Current international discussion on regulating LAWS

- Current legal and political issues
- Prospects for an international treaty

Broad scope underpinning discussion/concern:

 Systems that apply force through a process of matching sensor inputs to a 'target profile,' without human action/intervention:

The process takes place in an envelope of time and space without human engagement:

Sensor(s) Collect/produce data on external context Calculation Determines action based on processing sensor and other data

Force Applied if calculation conditions met

Moral and practical flow from uncertainty:

- When, where, to what/who might force occur?
 - What (else) will trigger force in practice?
 - How can things reasonably be encoded as targets?
 - How can we ensure control in time and space sufficient for upholding ethical principles and making meaningful legal judgments?

Situating these systems and concern



Core issues to respond to in the area of 'autonomous weapons':

- Are some of these ways of applying force fundamentally unacceptable?
- How can we keep sufficient control over the use of weapons systems?





Current state of international activity

- 'Lethal autonomous weapons systems' discussed at Human Rights Council (2013) then Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (since 2014)
- New legal instrument currently unlikely here



Challenges and dynamics

- Wait and see/speaking in favour/existing law adequate
- Explicit support for legal regulation from around 30 countries
- Increased recognition that human control is key area for discussion and work
- \rightarrow need to discuss the content of this to move forward