



# Who Decides Who Dies? Artificial Intelligence in Armed Conflicts

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In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the use of advanced **artificial intelligence (AI)** technologies has marked a radical transformation of military operations. The “**Lavender**” system, developed by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), represents one of the most controversial and discussed applications of AI in the modern battlefield.

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## A New Operational Paradigm

Based on *deep learning* algorithms and data mining, the Lavender system was designed to identify military targets – particularly members of Hamas – through automated analysis of a wide range of data, collected through **mass surveillance**. Along with the complementary software “**Where is Daddy?**”, it has enabled the identification of tens of thousands of potential targets, associating each with suspicious behavior or a recurring pattern.

The approach introduces a new paradigm compared to the past, when human evaluation was central to the targeting process. With AI, the procedure is structured in **five phases**:

1. **Identification** of the suspect through AI.
2. **Association** of the target with a residence.
3. **Selection of the appropriate weapon** (drones, precision munitions, or conventional bombs).
4. **Authorization of collateral damage**, with initial policies accepting up to **15 civilians killed for each member of Hamas**.
5. **Automated calculation of collateral damage**, based on estimates via mobile data.

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## The Effectiveness and Limits of the System

The model has proven to be fast and efficient, but not without **ethical and operational issues**. For example, estimating collateral damage based solely on the number of cell phones present in a building has caused **significant errors**, hitting civilian homes even in the absence of confirmed military presence.

To mitigate these risks, the IDF have activated preventive procedures such as:

- **Issuing warnings** before attacks via social media, SMS, voice messages, and phone calls.
- **Drones with loudspeakers** and parachuted radio transmitters with evacuation instructions.
- **Tactical pauses** in attacks to allow civilians to flee.
- **Humanitarian corridors** biometrically controlled to identify militants hidden among refugees.

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## The Rafah Example

These measures were also replicated during the **operation on Rafah in May 2024**, allowing for the early evacuation of large urban areas. According to military sources, this approach has **reduced civilian casualties**, serving as a **reference model for Western General Staffs**.

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