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Yes	WILPF Cameroon

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Global catastrophic risks mitigated	Risk multipliers managed	Implementation timeframe
Weapons of Mass Destruction	Conflict or political violence	Short
The threat from new and emerging technology	Poverty and inequality	

Peace and Security: Question marks over Africa's future

There is a strong fear for the humanity's future, besides an unreasonable technological development. Preventive action is required to ensure that this does not pose an additional threat to African peoples suffering already from armed violence.

DETAILS

The proposal of the idea of this project, it must be said, takes into account the possible actions to be undertaken in the course of the year 2020. As a regional project, it requires travel to targeted countries in the region, but also the organisation of workshops that may require participants to be brought from elsewhere.

On the other hand, meetings in Geneva can help to mobilise diplomats.

Overall, however, capacity building of stakeholders is essential. The direct short-term end result is that some states on the continent will align themselves with those already demanding a binding instrument against lethal autonomous weapons systems.

The background analysis is attached.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

Alleviating poverty and inequality

Currently in Africa, poverty, governance and authoritarian governments are root causes of many crises, many of which tend to mutate into violent extremism. Addressing root causes of a conflict is equal to finding lasting solutions to it. In this case, it is all about sensitisation and prevention of the further development and use of killer robots. Their use is potentially disastrous for African countries; so preventing their development is an adequate way to alleviate poverty and inequality mostly targeting women and girls.

Conversing effect in increasing poverty and inequality

Laws are made to be implemented. The problem with international laws and treaties is that once they are adopted, it usually takes time for states to comply with them; during this time the causes that are supposed to be addressed continue to produce the same effects. In this sense, it is feared that poverty and inequality will increase. But this proposal in itself does not present such risks; it is a future outcome that must be taken into consideration.

Reducing conflict and political violence

This proposal is meant to prevent future damages to the continent. Advocacy must be stepped up for a consistent normative framework, including a Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and on Autonomous Lethal Weapon Systems, or an international binding law to ban the killer robots, therefore to reduce conflicts.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Implementation strategy

The target persons at the African level are decision-makers in the countries that are High Contracting Parties to the CCW. Advocacy meetings are the most effective way to explain the issues of the Campaign. At the end of these meetings, it would be important to have activities with the media to spread the ideas and leave the general public as witnesses to the country's initiatives.

The second level of action is at the UN in Geneva. Here diplomats of those countries have to be met, both individually and collectively during a meeting, to convince them to take the floor and speak out during CCW meetings. Intermediate actors involved are ad civil society organisations.

The main obstacles are technical and financial. On the technical side, in the campaign team, artificial intelligence experts will be required, alongside campaign members, to explain the implications of the use of killer robots, also the need to regulate the sector to make it a development asset.

On the financial level, the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots is already providing support since 2018. But in view of the future stakes and the targets and actors to be involved, it will be necessary to further fundraise for the campaign.

Political will exists to realise this proposal

Based on the experience of working in the field for some years now, it appears that international laws provide a certain protection to vulnerable populations, protected in times of conflict by International Humanitarian Law. During 2018 and 2019, meetings and workshops were held in some African countries, during which institutions, organisations and personalities met, including at the Central African States Community and the African Union, who believe that the issue of lethal autonomous weapons should be taken seriously.

Since the beginning of discussions on autonomous weapons at the UN level, a total of 90 out of 125 High Contracting Parties to the CCW have publicly elaborated their views in a multilateral forum. From 2013, 15 African countries out of the 25 who are High Contracting Parties to the CCW have spoken out. Among the 28 states that have expressed their desire to move to negotiate new international law to prohibit fully autonomous weapons, there are 7 African countries. So at least at the political level there are engagements of some countries on which we can leverage to push the others.

What if political will does not exist yet

The political will does exist, but there are divergent views. For some officials met during field missions, the issue of

Killer Robots is not specifically on their agenda. As a result, many have refused to allow their institutions to take any steps to encourage adherence to the advocacy project for a treaty against Killer Robots, an action that for them should be devolved to Peacekeeping Missions. Others have expressed doubts that such a potentially destructive technology could be used, as the Killer Robots' modus operandi as described seems unrealistic. For them it would be important to make more efforts on more urgent problems (implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325, SDGs, improvement of Human Rights, etc.).

The idea now while raising awareness to these institutions or personalities is to use expert to demonstrate how urgent problems as they said can't be solved in a sustainable way if technology threats are not taken into consideration.

MITIGATING RISKS

Mitigating weapons of mass destruction

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has been conducting a gender conflict analysis in Cameroon since July 2019. What is heard from the survivors of conflict is awful. In other African countries conflicts lead to similar dynamics and even more tragic. And when it comes to the testimonies of women and girls who are natural pillars of African societies, question marks arise when we think about Africa, in five or ten years' time.

The current proposal will help adding voices to the list of African countries requesting the ban on autonomous weapons. Preventive action must be taken to ensure that technological developments do not pose an additional threat to African people suffering already from armed violence, the gender impacts of which are significant.