

Killer Robot

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Defence

Why in News?

Recently, 128 countries reached a consensus on a non-binding framework for dealing with autonomous weapons during talks in Geneva under the **Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)**.



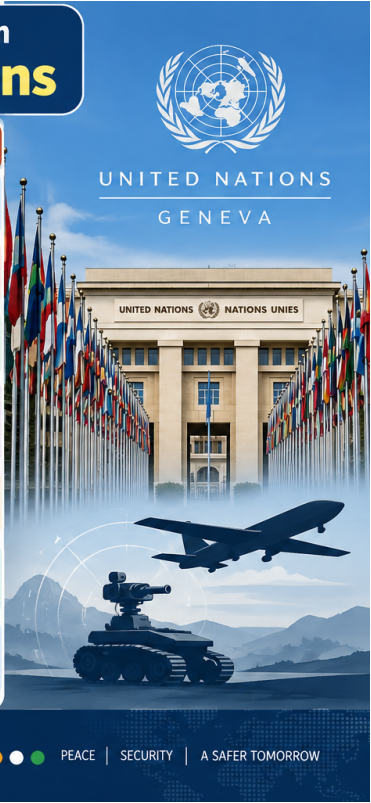
Key Facts: International Decision on

Autonomous Weapons



UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA

Feature	Details
 Countries involved	128
 Location	Geneva
 Date	5 September 2026
 Framework	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)
 Nature	Non-binding
 Decision	Adopted by consensus
 Subject	Autonomous weapons



- **Killer robots** - It is an informal term for autonomous weapons systems (AWS).
- These systems can detect, identify, and engage targets according to their programming, without requiring human approval for each individual attack.

TRADITIONAL WEAPON

Human makes the critical decisions at every step



AUTONOMOUS WEAPON

Machine systems perform key functions without direct human decision at each step



Important: Autonomous does not necessarily mean completely independent of humans. Different systems can involve different degrees of human control.

Technology should serve humanity, not replace judgment.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

- The agreement is formally known as the **Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons**.
- It is also sometimes referred to as the **Inhumane Weapons Convention**.
- **Aim** - To protect military troops from inhumane injuries and prevent noncombatants from accidentally being wounded or killed by certain types of arms.
- **5 protocols**
- **Protocol I (Non-Detectable Fragments)** - Bans weapons using fragments undetectable by X-rays in the body.
- **Amended Protocol II (Mines and Booby-Traps)** - Controls the use of landmines, booby-traps, and similar devices to protect civilians.
- **Protocol III (Incendiary Weapons)** - Restricts weapons designed to set fire to targets or cause burn injuries near civilian areas.
- **Protocol IV (Blinding Laser Weapons)** - Prohibits laser weapons designed to cause permanent blindness.
- **Protocol V (Explosive Remnants of War)** - Requires cleanup, recording, and marking of unexploded ordnance after fighting ends.

• Key concerns

- **Civilian casualties** - There is a significant risk of misidentifying combatants as civilians, which may result in unintended harm.
- **Accountability gap** - Liability remains unclear among programmers, manufacturers, commanders, operators, and states.
- **Human control** - An ethical dilemma arises when machines are permitted to make decisions regarding the use of lethal force.
- **Rapid technological growth** - Accelerated advances in artificial intelligence and autonomy intensify concerns related to modern warfare.

Reference

