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Russia Opposes Killer Robot Ban, Media Reports

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Russia stands against imposing an international ban on the emerging threat of so-called "killer robots," the Kommersant business daily reported Thursday, citing sources in the Foreign Ministry.

Russia has expressed interest in lethal autonomous weapons systems — better known as killer robots — to neutralize terrorist threats and limit casualty numbers in the event of an attack. Projects in development include combat robots able to act independently on the battlefield, the former deputy prime minister in charge of Russia's military-industrial complex announced in 2014.

Related article: Russia Wants In on a Killer Robot Future

Ahead of an 80-country UN conference on lethal autonomous weapons systems in Geneva at the end of August, Russia will go against the 26 countries that seek to ban the future androids,

Kommersant reported.

“First we must take into account that we’re talking about a technology that doesn’t have operational models yet,” an unnamed Foreign Ministry official was quoted as saying.

In addition to difficulties with defining the “superficial and speculative” term, Russia reportedly believes the existing international legal framework already applies to autonomous weapons systems “and does not need to be updated or adapted to weapons system that do not exist yet.”

Instead, Russia will reportedly support a French and German initiative to issue a political declaration asserting human control over the rapidly developing technology.

China became the only permanent UN Security Council member this year to support a ban on deploying killer robots, but not on developing them.

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