Dominion of Canada

General Assembly First Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)

1. **The Weaponization of Artificial Intelligence**

Canada is a strong advocate for the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the international community. Canada recognizes the increasing need and concern for developing and managing artificial intelligence safely to avoid the integration of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS). Canada firmly believes that the weaponization of artificial intelligence and use of LAWS would be “unethical and noncompliant with international humanitarian law”[[1]](#footnote-1). Canada advocates for the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence in its government through five guiding principles. 1. understanding and measuring the impact of using AI 2. transparency among citizens about where AI is being used 3. Explaining AI decision making 4. Protecting our citizens and governmental information while sharing our developments and AI data globally 5. Ensuring sufficient training for employees to better improve AI in public use [[2]](#footnote-2). Canada advocates for the ethical, purposeful and responsible use with the Pan-Canadian AI strategy[[3]](#footnote-3) to advance technology in science, health, environment and energy but strongly condemns the weaponization, or unethical and unlawful use of weapons which do not “maintain appropriate human involvement”. Canada recognizes the need to bridge the gap between the development of artificial intelligence and the weaponization of LAWS.

Globally, Canada has collaborated with many other countries to develop responsible ways to use and grow Artificial Intelligence without integrating LAWS. In 2021, Canada worked alongside member states in the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, to participate in table top exercises that simulate what through AI is “technically feasible, what is militarily desirable and what is legally permissible”. Through this initiative we were able to determine that the weaponization of artificial intelligence has no incentive to military sources with its unpredictable behavior and depends on compliance with international humanitarian law.[[4]](#footnote-4) Canada has also worked alongside the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence in order to protect the scientific development of Artificial Intelligence by working to “foster and contribute to the responsible development, use and governance of human-centered AI systems, in congruence with the UN Sustainable Development Goals”. [[5]](#footnote-5)

Canada will continue to safely develop and use Artificial Intelligence responsibly to combat the weaponization of AI and encourage member states to join us. Canada hopes to develop a further action plan to keep testing the impact of weaponization of artificial intelligence in communities and encourage transparency and explanation of Artificial Intelligence decision making among the development and usage of AI in the international community. Canada strongly condemns the weaponization of artificial intelligence and use of LAWS, and further proposes that member states use Artificial to grow our global sphere and use Artificial Intelligence responsibly.

1. **Combating the Global Illicit Arms Trade**

Canada is a strong proponent for not only combatting, but ending the illicit global arms trade. Canada has recognized that the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons is a widespread and persistent problem that supports other illegal activities such as drugs and human trafficking while also feeding lethal violence worldwide.[[6]](#footnote-6) Domestically, Canada has made efforts to limit arms within the country by banning over 1500 models of firearms as of May 1st, 2020.[[7]](#footnote-7) Canada has also made the movement to make the importing of small arms, such as handguns, illegal within the country.[[8]](#footnote-8)

On the international front, Canada has cooperated with many other countries to address combatting the illicit global arms trade. Canada recognizes the importance of working with the international community in attempts to make effective change. Canada has worked together with the Unites States to establish a cross-border task force in order to disrupt gun smuggling and trafficking between the two. This will ensure that intelligence regarding the smuggling of firearms, ammunition, and explosive weapons is shared between agents on each side of the border. The goal of this is to dismantle the trafficking of these materials without disrupting the trade of other legal materials.[[9]](#footnote-9) In September 2019, Canada became a state party to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The ATT is an international treaty that includes support of many Nation States such as Mexico, Brazil, China, Spain, Australia, and South Africa.[[10]](#footnote-10) Additionally, Canada has also made efforts within the United Nations (UN) to prevent the illicit flow of arms to areas of conflict. Canada ha expressed the importance of combating the illicit trade in small arms while respecting the rights of lawful firearm producers, exporters, retailers and owners. Canada was also a strong proponent of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Canada plans to continue their staunch international efforts to combat the global illicit arms trade and strongly urges other Member States to do the same. Canada would like to see the international community to further join and support the Arms Trade Treaty as well as establish other international and regional alliances to combat this issue. Similar to the task force Canada has partnered with the United States on, Canada urges other Member States to form similar cooperative actions with bordering nations in order to stop the illicit global arms trade.

1. Global Affairs Canada, “Government of Canada,” GAC (Government of Canada, October 21, 2022), https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues\_development-enjeux\_developpement/peace\_security-paix\_securite/conventional\_weapons-armes\_conventionnelles.aspx?lang=eng#a4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Responsible Ai.” GPAI. Accessed October 27, 2022. https://gpai.ai/projects/responsible-ai/. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Pan-Canadian AI Strategy.” CIFAR, October 26, 2022. https://cifar.ca/ai/. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research,” UNIDIR, accessed October 27, 2022, https://www.unidir.org/. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “Responsible Ai.” GPAI. Accessed October 27, 2022. https://gpai.ai/projects/responsible-ai/. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. “Illicit Trafficking and International Obligations” Accessed October 26, 2022 http://guncontrol.ca/issues-and-facts/illicit-trafficking-and-international-obligations/ [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. “Canada’s Commitments to Regulate Firearms” Accessed October 26, 2022 https://ploughshares.ca/pl\_publications/canadas-commitments-to-regulate-firearms/ [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. “Canada’s Government Moves to Make Selling or Importing Handguns Illegal” Accessed October 26, 2022 https://www.npr.org/2022/05/30/1102084025/canada-bill-freeze-handgun-sales-imports [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “ US, Canada Establish Cross-Border Task Force to Disrupt Gun Smuggling and Trafficking” Accessed October 26, 2022 https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/us-canada-establish-cross-border-task-force-disrupt-gun-smuggling-and-trafficking [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Arms Trade Treaty, “Treaty Status” Accessed October 26, 2022 https://thearmstradetreaty.org/treaty-status.html?templateId=209883 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. United Nations. “Canada Seeks treaty to Prevent Illicit Flow of Small Arms to Conflict Areas as Assembly’s Disarmament Committee Receives Range of New Texts” Accessed October 26, 2022 https://press.un.org/en/2006/gadis3326.doc.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-11)