

RESHAPING OF LEGAL REGIME GOVERNING ON DRONE TECHNOLOGY TO REACH SRI LANKA'S NATIONAL SECURITY OBJECTIVES AND ECONOMIC PROSPECTS; LESSONS LEARNT FROM EUROPEAN UNION AND UNITED STATES LEGAL REGIME

Abstract.

Among the technological advancements, drone technology stands out as a prominent example of the challenge posed to administrative authorities due to the multitude of their usage across various disciplines, especially media, privacy, agriculture, healthcare, and National Security (NS). Hence, today, drone technology presents a significant challenge for lawmakers in all states in developing effective regulations for its usage that are consonant with the NS's prospective and economic needs. As drones become more ubiquitous in various discipline, it is crucial to regularize and synchronise the legal landscape surrounding drone technology in order to achieve NS objectives and the commercial benefits of diversified advancement. In that context, this research focuses on revealing whether the drone legislation enacted in Sri Lanka (SL) was able to overcome the constraints generated by the ever-evolving advancement of drone technology while preserving consistency with the country's NS prospects and socioeconomic objectives. The research adopted a qualitative research method that includes personnel interviews, a library-based black letter approach, and a comparative analysis of international legal materials that govern drone matters in the United States and European Union. While searching for the research question, the paper primarily aimed to identify uncertainties and lacunae that prevailed in the SL legal regime on drone aspects. In the results analysis, the most evident concern of the research is that regulatory and enforcement authorities have already encountered many legal consequences as a result of failing to implement timely regulation and modifications. In addition, results express that the SL regulation for Implementing Standards UAS-IS-2022, Requirements for the Operation of Pilotless Aircraft, entails significant legal flaws in the areas of registration, certification, privacy rights, assessing operator competency, and commercial utilisation. Finally, research proposes recommendations to overcome those legal incapacities on drone matters to synchronise with the expectations of the NS and the economic prospects.

Key words: Drone technology, National Security, Implementing Standards UAS-IS-2022, Pilotless Aircraft

