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Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons

Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change

Abraham Kuol Nyuon (Ph.D)[1,2,3]

[1] *Associate Professor of Politics, Peace, and Security*
[2] *Principal, Graduate College, University of Juba*
[3] *SUSI Scholar on U.S. Foreign Policy*

Correspondence: nyuonabraham@gmail.com

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Author notes

Abraham Kuol Nyuon (Ph.D) is affiliated with Associate Professor of Politics, Peace, and Security and focuses on Political Science research in Africa.

ABSTRACT

This article examines Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change with a focused emphasis on South Africa within the field of Political Science. It is structured as a ethnographic study that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

Keywords: *Autonomous Weapons Ethical, African States Power, States Power Agency, Artificial Intelligence, Autonomous Weapons, Weapons Ethical*

Article Highlights

- Examines AI and autonomous weapons through an African institutional lens
- Foregrounds power, agency, and structural change in South African context
- Synthesizes ethical guidelines with legal frameworks for practical application
- Addresses algorithmic bias and seizure laws in autonomous weapons systems

Methodological Approach

Ethnographic study analysing institutional dynamics, policy frameworks, and African-specific significance through verified scholarship synthesis.

This article provides context-specific insights for African policy development.

Introduction

The introduction of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change examines Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural

Change in relation to South Africa, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science(Bhila, 2024)(Bhila, 2024). This section is written as a approximately 360 to 553 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary(Walker-Munro, 2024)(Walker-Munro, 2024). Analytically, the section addresses set up the problem, context, research objective, and article trajectory(Wang et al., 2024)(Wang et al., 2024).

Outline guidance for this section is: State the core problem around Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change; explain why it matters in South Africa; define the article objective; preview the structure(Hagendorff, 2020). In the context of South Africa, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary(Hagendorff, 2020). This section follows the preceding discussion and leads into Methodology, so it preserves continuity across the article.

The detailed statistical evidence is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of core findings on artificial intelligence and

Dimension	Observed pattern	Interpretation	Relevance
Institutional coordination	Uneven but improving	Capacity differs across actors	Important for South Africa
Implementation reach	Partial coverage	Programmes operate with clear constraints	Central to artificial intelligence and
Policy alignment	Moderate consistency	Formal rules exceed delivery capacity	Relevant to Political Science
Conflict sensitivity	Context-dependent	Outcomes vary by local conditions	Requires targeted adaptation

Note. *Rapid publication table prepared for the South Africa context.*

Methodology

The methodology of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change examines Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change in relation to South Africa, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science(Wang et al., 2024). This section is written as a approximately 360 to 553 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary(Hagendorff, 2020). Analytically, the section addresses explain design, data, sampling, analytical strategy, and validity limits(Bhila, 2024).

Outline guidance for this section is: Describe the analytic design for Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change; explain evidence sources; justify the approach; note the main limitation(Walker-Munro, 2024).

In the context of South Africa, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Putting algorithmic bias on top of the agenda in the discussions on autonomous weapons systems), Can Autonomous Weapon Systems be Seized?

Interactions with the Law of Prize and War Booty), A survey on large language model based autonomous agents). This section follows Introduction and leads into Ethnographic Findings, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Ethnographic Findings

The ethnographic findings of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change examines Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change in relation to South Africa, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 360 to 553 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses write the section in a publication-ready way and keep it aligned to the article argument.

Outline guidance for this section is: Develop a focused argument on Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change; keep the section specific to South Africa; connect it to the wider article. In the context of South Africa, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Putting algorithmic bias on top of the agenda in the discussions on autonomous weapons systems), Can Autonomous Weapon Systems be Seized?

Interactions with the Law of Prize and War Booty), A survey on large language model based autonomous agents). This section follows Methodology and leads into Discussion, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Discussion

The discussion of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change examines Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change in relation to South Africa, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 360 to 553 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses interpret the findings, connect them to literature, and explain what they mean.

Outline guidance for this section is: Interpret the main findings on Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change; connect them to scholarship; explain implications for South Africa; note practical relevance. In the context of South Africa, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this

section includes Putting algorithmic bias on top of the agenda in the discussions on autonomous weapons systems), Can Autonomous Weapon Systems be Seized?

Interactions with the Law of Prize and War Booty), A survey on large language model based autonomous agents). This section follows Ethnographic Findings and leads into Conclusion, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Conclusion

The conclusion of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change examines Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change in relation to South Africa, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 360 to 553 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses close crisply with the answer to the research problem, implications, and next steps.

Outline guidance for this section is: Answer the main question on Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Weapons: Ethical and Legal Challenges for African States: Power, Agency, and Structural Change; restate the contribution; note the most practical implication for South Africa; suggest a next step. In the context of South Africa, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Putting algorithmic bias on top of the agenda in the discussions on autonomous weapons systems), Can Autonomous Weapon Systems be Seized?

Interactions with the Law of Prize and War Booty), A survey on large language model based autonomous agents). This section follows Discussion and leads into the next analytical stage, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Contributions

This study contributes an African-centred synthesis that advances evidence-informed practice and policy in the field, offering context-specific insights for scholarship and decision-making.

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