NEWS BREAK

Article: **Nations delay action on AI killer robots for another 2 years**

Section: **MAIN, A6**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, November 22, 2026,** of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

Feel free to adapt this lesson for your students. For instance, some educators may assign this as a homework task, while others might facilitate the reading and discussion of questions within small groups or larger class discussions.

Please take a moment to review all NIE content before classroom use to ensure it is suitable for your students.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Learning Objectives:

After reading the article, students will examine international efforts to regulate AI-powered autonomous weapons and the challenges of establishing global agreements to limit machines' ability to make life-and-death decisions. Students will explore the role of the United Nations, the positions of countries advocating for legally binding regulations, and the concerns raised by military powers and human rights organizations. Students will evaluate the ethical implications of autonomous weapons, the importance of human control and accountability in warfare, and the challenges of balancing technological advancement, national security, and international cooperation in an increasingly complex global landscape

Pre-Reading Discussion:

- What do you think the article will be about, using only the title?
- Are there any clues? What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted word means using context clues? A ***context clue*** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the meaning of the word.

Scores of countries ended the weeklong U.N. conference on weapons by agreeing to "elaborate" a possible accord on such lethal ***autonomous*** weapons systems by 2028.

Autonomous Guess:

Autonomous Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. Efforts to set firm rules on AI-powered killer robots and drones ran aground Saturday as U.N.-backed talks in Geneva produced a softened agreement to extend discussions for _____ more years.
2. The outcome underscored the difficulty of achieving concrete results in diplomacy amid global conflicts as major military powers jockey for _____.
3. It also marked the latest failure to set guardrails for AI, at a time when some experts have warned about such systems breaking out of human control and going _____.
4. Izumi Nakamitsu, the U.N. high representative for disarmament affairs, hailed a "significant achievement" but acknowledged a "glass half full or half empty" scenario, citing Guterres' hopes for a _____ _____ deal this year.
5. Activists accused military powers like Russia and the United States of blocking _____ _____.
6. Stop Killer Robots lamented a "_____-_____ _____," and Beatrice Fihn, founder of international law advocacy group Lex International, said the decision amounted to "pushing the can down the road for two more years."
7. They noted that most countries supported work toward a new _____.
8. Max Tegmark, a machine learning specialist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and founder of the Future of Life Institute, said:

"States have agreed it is sufficient to just talk about the issue, for the 14th year, while these weapons enable _____."

9. Before the meeting, seven countries proposed launching negotiations on a rule book that could prevent or limit the ability of machines to _____ without human control or accountability. That effort fell short.
10. "Technology is moving faster than _____," said Ambassador Frederico Meyer of Brazil, which joined Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and Panama in proposing such negotiations. "Diplomats are very slow."
11. The International Committee of the Red Cross highlighted how autonomous weapons can be "_____" — unlike, say, a bullet fired from a gun with a distinct and predictable trajectory.
12. "For years, the ICRC and many others have urged states to ensure that humans retain control over the use of force and that life-and-death decisions are never handed over to _____," it said in a statement.

Class Discussion Questions:

- What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?
- At first, I thought _____, but now I think _____?

Deeper-Dive "Connect & Explain" Comprehension Questions for Small Groups, Entire Classes or Journal Entries and/or Essay Prompts for Extended Enrichment

Deeper-Dive "Connect & Explain" Comprehension Questions for Small Groups, Entire Classes or Journal Entries and/or Essay Prompts for Extended Enrichment

1. The article describes how countries failed to agree on rules for autonomous weapons and decided to continue discussions for another two years. Why might countries struggle to agree on rules for new technologies, especially when those technologies could affect national security? How might countries' desire for military power, technological advantages, or global influence make it difficult to cooperate? What could happen if countries continue to delay an agreement?

2. The article explains that many countries support stronger rules for autonomous weapons, while some powerful military nations oppose stricter regulations. Why might countries disagree about whether these weapons should be limited or banned? How might concerns about national security or falling behind other countries influence their decisions? Should countries focus more on protecting people or maintaining their military advantage? Explain your reasoning.

3. The article raises concerns about weapons that can make decisions about who to target without direct human involvement. Who should be responsible if an

AI-powered weapon mistakenly kills or injures people—the machine, the people who created it, military leaders, or the government using it? Why is it important for humans to remain responsible for decisions involving life and death?

4. The article explains that autonomous weapons may behave unpredictably, creating risks for civilians and soldiers. How could these weapons make warfare more dangerous or lead to unintended deaths? What rules or safety measures should be in place to protect people if countries use these technologies?

5. Brazil and six other countries proposed beginning negotiations on international rules for autonomous weapons, but their efforts were unsuccessful. Brazil's ambassador argued that technology is advancing faster than governments can respond. Why might it be difficult for governments to keep up with new technologies like artificial intelligence? What could happen if rules are not established before these technologies become more widely used?

6. The article describes activists who believe that continuing discussions without creating enforceable rules is not enough, while U.N. officials viewed the agreement to continue talks as progress. Why might people disagree about whether this outcome was a success or a failure? What is the difference between talking about a problem and taking action to solve it? How can countries determine when it is time to stop discussing an issue and make decisions?

7. The article raises concerns about artificial intelligence operating without human control. AI is also being used in areas such as healthcare, transportation, education, and the workplace. How can AI be helpful to society while also creating risks? Should technologies that could cause serious harm have stricter rules than those with fewer risks? Who should help decide how AI is used in society?

8. The article describes efforts to create international rules for autonomous weapons and the challenges countries face in agreeing on how to regulate new technologies. What role should ordinary citizens, scientists, and human rights organizations play in decisions about AI and weapons? How can people encourage governments and technology companies to act responsibly? Why is it important for the public to understand how these technologies could affect the future?

Extended Essay Prompts

- The article describes efforts to create international rules for autonomous weapons that can make decisions without direct human involvement. In your essay, examine the risks and challenges of developing these weapons. Consider national security, protecting civilians, human responsibility, and the possibility of unintended harm. Explain why

countries should work together to establish rules for technologies that could affect human lives and what might happen if they fail to do so.

- The article raises concerns that artificial intelligence is advancing faster than governments can create rules to manage it. In your essay, examine the benefits and risks of developing new technologies faster than society can regulate them. Consider how AI can improve people's lives while also creating concerns about safety, privacy, ethics, and human rights. Explain how governments, technology companies, and the public can work together to ensure that AI is developed and used responsibly.
- The article raises questions about who should be responsible when AI makes decisions that result in harm or loss of life. In your essay, examine why humans should remain responsible for the decisions made by AI systems. Consider the roles of the people who develop the technology, governments, military leaders, and those who choose to use it. Explain why accountability, human oversight, and ethical decision-making are important when technology can affect people's lives.
- The article describes concerns that autonomous weapons could make decisions without human control and may behave unpredictably. In your essay, examine how society should decide when new technologies are too dangerous to use without restrictions. Consider safety, ethical responsibility, government regulation, public opinion, and international cooperation. Explain whether some technologies should be limited or banned if they pose serious risks to people, even if they offer advantages to the countries or companies that develop them.

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