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## **Scientific Nonalignment – Technology without Geopolitics**

The world is rampaged by a virus. At an early stage of the pandemic, on March 23, 2020, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, called for „an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world“: „It is time to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives“. His speech remained widely unnoticed. Arms expenditures sharply increased in the first year of the pandemic and are expected to rise more than the global expenditures on health in 2021. It is becoming more and more obvious that even existing and working vaccines are rated, applied and used for geopolitical purposes and are accordingly creating tensions. The geopolitical power blocs are counterparts.

The Movie „The Day the Earth Stood Still“ (1951) was created in a situation when science (or technology) had not only enabled atomic bombs, but also (as it seemed) first steps to conquer space. The movie tells the story of a superior alliance of civilizations, which is sending a kind of an envoy to convince or force humankind to stop using these technologies against each other or anything else. As the politicians of the dominating blocs show little responsiveness, the superior force puts all life on a hold to underline its power and directs its demands to a rapidly assembled group of high-ranking scientists from all parts of the world. This fantasized, fast and consensual gathering of the world's leading scientists is certainly based on a patriarchal view of things. But the scientists – unlike the politicians – quickly reach an agreement on the peaceful application of the new technologies and save the planet Earth from destruction by the superior alliance of civilizations.

The picture drawn there was never and is certainly not appropriate to the contemporary landscape of science and technology. It seems impossible that a single actor could take out his (analog) address-book, make a few calls and thereby gather everyone (usually male), that is important. The field of disciplines, institutions and actors is dramatically expanding. Some larger initiatives gained applause for their „call upon governments“ not to develop „lethal autonomous weapons, selecting and engaging targets without human intervention“. But many of the subscribers are indeed involved in government research projects on artificial intelligence in military applications. Technology is deeply intertwined with governmental and commercial structures while the scientific ideal of revealing the relationships of our material world and responsibility attached to it, are an issue with as much attention as the call of the UNSC for a global ceasefire.

Departing from this pessimistic view on the state of science, we may begin to define options for science and technology which is not aligned to commercial and/or geopolitical power blocs. So called „civil clauses“ or initiatives like the „Lethal Autonomous Weapons Pledge“ may be a starting point but reveal their flaws in the contemporary setting of „Tech-Geopolitics“.