Brazil's Position Paper

Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain and Its Implications for International Peace and Security

16 June 2026

I. INTRODUCTION

This national position paper was prepared as a contribution to the multilateral dialogue initiated by General Assembly Resolution 79/239, titled “Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security”, and with a view to the informal exchanges on the issue convened by General Assembly Resolution 80/58, to be held in Geneva from 15 to 17 June, 2026.

Brazil welcomes the report by the UN Secretary-General prepared pursuant to Resolution (document A/80/78), and its consolidated analysis of State submissions, which confirms the urgent need for substantive multilateral engagement on this issue.

Brazil notes that this agenda intersects with, but is broader than, the ongoing discussions on autonomous weapons systems (AWS) within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which remain a priority and an urgent concern. Brazil continues to actively support and advocate for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons systems.

The present process on AI in the military domain (AIMD) goes beyond the LAWS discussion and addresses a wider range of AI applications in the military domain, including command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, strategic decision support, cyber operations, and the nuclear domain.

The fact that artificial intelligence technologies emerged after the consolidation of existing international legal frameworks does not place them outside the scope of international law. International humanitarian law applies to all means and

methods of warfare, including those resulting from future technological developments.

II. OPPORTUNITIES

Brazil recognizes that the application of artificial intelligence in the military domain offers genuine opportunities when deployed responsibly, within the bounds of international law, including international humanitarian law, and subordinated to the overarching goal of maintaining international peace and security.

Brazil stresses that the recognition of the reality of AI-enabled military systems does not in any way legitimize armed conflicts or encourage the militarization of artificial intelligence technologies, but rather seeks to ensure minimum safeguards for humanity in circumstances where such technologies are employed.

Non-lethal and logistical applications, including predictive maintenance, resource optimization, simulation and training, and administrative efficiency, could enhance the operational readiness of defense forces while posing limited humanitarian risks.

The same applies to AI-enabled intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance tools, which may contribute to more accurate situational awareness, provided that human judgment remains the decisive element in any action affecting the use of force.

AI tools also have the potential to support, within established frameworks, the verification of compliance with disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control instruments, including the NPT, the CTBT, and any future instruments governing fissile materials and nuclear disarmament verification.

AI could also assist in protecting civilians during armed conflict, by improving the identification of military objectives, reducing the risk of misidentification, and enhancing the capacity to investigate civilian casualties. It should be

underscored, however, that AI can support these functions only if it is designed with IHL compliance as a primary parameter and deployed with sustained meaningful human control.

III. CHALLENGES AND RISKS

A. Risks to International Peace and Security

Brazil shares the concerns expressed by numerous States regarding the potential risks posed by military uses of AI to international peace and security. The compression of the observe-orient-decide-act loop, the risk of miscalculation and unintended escalation, and the potential for AI-driven arms races are among the most serious challenges facing the international community.

Furthermore, Brazil notes that violations of international law, including those facilitated or exacerbated by the irresponsible use of AI-enabled systems, can deepen instability, fuel cycles of violence and undermine prospects for sustainable peace. Discussions on AI in the military domain should therefore not be limited to questions of operational legality, but must also consider the broader humanitarian and peace-and-security implications of these technologies.

Technological asymmetries between States also constitute a structural risk of the first order. Brazil calls attention to the particular vulnerability of developing countries in this regard and underscores the importance of ensuring that governance arrangements do not entrench existing disparities or create new barriers to the legitimate peaceful uses of AI.

B. Risks to International Humanitarian Law

The application of AI in the military domain raises profound questions concerning compliance with international humanitarian law, in particular the cardinal principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution.

Brazil expresses grave concern at the growing number of reports of deliberate or indiscriminate attacks affecting civilians and civilian objects in contemporary armed conflicts. The integration of AI into military operations cannot serve as a justification for lowering standards of civilian protection or weakening compliance with international humanitarian law.

These risks have already been demonstrated in practice, with the deployment of AI-enabled targeting and autonomous systems in densely populated areas, with grave humanitarian consequences for civilian populations.

Of particular concern is the compression of military decision-making timelines enabled by AI systems. When targeting, engagement, or escalation decisions are shaped by algorithmic processes operating within highly compressed timeframes, the capacity of human operators to deliberate, override, or de-escalate may be substantially reduced.

This problem is compounded by the risk of misclassification of threats by AI-enabled targeting and decision support systems. Algorithms trained on incomplete, obsolete or unrepresentative datasets may erroneously identify civilian objects as military targets, attribute hostile intent to ambiguous movements, or fail to distinguish combatants from non-combatants in complex urban environments.

Brazil underlines that expediency must never become a justification for the erosion of legal safeguards, and that the compression of decision cycles must be treated as a structural risk requiring specific governance responses.

Thus, the deployment of AI systems that cannot reliably distinguish between combatants and civilians, or that can lead to violations of the principles of proportionality, precaution and constant care in battlefield environments are incompatible with IHL obligations that bind all States.

Brazil reaffirms the obligation under Article 36 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions to review new weapons, means and methods of warfare for

compliance with applicable international law. This obligation applies fully to AI-enabled systems, including not only weapons systems themselves, but also AI-enabled decision-support, targeting, command-and-control and operational planning systems capable of materially influencing the conduct of hostilities.

In this regard, Brazil recalls the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, according to which international humanitarian law applies to “all forms of warfare and to all kinds of weapons, those of the past, those of the present and those of the future”.

C. Accountability

Brazil is concerned that increasing reliance on AI-enabled systems may create conditions conducive to the diffusion or evasion of accountability across chains of command, operators, developers and private actors. Such challenges do not displace existing obligations under international law, including the rules governing State responsibility and individual criminal responsibility.

The delegation of critical military decision-making to algorithmic systems risks creating responsibility gaps, understood as situations in which international law is breached but individual or State accountability is evaded. This is unacceptable under international law and would undermine the foundational principle of human responsibility for acts of war.

Brazil underscores that, in accordance with the international law of State responsibility, States bear full international legal responsibility for the use of AI-enabled systems under their command, direction and/or control, irrespective of the degree of automation involved.

However, it is clear that the opacity of algorithmic systems, the diffusion of responsibility across chains of command, developers, and operators, and the speed at which AI-driven operations unfold may complicate the attribution of individual criminal responsibility for international crimes, such as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

D. AI and the Risk of Nuclear War

There is a deep concern with the implications of the integration of AI in nuclear command, control and communications (NC3) systems to the risk of nuclear conflict. Ultimately, this could lead to a destabilizing arms race, given that the callous use of AI in nuclear-related systems accelerates response times and increases the likelihood of nuclear weapons being used accidentally, unintentionally or without authorization.

This area poses risks that are qualitatively distinct from other AI applications, since the potential for miscalculation in this domain could have irreversible and catastrophic consequences for all of humanity.

Brazil's position on nuclear weapons is unequivocal: their use or threat of use under any circumstances is incompatible with international law and international humanitarian law and unacceptable on humanitarian grounds. The risks posed by nuclear weapons will not be fully mitigated until those weapons are eliminated.

In this context, the integration of AI into nuclear-related systems raises concerns that go beyond questions of command and control: AI must not be permitted to lower the threshold for nuclear use, accelerate escalatory pathways, or reduce the time available for crisis communication to prevent any recourse to nuclear weapons.

In line with this reasoning, Brazil co-sponsored General Assembly Resolution 80/23, titled "Possible risks of the integration of artificial intelligence into command, control and communications systems of nuclear weapons".

Brazil therefore calls for a formal commitment to exclude AI from any system that could initiate or trigger nuclear weapons employment, and to refrain from any doctrinal developments that would treat AI-assisted nuclear decision-making as a form of acceptable deterrence practice.

E. AI and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

In the field of life sciences, the convergence of AI with synthetic biology, gain-of-function research, and cloud laboratory platforms is of particular concern. AI-assisted tools can now accelerate the design of novel biological agents, optimize experimental conditions, creating jurisdictional and oversight challenges that existing governance regimes were not designed to address, significantly escalating biosecurity vulnerabilities.

This represents a particularly formidable challenge for the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), in view of the absence of an independent inspection mechanism and overall institutional underdevelopment. Brazil currently chairs the BWC Working Group on strengthening of the Convention, which is developing measures on compliance and verification and a dedicated science and technology (S&T) mechanism, designed specifically to maintain rigorous and continual assessment of scientific and technological developments, thereby enhancing its capacity for risk anticipation and response.

In the field of chemistry, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), while more institutionally developed, also faces novel challenges as AI tools become capable of identifying previously unknown toxic agents or optimizing delivery mechanisms. This topic was discussed at the Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the CWC, which took place in Rabat in 2024 and was attended by Brazil.

In the nuclear domain, we note the IAEA has been exploring the use of AI in order to achieve efficiency and effectiveness of its administrative and programmatic work. However, such uses raise significant concerns with regard to data protection, potential bias and risk management, in particular given the sensitive nature of safeguards-related information and the requirements for strict confidentiality. In this regard, Brazil co-sponsored, together with 12 other States, a joint statement during the March 2026 session of the Board of Governors. The statement emphasized that “the integration of AI applications into the Agency’s

activities must remain a controlled, responsible, and transparent process", as well as that "the continued use of AI may necessitate discussion and potential approval by the IAEA policy-making organs".

Brazil is deeply concerned by the potential for AI to erode the barriers that have historically limited access to weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, including terrorist organizations and individuals.

Brazil calls upon all States to conduct rigorous assessments of the impact of AI on their obligations under the BWC, the CWC, and the IAEA, and to engage constructively in updating those frameworks to address AI-driven risks.

F. AI and the Cyber Domain

The intersection of artificial intelligence and cyber operations constitutes one of the most consequential dimensions of the military AI agenda. AI tools can dramatically amplify the speed, scale and sophistication of offensive cyber capabilities, enabling the automated identification of vulnerabilities, the generation of adaptive malware, and the conduct of operations at a pace that outstrips human defensive response. At the same time, AI-enhanced defensive systems offer genuine improvements in threat detection and network resilience. The concern is that the offensive applications may be advancing faster than defensive ones, at least in the short term.

Brazil calls for dedicated multilateral attention to the governance of AI in cyber operations, including the development of agreed norms on the obligations of States to ensure that such tools operate within the bounds of international law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality and non-intervention.

Brazil also underscores that military capabilities for information and psychological operations have been significantly enhanced by AI. The dissemination of AI-enabled synthetic content can be used to fuel disinformation campaigns, contributing to political destabilization and the manipulation of public debate. In this context, multilateral discussions on AI governance should address the

prevention of such practices in defense of information integrity, which may constitute a violation of the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States.

G. Technological and Structural Concerns

Brazil notes with concern the structural risks inherent in the development and deployment of AI systems in military contexts.

These include algorithmic and data biases that may systematically skew targeting or threat assessment decisions; vulnerability to cyberattacks, adversarial inputs, and data poisoning that could manipulate system behavior with potentially catastrophic consequences; opacity of decision-making processes (the so-called “black box” problem) that prevents commanders and operators from understanding or predicting how an AI system will behave in contested or novel environments; model brittleness, whereby AI systems trained on historical or synthetic data may fail in unpredictable ways when confronted with real-world conditions that differ from their training environment; automation bias, whereby human operators may place undue reliance on AI outputs and fail to exercise the independent judgment; and reliance on external technology providers, which raises questions of sovereignty, supply-chain security, and long-term operational dependability.

Developing countries face particular challenges in this regard, as they are more likely to depend on foreign AI infrastructure and to lack the capacity to independently verify the behavior or reliability of AI systems they may acquire or be exposed to.

In this regard, Brazil underscores the need for the development of international technical standards for AI systems used in the military domain. The absence of agreed standards for the testing, evaluation, validation and verification of military AI creates conditions in which systems may be deployed without adequate assurance of their reliability, safety, or legal compliance.

Brazil calls upon States and relevant international bodies, including ISO, IEEE, and appropriate UN agencies, to work toward the elaboration of technical standards for military AI. Technical standardization must be pursued in a manner that is inclusive of developing countries and does not create new forms of technological dependence or exclusion.

AI in the military domain should not be understood solely through the lens of weapons systems or operational considerations. Its implications extend far beyond the battlefield, including profound humanitarian, legal, ethical, human rights and international peace and security consequences.

IV. THE NEED FOR A NORMATIVE AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Brazil reaffirms that international law applies in full to AI in the military domain throughout the entire life cycle of AI systems, from design and development to deployment, use and decommissioning.

Brazil reiterates that discussions on AI in the military domain must be grounded in the Charter of the United Nations in its entirety, including the principles of sovereign equality, non-intervention, peaceful settlement of disputes and the prohibition of the threat or use of force, as well as international humanitarian law, international human rights law, the international law of State responsibility and all disarmament and arms control treaties. The technological complexity introduced by AI does not alter the legal obligations of States; but it intensifies the need to develop or adapt frameworks to ensure their implementation.

Brazil further notes that certain AI-enabled military capabilities may also affect the enjoyment of human rights outside situations of armed conflict, particularly in contexts involving surveillance, biometric identification, predictive analytics and dual-use technologies with grave humanitarian consequences.

A. Meaningful Human Control

Brazil supports a robust human control requirement as a cornerstone of any governance framework for AI in the military domain. Meaningful human control must be understood not merely as a formal concept, but as an operationally effective condition: human commanders and operators must have the awareness, authority, time, and capacity to understand, anticipate, and intervene in AI-assisted decision-making, particularly in situations involving the use of force, and must be held liable for its consequences.

With regard to lethal autonomous weapons systems specifically, Brazil believes meaningful human control requires a responsible chain of command and the ability to anticipate and limit the scale of operations and the effects of such systems. This includes preventing systems from significantly altering mission parameters without human intervention and incorporating effective deactivation mechanisms. In addition, Brazil supports prohibiting the use of autonomous weapons systems that are incapable of being used in compliance with international humanitarian law.

Consistent with General Assembly resolutions 78/241 and 79/62, Brazil reiterates its support for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on lethal autonomous weapons systems, which would preferably take the form of a new protocol to the CCW. Brazil delivered, alongside 41 other States, a joint statement at the September 2025 session of the CCW GGE affirming readiness to move toward negotiations on the basis of the rolling text in discussion within the Group. Brazil expects that the upcoming 7th Review Conference of the CCW will adopt a mandate to start negotiations to that end and to conclude them without delay.

B. Ethical and Development Dimensions

Brazil draws attention to the ethical dimensions of AI in the military domain that extend beyond legal compliance. The delegation of life-and-death decisions to algorithmic systems raises fundamental questions about human dignity and the moral architecture of war. Brazil supports the inclusion of ethical safeguards, including principles of explainability, proportionality, fairness and the protection

of non-combatants, as central parameters in the design and review of military AI systems.

Brazil notes that concentration of computational infrastructure, advanced semiconductor production and foundational AI models in a limited number of States and corporations may generate new strategic dependencies and asymmetries. In this context, underscores the indivisibility of security and development. Any international governance framework for military AI must ensure that constraints on harmful military applications do not inadvertently impede the peaceful and developmental uses of AI, particularly in the Global South. Technology transfer, capacity-building, and equitable access to the benefits of AI for sustainable development must be integral components of any multilateral arrangement.

V. PROCESS AND INSTITUTIONAL PREFERENCES

A. The Centrality of the United Nations

Brazil strongly supports the United Nations as the primary and indispensable forum for the development of international governance frameworks for AI in the military domain.

Brazil notes with concern the fragmentation of existing governance efforts across multiple parallel processes, including various regional or plurilateral arrangements. While these initiatives may serve useful purposes, including through furthering a multistakeholder dialogue, they cannot substitute for a genuinely multilateral process with universal participation.

B. Complementarity of Processes

The issue of AI in the military domain is currently being discussed in the First Committee of the General Assembly, the CCW, the Conference on Disarmament and the UN Disarmament Commission. These processes should not compete but should build on each other, with each forum addressing the dimensions most

suited to its mandate and membership. Any future dedicated UN process should contribute to a coherent and complementary governance architecture.

Brazil supports the Secretary-General's recommendation, contained in report A/80/78, that States take concrete steps at the eightieth session of the General Assembly to establish a dedicated and inclusive process to comprehensively address AI in the military domain.

Brazil favors an open-ended working group model under General Assembly auspices, which would ensure universal participation and a mandate broad enough to address the full range of AI applications in the military domain, from autonomous weapons to command and control, strategic decision support, nuclear interfaces, and cyber-AI convergence.

C. Transparency and Confidence-Building

Pending the development of a comprehensive multilateral governance framework, Brazil supports the elaboration of transparency and confidence-building measures, at the global and regional levels, such as voluntary exchanges of information on national AI governance frameworks, reporting mechanisms on military AI doctrines and policies, among others.

D. Multi-Stakeholder Approach

Brazil recognizes the importance of engaging civil society, academia, the scientific community, and industry in discussions regarding the governance of AI in the military domain, within the respective responsibilities of each stakeholder. Given that AI innovation is predominantly driven by the private sector, regulatory and governance frameworks that ignore industry dynamics will be of limited effectiveness.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the foregoing, Brazil puts forward the following recommendations for multilateral consideration:

1) Adopt a negotiation mandate within the CCW toward a legally binding instrument that addresses the regulation of autonomous weapons systems through a combination of prohibition of AWS incapable of operating in conformity with international humanitarian law and the regulation of other autonomous systems in order to ensure meaningful human control over their operation and eliminate possible gaps in legal accountability and State responsibility.

2) Establish, under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, a dedicated open-ended working group on AI in the military domain, with universal membership and a comprehensive mandate to discuss the issue.

> 2.1) The mandate should be oriented towards developing shared understandings of the benefits, risks and challenges of AI in the military domain and to develop norms, rules and principles for its responsible use in compliance with international law, in particular international humanitarian law, and taking into account ethical concerns and the need to safeguard international peace and security. These understandings (an impact assessment framework) would support States and relevant international organizations in avoiding misuses of AI and mitigating its harmful consequences.

3) Ensure that the governance of AI in the military domain and the governance of AI for peaceful and developmental purposes are treated as mutually reinforcing, not separate or competing agendas.

4) Evaluate the impact of AI on the integrity of existing disarmament and non-proliferation frameworks, including the NPT, the CTBT, the BWC, and the CWC, and develop collective responses to risks identified.

Brazil remains committed to constructive, inclusive and multilateral engagement aimed at ensuring that the development and use of artificial intelligence in the

military domain remain fully consistent with international law, international peace and security, and the protection of human dignity.