

# Forging Paths *for* Shared Sacred Flourishing

International Council Meeting | June 23-25, 2026 | Mauritius

## THEMATIC DIALOGUE I

### Artificial Intelligence in Conflict Settings

#### Human Rights, Human Dignity, and Multifaith Perspectives

According to the 2025 SIPRI report, military expenditures have reached record levels, surpassing USD 2.7 trillion annually, as states rearm in response to shifting geopolitical rivalries, proxy conflicts, and rapid technological change.<sup>1</sup> The multilateral disarmament architecture built in the late twentieth century is under severe pressure: key treaties have collapsed or stalled, nuclear modernization and testing is accelerating again, and new forms of warfare increasingly blur the line between combatant and civilian. The outcome is the deterioration of international laws and a normalization of perpetual, technologically enabled conflicts.<sup>2</sup> Among the most consequential developments is the rapid integration of artificial intelligence and autonomous systems into military doctrine and security operations, raising urgent questions regarding accountability, human oversight, and the ethical limits of machine-enabled decision-making.<sup>3</sup> These developments pose a direct threat to the principles universally agreed upon in the aftermaths of WWII. The emergence of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), capable of selecting and engaging targets without meaningful human control, poses significant challenges for existing international humanitarian law frameworks

governing accountability, proportionality, distinction, and civilian protection.

In *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026), Pope Leo XIV warned against the increasing integration of AI into systems of warfare, surveillance, and domination, cautioning that the delegation of life-and-death decisions to autonomous systems risks eroding moral responsibility, accountability, and human dignity.<sup>4</sup> The encyclical calls for AI to be “disarmed” from logics of exclusion, control, profit, and war, and urges the international community to ensure that human conscience and ethical judgment remain central in decisions affecting human life and security.

Religious and faith actors, connected through a shared sacred worldview, have an important role to play in advancing ethical reflection, promoting accountability, and reaffirming the primacy of human dignity and moral responsibility in the development and governance of emerging technologies. Through interfaith dialogue, youth engagement, and collaboration with policymakers, civil society, and technology leaders, faith communities can contribute to shaping more inclusive and human-centered approaches to AI governance, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention.

1 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2025. SIPRI Fact Sheet. Solna: SIPRI, 2025.

2 United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. The State of Arms Control and Disarmament 2023. Geneva: UNIDIR, 2023.

3 United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. The Weaponization of Increasingly Autonomous Technologies: Artificial Intelligence. Geneva: UNIDIR, 2021.

4 Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas: On Safeguarding Human Dignity in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* (2026); Vatican statements and reflections on AI ethics, warfare, and responsible governance.

## Expected Outcomes

- Strengthened multifaith dialogue on the ethical, humanitarian, and governance implications of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.
- Increased awareness of the risks associated with AI-enabled warfare, autonomous weapons systems, and the erosion of meaningful human accountability in conflict settings.
- Greater recognition of the role of religious and faith actors in advancing ethical reflection, human dignity, and moral responsibility within global discussions on AI governance.
- Identification of opportunities for collaboration among faith leaders, youth representatives, policymakers, civil society, and technology experts on responsible and human-centered approaches to emerging technologies.

## Guiding Questions

1. How are artificial intelligence and emerging technologies reshaping the nature of conflict, security, and human accountability?
2. What ethical and legal concerns arise from the development and deployment of autonomous weapons systems and AI-enabled military technologies?
3. What does “meaningful human control” mean in the context of AI and lethal decision-making, and why is it essential for protecting human dignity and civilian life?
4. How can international institutions, governments, and technology actors strengthen governance frameworks to ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance with international humanitarian law?
5. How can religious and faith actors contribute to global efforts to ensure that artificial intelligence remains guided by human dignity, moral responsibility, and the protection of life, particularly in conflict settings?
6. How can multistakeholder dialogue help prevent the misuse of AI in ways that deepen violence, exclusion, surveillance, and social fragmentation?

# Principles of Algor-Ethics

In July 2024, representatives of 11 world religions convened **AI Ethics for Peace**, promoting “Algor-ethics” — namely the ethical use of AI. The six principles of Algor-Ethics include:

- **Transparency:** AI systems must be understandable to all
- **Inclusion:** AI systems must not discriminate against anyone — because every human being has equal dignity
- **Responsibility:** there must always be someone who takes responsibility for what a machine does
- **Impartiality:** AI systems must avoid bias and discrimination
- **Reliability:** AI systems should produce consistent, accurate, and trustworthy results
- **Security and Privacy:** AI systems must be secure and respect the privacy of users

Developed by the Pontifical Academy for Life