



# China Questions Safety Issues in Military Intelligentization

**OE Watch Commentary:** The growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the military sector has prompted two Chinese researchers to take a close look at the safety issues of military intelligentization. The term, intelligentization, is a uniquely Chinese concept that uses AI's rapid machine processing capability in military planning, operational command, and decision support. Chinese military strategists believe that developing intelligentization will change the structure and outcome of warfare to their advantage.

In the following article, published in *Jiefangjun Bao*, the People's Liberation Army's official newspaper, the authors argue that due to the complexity, confrontational strategies, and autonomous nature of intelligentized weapons and equipment, as well as the unpredictable nature of intelligentized warfare, the military is facing three categories of safety issues.

First, there is the "issue of safe control." Basically, safety can be compromised by human error or mechanical malfunction. These factors can result in the loss of control over intelligentized weapons and equipment, causing them not to function the way they are intended. The result can be disastrous with the equipment turning "the muzzle to fire at their own creator and owner."

Second, there is the "issue of safe protection." The authors note that compared to mechanized and informatized combat systems, the command and control of intelligentized military systems is more centralized and more complex. Intelligentized military systems consist of more sensitive electronic components and longer information transmission links. These factors, coupled with military intelligentization being in the embryonic stage, make the systems more vulnerable to attack and interference. This could then lead to their paralysis and incapacitation.

Finally, there is the issue of safety ethics. This has to do with the accidental killing of innocent civilians through drone strikes. The authors explain that the nature of war has changed from close-up fighting to using technology that allows for long-range and over-the-horizon intelligentized strikes. This has a desensitizing effect, weakening human resistance to killing. It is also lowering the threshold of war. The authors write that this can create moral and ethical issues.

According to the article, the safety issues in military intelligentization are complex, but the bottom line to resolving these issues is more training and more research and development to advance the technology. They also suggest that legislation on the research and development and employment of intelligentized weapons and equipment be enacted as soon as possible. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)**

***“It is a must to solve the safety issues encountered in the development of military intelligentization through the innovative development of military intelligence technology.”***

**Source:** “重视军事智能化发展安全问题 (Attach Importance to Safety Issues in the Development of Military Intelligentization),” *Jiefangjun Bao*, 13 October 2020, [http://www.81.cn/jfjbmap/content/2020-10/13/content\\_273276.htm](http://www.81.cn/jfjbmap/content/2020-10/13/content_273276.htm)

*The rapid development of artificial intelligence, as well as its wide applications in the military sector, does not make our world safer. On the contrary, because of the confrontational strategy of military intelligentization, the complex intelligentization technology, the “autonomous” actions of intelligentized weapons and equipment, and the unpredictable intelligentized warfare have made the safety issues faced by military intelligentization more prominent.*

*Issue of Safe Control...*

*Issue of Safe Protection...*

*Issue of Safety Ethics...*

*The causes of the safety issues in military intelligentization are complex...*

*The high-degree integration between human and machine has turned the hail of bullets and the fight with flesh and blood on the traditional battlefield into a “game” of bytes and codes. Long-range and over-the-horizon intelligentized strikes have gradually weakened humans’ resistance to killing each other and also lowered the threshold for war. The voids in those guidelines and laws are the source of the moral and ethical issues in military intelligentization.*

*To exert effort to eliminate potential safety risks in military intelligentization. The development of artificial intelligence, building of an intelligentized military, and winning over intelligentized warfare require adhering to dialectical thinking, being problem-oriented, striving to make the best of one’s strengths and avoid one’s weaknesses, and eliminate potential negative factors and unsafe issues. To speed up the development of military intelligence technology.*

*S&T is the core combat capability. Military intelligence technology is an important leading and disruptive force to drive future combat capability building. It is a must to solve the safety issues encountered in the development of military intelligentization through the innovative development of military intelligence technology.*

*To enact legislation on R&D and employment of intelligentized weapons and equipment as soon as possible. To solve the safety issues in military intelligentization at the root, it is essential to establish guidelines for the R&D and employment of military intelligence technology; incorporate military R&D and employment of artificial intelligence with the building of morals, ethics, and laws; and formulate generally recognized and binding international norms based on joint studies and efforts from different countries, so as to put a halter on the system for the development of military intelligentization.*