

# Autonomous Drone Attacked Soldiers in Libya All on Its Own

Libyan forces were "hunted down and remotely engaged" by an autonomous drone, a UN report reads.

By [Daniel Van Boom](#)

Global Research, June 02, 2021

[CNET](#) 31 May 2021

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

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*The fear of killer robots is as old as robots themselves — thinkers like [Elon Musk](#) and [Sam Harris](#) have long argued that AI poses a serious threat to human civilization. But if you're at all panicked about AI or robots, a new UN report may add to your anxiety, as it explains that a drone attacked (and possibly killed) soldiers all on its own.*

It's thought to be the first recorded case of an autonomous drone attack.

The incident occurred in March 2020 in Libya, a country that was in the midst of a civil war. Turkey, a key combatant in the war, deployed the [STM Kargu-2 drone](#), according to the [UN Security Council's Panel of Experts on Libya report](#). The drone, which the report refers to as a "lethal autonomous weapon," then found and attacked Libya's Haftar Armed Forces.

Logistics convoys and retreating forces were "hunted down and remotely engaged by lethal autonomous weapons systems such as the STM Kargu-2," the report reads. "The lethal autonomous weapons systems were programmed to attack targets without requiring data connectivity between the operator and the munition: in effect, a true 'fire, forget and find' capability."

The creator of the Kargu drone, STM, says the device "can be effectively used against static or moving targets through its indigenous and real-time image processing capabilities and machine learning algorithms embedded on the platform."

The UN in 2018 attempted to begin working on a treaty that would ban autonomous weapons, but the move was blocked by both the US and Russia, [Politico reported at the time](#). Human Rights Watch has been campaigning against such weapons since 2013, and [has backed a campaign to stop their spread](#).

"Killer robot proliferation has begun," [tweeted Max Tegman](#), a machine learning researcher at MIT. "It's not in humanity's best interest that cheap slaughterbots are

mass-produced and widely available to anyone with an axe to grind. It's high time for world leaders to step up and take a stand."

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*Featured image: The STM Kargu-2, which its manufacturer describes as a "rotary wing attack drone loitering munition system." (Source: STM)*

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