Submission to the United Nations informal exchanges on "Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security"

Geneva, 15–17 June 2026

Soka Gakkai International

The Soka Gakkai International (SGI) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the informal exchanges convened pursuant to UN General Assembly resolution 80/58 on artificial intelligence (AI) in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security. Guided by Buddhist principles and informed by a longstanding commitment to peace, human dignity and disarmament, SGI brings to these exchanges a perspective rooted in the conviction that every human life is irreplaceable and that the purpose of international governance must be to protect and uphold our common humanity.

As a member of the Stop Killer Robots coalition, SGI also aligns itself with the written submission by the coalitions' Interfaith Working Group.

SGI welcomes the Secretary-General's substantive report (A/80/78) and the structured attention the international community is now bringing to bear on military AI beyond the narrower question of autonomous weapons systems. These exchanges represent a vital opportunity to develop shared norms and enforceable standards. The urgency of doing so has grown sharply as the real-world deployments of AI in armed conflict are already generating grave humanitarian consequences. The international community cannot afford a governance gap between the pace of technology and the pace of norms.

Introduction

AI in the military domain is evolving faster than the legal and ethical frameworks designed to govern the use of force. Systems are now being deployed for surveillance, target identification and recommendation, decision-support, logistics and command-and-control. Generative AI and large language models are being integrated into operational military systems. The result is a profound transformation of how armed force is planned, executed and experienced, one that raises questions of conscience, accountability and human dignity that no state, organization or faith community can afford to leave unanswered.

SGI's concerns cluster around five interconnected themes: (1) the erosion of meaningful human control and accountability; (2) the acceleration of decision-making and the risk of escalation; (3) the dehumanizing effects of AI bias and data practices; (4) the absence of adequate transparency; and (5) the dangers of proliferation in the absence of binding norms.

I. Human Control and Accountability

International humanitarian law (IHL) requires deliberate, informed human judgment in decisions that affect life and death. The core principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution cannot

be reduced to algorithmic outputs. Yet the deployment of AI-assisted targeting systems risks doing exactly that: substituting machine-generated recommendations for genuine human deliberation.

When an AI system contributes to a harmful error, the "black box" nature of many such systems makes it difficult to establish why it happened and who is responsible. This diffusion of accountability is deeply problematic. Commanders, developers, companies, states and other relevant actors must remain fully accountable for the consequences of the systems they develop, deploy or authorize. Responsibility for the use of force cannot be transferred to a machine.

- A "human in the loop" is not sufficient if that person lacks the time or information to exercise genuine independent judgment. Human control must be meaningful in practice, not just on paper.
- The international community must affirm that meaningful human control is a legal and ethical requirement, and define clearly what it demands across different military applications.

II. Speed, Scale and the Risk of Escalation

The strategic appeal of military AI lies largely in its capacity to process information and support operations at greater speed and scale than would otherwise be possible. Yet these developments also raise important humanitarian and security concerns. As decision making becomes increasingly compressed, there may be fewer opportunities for careful deliberation, de-escalation and independent human judgment. Recent developments in armed conflict have highlighted these challenges, drawing attention to the need for safeguards that ensure technological capabilities do not outpace the human responsibility and oversight required in decisions involving the use of force.

- The acceleration of military decision-making is particularly dangerous in contexts involving nuclear-armed states, where AI integration into command and control systems raises the risk of miscalculation at catastrophic scale; a concern reflected in the recent UN General Assembly resolution on AI and nuclear weapons.
- Any international framework for military AI must include clear requirements that preserve sufficient time for genuine human deliberation.

III. Bias, Data and the Dehumanization of Conflict

AI systems learn from data, and data inevitably reflects the societies and circumstances from which it is drawn, including existing inequalities and prejudices. As a result, AI systems can exhibit bias through the data on which they are trained, the way they are designed, or the manner in which they are used. In military contexts, such bias can have serious consequences, including the misidentification of civilians, the failure to recognize protected persons or objects, and the disproportionate impact of military operations on already vulnerable communities.

A recent report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *Bias in Military AI and Compliance with International Humanitarian Law* (August 2025), highlights how bias can arise throughout the lifecycle of military AI systems and may undermine compliance with core principles

of international humanitarian law. Beyond its legal implications, bias in military AI also raises ethical concerns such as "digital dehumanization", the process by which people are reduced to data points and algorithmic assessments rather than recognized as human beings possessing inherent dignity and worth.

- States should recognize that bias in military AI is not simply a technical challenge but a humanitarian, legal and ethical concern; they should develop the expertise and oversight mechanisms necessary to identify, assess and take action on bias in military AI systems.
- Data used in military AI systems should be obtained lawfully, independently assessed for accuracy, reliability and bias, and not repurposed from civilian or commercial sources without appropriate safeguards and respect for human rights.
- Where risks of bias cannot be adequately mitigated, AI systems should not be deployed in contexts involving the use of force.

IV. Transparency and Accountability

Many current AI systems are difficult to interpret, even for those operating them. Operators may not understand why a system flagged a particular target; commanders may be unaware of the assumptions embedded in the tools they authorize; and states frequently keep military AI applications classified, making independent oversight extremely challenging.

This opacity is incompatible with the standards of accountability that IHL requires. Meaningful oversight by commanders, states, international monitors and, where applicable, judicial bodies depends on systems being understandable, traceable and open to scrutiny.

- States should provide transparency about the AI systems they use in military operations: their functions, data sources, known limitations and human oversight arrangements.
- Technology companies supplying military AI must be honest about the capabilities and limitations of their products and must not enter into contracts where they cannot verify lawful use.
- These exchanges should advance concrete transparency commitments, building on the framework set out in resolution 80/58 and the Secretary-General's report A/80/78.

V. Proliferation and the Need for Binding Norms

The rapid development of military AI presents humanity with an important choice. Without clear international rules and shared ethical principles, these technologies are likely to spread to an increasing number of state and non-state actors. As countries seek to strengthen their security and avoid falling behind others, there is a danger that competition will outpace reflection, and that technological advances will move ahead of the safeguards needed to protect human life and dignity.

Recent international discussions have helped to deepen awareness of these challenges, but much work remains to be done. The pace of technological change makes it increasingly urgent for the international community to move beyond discussion alone and towards effective forms of

governance. The 2026 informal exchanges provide an important opportunity to strengthen international cooperation and build a common understanding of how military AI can be regulated in ways that uphold peace and human security.

- While voluntary principles and political commitments can make a valuable contribution, they are not sufficient on their own. The international community should work towards legally binding measures that ensure meaningful human judgment, accountability, transparency and compliance with international humanitarian law.
- Efforts to prevent the proliferation of military AI systems that pose unacceptable humanitarian risks should be accompanied by greater transparency, dialogue and confidence-building among states, helping to reduce mistrust and the risk of escalation.
- The 2026 informal exchanges should serve as a step towards a stronger international framework for military AI governance, one guided by respect for human dignity and a shared commitment to protecting life, advancing peace and fostering cooperation among peoples and nations.

SGI calls on Member States to:

- Commit to a legally binding international instrument that prohibits autonomous weapons systems that target people and lacking meaningful human control, establishes binding standards for oversight, transparency and accountability across the AI lifecycle, and creates verification mechanisms.
- Provide genuine transparency on the military AI systems they are developing and deploying, including data sources, human oversight arrangements and known limitations.
- Ensure all military AI applications comply with IHL, including the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution.
- Guarantee that decision-making in conflict settings can always be traced and reconstructed, so that legal and moral responsibility cannot be displaced onto a machine.
- Prohibit the use of unlawfully gathered data in military AI systems and require independent audits of data quality and bias.

SGI calls on technology companies to:

- Be transparent about the design, training data and decision-making processes of AI systems, including those with military applications.
- Refuse to enter into or fulfil contracts with military actors where they cannot verify that their systems will be used in compliance with international law.
- Engage in good faith with international regulatory processes, recognizing that private self-regulation alone cannot meet the challenges posed by AI in warfare.

Conclusion

SGI's engagement with this issue is grounded in the Buddhist conviction that human dignity is inherent and unconditional. Consequently, it must never be reduced to any score, category, or

algorithmic assessment. Every person possesses an immeasurable dignity that must be respected and protected. The fundamental challenge before us is not simply how to regulate new technologies, but how to ensure that they serve the cause of peace and human well-being. Violence and war inevitably inflict suffering and undermine human dignity. The danger posed by military AI is that it may further erode opportunities for human empathy, dialogue and restraint while increasing the distance between those who make decisions and those who bear their consequences. Our task is therefore not only to prevent harmful uses of AI, but to strengthen the values of compassion, solidarity and respect for life that are the true foundation of peace.