**Under EMBARGO until: 00:01 EST, 13th November 2019, 05:01 GMT, 13th November 2019**

**PRESS RELEASE:** 13th of November 2019

**73% in favour of a ban on Killer Robots across 10 European countries**

* A majority of people (73%) in 10 European countries want their country to work towards an international ban on killer robots, i.e. weapons systems that would select and attack targets without human control. Only 13% were opposed to such a ban.
* A [previous poll](https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/2019/01/global-poll-61-oppose-killer-robots/) conducted in 2018 also showed that 61% of respondents across 26 countries oppose the development of killer robots, with a majority opposed killer robots even in China (60%), Russia (59%), the UK (54%) and the US (52%).
* In Ireland, 81% of respondents are in favour of the Irish government working towards a treaty banning killer robots. This is the highest proportion of the ten European countries polled.
* European states must urgently work towards a legally binding instrument to prevent weapons systems that will select and engage a target without meaningful human control becoming a reality.

Rapid technological developments are causing significant concerns that weapons systems will be developed that can autonomously select and attack targets, essentially delegating the decision to kill to an algorithm-operated machine. The results of this opinion poll show that public sentiment in Ireland overwhelmingly supports a ban on such weapons and wants Ireland to take action.

States have discussed options to deal with lethal autonomous weapons, popularly known as killer robots, at the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* since 2013. A majority of states want to ensure human control over the use of force and want to work towards concrete measures to prevent the development of such weapons.[[1]](#footnote-2) A small minority of states is trying to drastically slow down meaningful diplomatic progress. Russia, Israel, South Korea and the United States do not support negotiations for a new treaty. However, [30 states](https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/about/" \l "actions) are now seeking a ban on lethal autonomous weapons systems, Ireland is not yet one of them. The next annual meeting of the CCW will take place on the 13th to the 15th of November 2019 in Geneva. In spite of the clear public support for legally binding and international measures, a majority of European states only support a non-binding political declaration that would be insufficient to address the challenges raised by killer robots.

According to Laura Nolan, an Irish member of the International Committee for Robot Arms Control, a founding member of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots: “The European Parliament has taken a strong stance against autonomous weapons. Ireland is a major centre for technological development and this makes it our responsibility to work towards a legally binding instrument to prevent the development and use of killer robots.”

Mary Wareham of Human Rights Watch and Coordinator of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, said “Ireland is known around the world as a champion of multilateral efforts to advance humanitarian disarmament with the goal of preventing human suffering. This survey shows that the Irish public want their government to help create an international treaty to prohibit fully autonomous weapons and prevent potentially catastrophic human suffering before it's too late.”

The survey carried out by [YouGov](https://yougov.de/) in October 2019 was commissioned by [Campaign to Stop Killer Robots](https://stopkillerrobots.org/). Sample size 1000 people per country (except Switzerland and Ireland, sample size 500 and Germany, sample size 2000).

For more information, or to schedule an interview, please contact:

Clare Conboy: [clare@stopkillerrobots.org](mailto:clare@stopkillerrobots.org) or +41 76 434 4483

* Website:[www.stopkillerobots.org](http://www.stopkillerobots.org/)
* Twitter: [@BanKillerRobots](https://twitter.com/BanKillerRobots) and [@ban\_kr\_ireland](https://twitter.com/ban_kr_ireland)

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)