

PRESS RELEASE

UN Global Dialogue opens with urgent call for safe and inclusive AI that benefits all

AI safety, accountability and human oversight among topics to be discussed.

GENEVA, 6 July 2026 – The United Nations today kicked off a global dialogue bringing together governments, tech companies, academia, civil society and the technical community to facilitate discussions on artificial intelligence governance.

The inaugural session of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance (AI Dialogue) seeks to ensure that governance reflects the priorities of all nations, not just the most technologically advanced, and that the benefits of AI are shared by all.

Discussions will address various themes including the opportunities and implications of this technology; how to bridge the AI divide; international cooperation on AI governance; and robust human oversight of AI systems, consistent with international law, to ensure safety and security.

*“AI is advancing at runaway speed. The question is whether we will govern it together – or let it govern us. For the first time, the AI Dialogue gives every country a seat at the table. We must now turn global participation into global action – to make AI safer, fairer, more accessible and more ethical.” – **António Guterres, UN Secretary-General***

“This Global Dialogue is not merely about regulating a technology. It is about defining a shared vision in which technological progress goes hand in hand with human dignity, equity, and sustainable development. If governed responsibly and collectively, AI has the potential to accelerate progress across nearly every Sustainable Development Goal, offering powerful new tools in healthcare, education, scientific research, disaster preparedness, and agriculture.

*It is about demonstrating to the people of the world that the United Nations is not lost in the past or too slow to act; that it is, in fact, able and willing to move on the most pressing and emerging issues of our time.” – **Annalena Baerbock, President of the UN General Assembly***

WHY THIS PLATFORM, WHY NOW

AI is already being governed – through national regulations, technical standards, procurement frameworks, and bilateral agreements – but unevenly. Governance frameworks have been shaped predominantly by countries with advanced AI sectors, while the countries most exposed to AI’s consequences have had the least say in how those frameworks are designed.

The AI Dialogue corrects that imbalance. Mandated by the UN General Assembly, it gives every government an equal seat. Developing countries and the Global South participate with full standing to shape outcomes – not as observers.

Follow the Global Dialogue remotely on [6 July](#) and [7 July](#).

*“The credibility of this first Global Dialogue has been built through an open and participatory process that continues here in Geneva. Our collective success will be defined by every voice, perspective, experience, and contribution that is shaping the path forward for AI.” – **Egriselda López, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the UN and Co-Chair of the Dialogue***

"Leveraging the convening power of the UN, we must start transforming artificial intelligence into a global public good that benefits all of humanity while ensuring safety by design and meaningful human oversight. For this to happen, the first Global Dialogue on AI Governance in Geneva should spark AI's San Francisco moment." – Rein Tammsaar, Permanent Representative of Estonia to the UN and Co-Chair of the Dialogue

See the [full programme](#) and [list of featured attendees](#) here.

SIX MONTHS OF GLOBAL CONSULTATIONS

Since January 2026, structured global consultations have taken place across thematic, regional, and virtual formats, drawing in governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, and the technical community. More than 1,500 written submissions were submitted from organisations and individuals across all regional groups.

The result of the written submissions revealed different priorities among the groups: for example, governments were the only stakeholder group to place capacity-building first. Most other groups ranked safety first. Other themes that ranked high in priority include transparency, accountability and human oversight, as well as social, economic, ethical, cultural and linguistic implications.

One area of consensus from the consultations is that participants want to see continuity in this process: more than five hundred submissions called for the process to continue beyond July.

The Dialogue takes place one week after the Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence launched its preliminary report, handing the governments who convene there a shared evidence base to build policy from. The Panel, composed of independent scientists and experts from every region, outlines trends in AI and warns that current safeguards cannot keep pace with the growth of AI's capabilities.

The Panel comprises 40 members serving in their personal capacity, independent of any government, company, or institution, including the United Nations. Members were selected from more than 2,600 candidates through an open call and independent review process. The Panel is co-chaired by Yoshua Bengio (Canada) and Maria Ressa (Philippines).

"For AI to benefit all people, technology and international cooperation must move forward together. The Global Dialogue on AI Governance has sharpened the world's focus on building an AI future that includes everyone, especially the 2.2 billion people who have yet to join the digital world." – Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary-General, ITU

"Humanity's rich and diverse cultural and linguistic heritage is our greatest source of creativity, identity and resilience, but we must ensure Artificial Intelligence strengthens, rather than erodes this diversity. Global AI governance is essential to protect all voices, empower all cultures, and guarantee that innovation reflects the full breadth of human culture." – Khaled El-Enany, UNESCO Director-General

"The Global Digital Compact gave the multilateral system two things it never had before: an independent scientific panel to assess AI's impacts and opportunities, and a global dialogue where every government has a seat at the table. Today, for the first time, both come together. That is what makes 6 July a turning point – not just for AI governance, but for how the international community responds to transformative technology." – Amandeep Singh Gill, Under-Secretary-General and Special Envoy for Digital and Emerging Technologies

ABOUT THE GLOBAL DIALOGUE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE GOVERNANCE

The Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence Governance is the first platform under a United Nations General Assembly mandate where Member States and all relevant stakeholders convene on AI governance. Established by resolution A/RES/79/325, it meets recurrently to exchange best practices, share national and regional experiences, and build common approaches to the governance of artificial intelligence.

The AI Dialogue forms part of a comprehensive Digital Week in Geneva, a European UN hub, back-to-back with the annual AI for Good Global Summit and WSIS Forum.

ABOUT THE JOINT SECRETARIAT

The joint secretariat of the Global Dialogue comprises the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET), and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG). ITU and UNESCO coordinate the secretariat for the first session.

ABOUT ITU

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations agency for digital technologies, driving innovation for people and the planet with 194 Member States and a membership of over 1,000 companies, universities, civil society, and international and regional organizations.

Established in 1865, ITU coordinates the global use of the radio spectrum and satellite orbits, establishes international technology standards, drives universal connectivity and digital services, and is helping to make sure everyone benefits from sustainable digital transformation, including the most remote communities. From artificial intelligence (AI) to quantum, from satellites and submarine cables to advanced mobile and wireless broadband networks, ITU is committed to connecting the world and beyond. Learn more: <https://www.itu.int/en/>

ABOUT UNESCO

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, is a specialized agency dedicated to strengthening international cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, and information. It sets standards, produces tools and develops knowledge to create solutions to some of the greatest challenges of our time, and foster a world of greater equality and peace.

Protecting biodiversity, responding to artificial intelligence, advancing quality education, safeguarding heritage, and ensuring access to reliable information are some examples of the work that UNESCO does with its 194 Member States across the globe.

ABOUT ODET

The United Nations Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET) serves as the UN system-wide focal point for advancing inclusive, rights-based digital cooperation. Functioning as a “Connector, Catalyst, and Convener,” the office coordinates efforts on AI governance, facilitates multistakeholder policy dialogue, advises senior leadership on technology, and supports the implementation of the Global Digital Compact.

For more details, visit <https://www.un.org/digital-emerging-technologies/content/about>

PRESS CONTACTS

ITU: David HIRSCH, pressinfo@itu.int

UNESCO: Maria SANCHEZ APONTE, m.sanchez-aponte@unesco.org

ODET: Karoline HASSFURTER, karoline.hassfurter@un.org