

AUTOMATION AND AUTOMATIC NOTIONS AROUND THE UNMANNED VEHICLES*

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ABSTRACT

The notion of «autonomy» and «automatic» suffered an evolution—or involution—due to the development of the «unmanned vehicles» across land, sea, and air. This research exercise highlights that the lack of a unified regulatory and technical nomenclature for vehicles that operate with minimal or no human intervention required the adoption of harmonised definitions in international law and industry standards. Through sector-specific analysis, the paper details how autonomy is conceptualized and regulated in maritime, automotive, and aviation domains, referencing frameworks such as the IMO, SAE, and EASA. The heart of the research paper is that the expression «unmanned vehicles» best encapsulates the spectrum of technologies discussed, stressing the importance of precise terminology for legal clarity and technological advancement. Furthermore, adopting the umbrella term «unmanned vehicles» signifies adopting a comprehensive approach to defining and regulating unmanned vehicles. It would reflect the realities of minimal human involvement and the transformative impact of IT on traditional concepts.

Keywords: autonomous vehicles, automatic vehicles, drones, MASS, unmanned vehicles.

SUMMARY: I. INTRODUCTION.—II. HOW WILL AUTOMATIC AND AUTONOMOUS NOTIONS BE DISCUSSED?—III. AUTOMATIC DOES NOT MEAN AUTONOMOUS.—IV. AUTONOMY IN OCEANS.—V. AUTOMATIC, AUTONOMOUS, OR DRIVERLESS? THE UNDEFINED WORLD OF VEHICLES.—VI. AUTOMATION IN AVIATION: A SKY OF NOTIONS.—VII. A WORLD WITHOUT HUMANS: THE UNMANNED WORLD.—VIII. REFERENCES.

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