

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