

**Forum:** GA2eng: Human rights committee

**Issue:** Protection of Human Rights in the era of artificial intelligence and internet

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**Position:** Chair

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## Introduction

The impact of artificial intelligence and internet on human rights is one of the most crucial factors that defines the period in which we live in. The era of artificial intelligence and internet continually challenges the concept of human rights. With artificial intelligence (AI) constantly finding its way into our daily lives, and the internet becoming a necessity for our generation, our civil rights are threatened, whether this be a loss in the right to freedom of thought on platforms and programs, or whether this be a loss of moral worth currently granted to humans.

AI will make a significant impact on human rights and it is important for companies, administrations to identify the risks threatening our human rights over the opportunities of AI. These new threats will cut across all sectors of the economy and are relevant to all industries, not just the technology sector. AI brings an uncertain future and it is important to use new methods of human rights due diligence that identify the future issues as well as the issues of today.

Nowadays the right to freedom is recognized offline and online, to protect humans in both cases. However not all of these steps have been useful, some even putting humans at a disadvantage through technological advancement, inevitable evolution and progress.

## Definition of Key Terms

The definitions are in alphabetical order, not in order of importance.

### **AIDR**

Artificial Intelligence for Disaster Response.

### **Automation**

A mechanical device that functions automatically without the help of human, reducing the human intervention.

### **Artificial intelligence (AI)**

It may also be called machine intelligence: it is a type of intelligence demonstrated by machines similar to the natural intelligence visible in humans.

### **Databases/ electronic database**

A collection of data or information that is organized for rapid search and retrieval by a computer; databases are here to facilitate the storage, modification, retrieval, and cancellation of data partnership with various data-processing operations.

## **Human Rights**

Principles or norms, protected in municipal and international law, protecting standards or behavior regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language or any other status.

## **Inequality**

The quality of being uneven, in areas such as: social disparities, opportunities and many more.

## **Internet**

Global system of interconnected computers network to communicate between network and devices around the world.

## **Privacy**

The ability of an individual or group to seclude themselves from the public world.

## **Unconnected**

In this context, disconnected from the internet world.

## **UN OCHA**

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Its role is to strengthen the international response to hard and complex emergencies, and natural disasters.

## **Background Information and Overview**

### **The Usurping of Human Rights**

#### *Privacy*

An important factor of the human rights is privacy. As you may be aware of, internet users nowadays conduct important aspects of their lives and intercommunicate, posting everything from private to professional information. This information is kept in huge databases that will then be run through and used by the government or internet companies. Therefore, our priority is to maintain, respect and secure human rights in cyberspace.

In January 2020 we know that 4.54 billion people across the globe use the internet, while social media users have passed the 3.8 billion mark: this means that nearly 60% of the world's population is online and the latest indications have shown that more than half of the world population will use social media by the end of this year. This shows how much humans use the internet and especially social media platforms, and how much information is shared and saved into large amounts of personal data with or without the user's consent. People provide information about their health, family life, political affiliations, business and many other aspects of their lives, unaware of who is going to use it, for what purpose nor how.

E.g: Political ads that are targeted according to the voter's political affiliation and the voter's records. This policy was then banned by Google in the E.U at the end of 2019, and banned for the rest of the world on January 6th, 2020. Yet google and many other platforms that we use daily haven't banned ads that targets a specific gender, age or location. Nonetheless, our information is still being used.

Some important challenges remain, and there is still a long way to go to ensure that everyone around the world has a fair and an equal access to safe digital connectivity. This connectivity should not put basic human rights such as freedom in peril.

### *Freedom under AI*

Self-determination and autonomy are rights often protected under international human rights laws, but when algorithm and conscience-less objects are brought into the equation they can be used to limit the freedom of oneself. The freedom to speak a person's mind, is often regulated by programs or apps for, what according to them, is the greater good. However, when these values and ideas are exploited by, for example, countries or parties to silence the masses, it can lead to a huge lack in transparency and can lead to information distortion. This inherently goes against an ideology present in many declarations of human rights because it does not permit people to “freely determine one’s political status and freely pursue economic, social, and cultural development.”.

This also prevents a certain freedom of receiving non-biased, factual information. This misinformation can lead to greater issues concerning human rights such as people not knowing they are entitled to these basic human rights. If programs and stakeholders impose their truth upon the consumers, they are perpetuating their ideology, not leaving people the benefit of choice in their life decisions.

### *A danger to our value of moral worth*

If AI starts performing tasks or duties usually performed by humans, how do we conserve a sense of economic and moral worth? In international human rights laws, it has often been recognized that all humans are regarded as the same and entitled to equal treatment but what defines that treatment has often been mutated to suit so or so's opinions and "truth". This has caused a devaluing of individual workers’ skills training, and professional capabilities resulting from labor force displacements, that has been brought on by the rise in automation's role in labor.

We are not only living in the era of a new industrial revolution, but a period where online personas and experiences are prioritized. With the exponential rise in our usage of social media apps (for example dating apps such as Tinder), we have created a sort of Matrix where we are permitted to judge a person simply based on their looks, objectifying humans, and their roles, reducing them to social media profiles. This has significantly decreased our moral worth as fully fledged humans, which has brought in the need for controlling algorithms (as seen in *Freedom under AI*) in order to shelter people from the destruction of their social and moral worth.

### **An unfair access to the new technologies**

#### *Inequality*

As of the start of 2020 roughly 40% of the world's population is still unconnected to the internet. However almost 300 million people came online for the first time in 2019, with the majority of those, new users come from developing countries (developing economies).

### *Poverty*

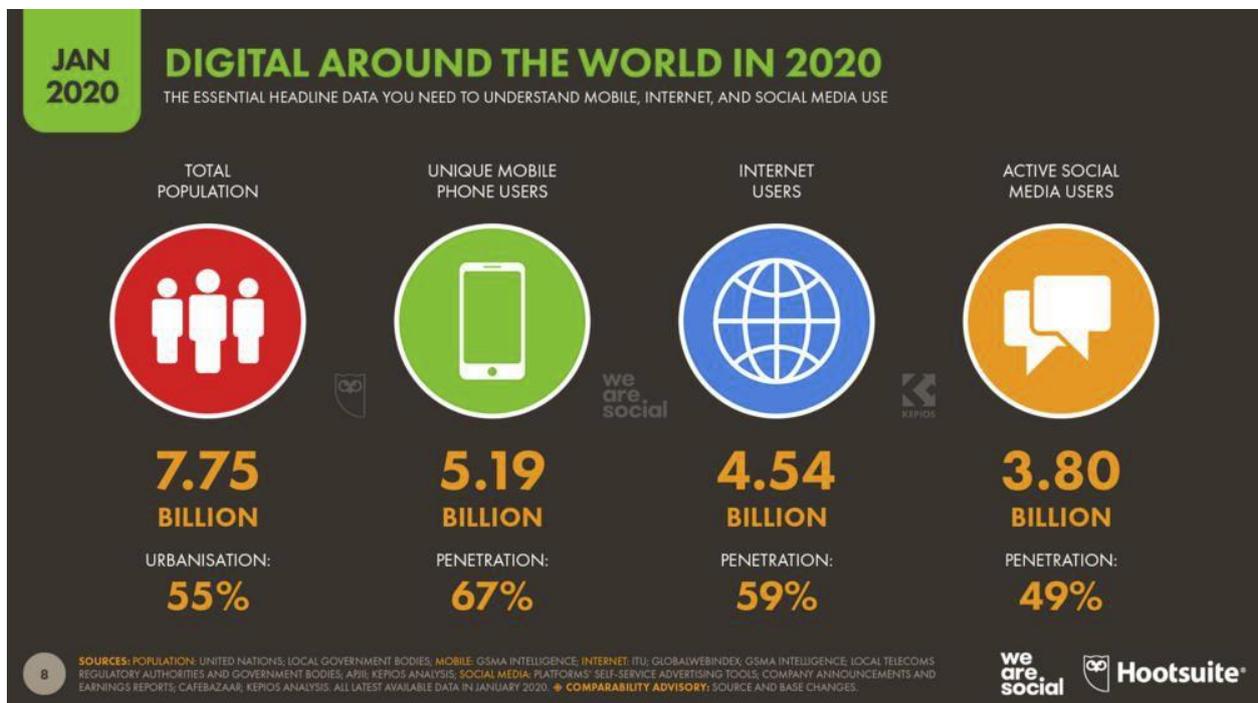
Many factors come into place when we talk about inequality to the internet or to artificial intelligence, such as infrastructure, the user's skills, awareness, cultural acceptance, affordability, local adoption and use.

### *Infrastructure*

15% of the world's population still don't have access to electricity; in Sub-Saharan Africa; give or take 600 million people (2/3 of the region's population) do not have access to electricity. An area also affected by this is South Asia, where nearly a quarter of the population does not have regular electricity access. We must also take into account that 31% of the global population do not have 3G coverage.

The cost of these technological devices is also another factor that prevents the public from accessing the internet. With 13% of the world's population living underneath the poverty line, and the fact that electronic devices are not always affordable, it makes it a lot harder to buy phones or laptops. Making these devices accessible for 100% of the population, in only 29 countries.

### *Local adoption and use*



About 80% of the online content is available in approximately 10 languages, making it less accessible as only 3 million people speak one of those 10 languages as their mother tongue.

### *Skills, awareness and cultural acceptance*

An important barrier for the use of nowadays technologies is for some the lack of education. 15% of adults globally are illiterate. But there are also cultural issues such as gender where women are 50% less likely to use the internet compared to men. The gender gap is particularly present in Southern Asia. For social media use, men are three time more likely to use the platforms compared to women.

## The development of AI

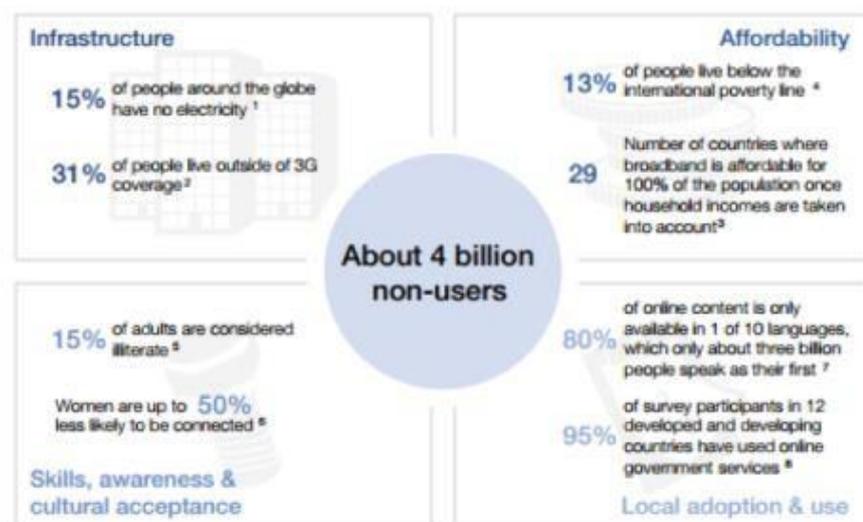
### *International development*

Generally, the perception of AI has grown quite negative these past few years. Taking over mankind, by taking job opportunities for example. But AI may also be a significantly good benefit for people in undeveloped or developing countries.

### *How AI is helping undeveloped and developing countries*

Disaster relief is now more effective with the use of AI, e.g: In the aftermaths of the Nepalese earthquake of 2015; the UN OCHA used AI for the first time identify all social media posts related to the Nepal earthquake. The aim of this being to better emergency needs, response to disaster, and infrastructural damage.

Figure 4: Approaching the problem through careful segmentation



Most recently available figures used: 1. World Bank, 2012; 2. ITU, 2015 estimate; 3. Broadband Commission for Digital Development, ITU/UNESCO, 2015; 4. World Bank, 2015 (2012 data); 5. UNESCO, *Adult and Youth Literacy*, 2015; 6. Controlling for education level and household income, World Wide Web Foundation, 2015; 7. World Bank, 2014; 8. BBC, 2014e.

AI and the Internet do not only help in coping during times of natural disasters but also can serve a purpose in the matters of education. Thanks to AI the students would benefit from having tireless teachers, these machines can provide classes teachers. E.j: In certain parts of Africa, AI platforms were created to help students with their schoolwork, remotely and that is suited for specific needs that the pupils need. (Platforms used in Africa: Eneza Education; Daptio).

When AI is implemented in farmer's lives, the latter can benefit greatly. It can provide them with how and when to prepare the land for optimal results, including weather forecast for up to a month. For example, in India there is a fertilizer app (Apps: AI Snowing App; Microsoft Cortana Intelligence Suite; Power B we can also add Machine Learning).

Health wise, the resources available in developing economies are very limited, people only rely on their own beings to survive. AI solutions may play an essential role in ensuring that the illnesses of these poorer populations are well treated. In many places such as Nepal and Africa, human medical experts are scarcely available.

This is where AI might help provide a solution, providing analytical outputs doctors can utilize in order to perhaps give create a better diagnosis with a better treatment plan. IA can also be used to predict disease outbreaks, with the use of analyzing big data bases, the healthcare jobholders have better chances directly controlling the diseases. Now that AI is omnipresent in providing healthcare, help is no longer as difficult as it was in the past. However, AI will remove a lot of factory workers which will lead to many people losing their jobs.

### *Possible bias found in AI*

People and stakeholders have often been subjected to some form of internal bias; AI could provide a solution to this. Now that it is available in our lives; it could provide an anti-discriminatory force because of the lack of conscience present in the latter. AI could treat everyone on the same footing, if programmed to do this. However, a robot must be programmed by a human, with their own mindset, and opinions, therefore the algorithms and the data that this person will be writing, will affect the AI somehow, the machine will possibly have the same point of view, mindset and ideology given by the programmer.

E.g: *Tay* from Microsoft, this robot was designed to talk and mirror the way we human teenagers do, but within a few hours it started posting some anti-feminist and racist tweets. Microsoft proceeded to take *Tay* down, but were quite shocked by the failure of the project. The problem with AI is that it is not designed to be human proof. This has shown that although people can try their best to make AI "unprejudiced" it will never achieve the latter. With computer algorithm becoming more involved in major decisions in many industries (who gets a loan from the bank and who does not, who is hired or fired etc...), and them most probably being inequitable, how do we guarantee that these algorithms do not impeach on human beings' rights to work and fairness in treatment?

## Major Countries involved

### China

China is located in Eastern Asia, and first announced its implications in the AI industry in July 2017 with a Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan). It is a three-step plan that firstly consists of making China's AI industry "in-line" with all the other competitors by 2020, secondly the country wants to be "world-leading" in some AI related fields by 2025, and thirdly want to become the primary hotspot for AI innovation by 2030.

The plan lays out the government's intention to recruit the world's best AI specialists, strengthen the training of the domestic AI labor force, and lead the world in laws, regulations, and ethical norms that promote the development of AI. The latter includes the intent to actively participate in and lead the global governance of AI. (By 2030 the government aims to

cultivate an AI industry worth 1 trillion RMB, with its related industries worth 10 trillion RMB).

## France

France is located in Europe and is part of the European Union. The French president Emmanuel Macron disclosed a €1.5 billion plan to transform France into a global leader in AI research, industry, and training at the end of the AI for Humanity Summit. (See report: *For a Meaningful Artificial Intelligence: Towards a French and European Strategy*, written by Cedric Villani and other members of the “Villani Mission”.)

The president announced several initiatives to strengthen AI ecosystem in France and attract International talent, the most important part about it is the National Artificial Intelligence Program, that will create four or even five research institutes around the country.

France also wants to develop an open data policy to use it in sectors, such as healthcare.

The French government will provide financial framework to support the development domestic “AI champions” and want to put regulations in place to ensure that AI is transparent, and non-discriminatory.

They wish to focus on environment, healthcare, transportation, and defense, but the French president Emmanuel Macron did not reference the recommendations in the Villani report, instead he focused on the potential of AI in domains such as transportation and healthcare.

## India

India is located in the South of Asia, and its strategy focuses on how India can use AI in economic growth but also social inclusion. The *NITI Aayog*, the government think-tankers wrote a report and called the approach #AIforAll.

The *NITI Aayog* provides over 30 policy recommendations to invest in scientific research, encourage reskilling and training; accelerate the adoption of AI across the value chain, and promote privacy, security, and ethics in artificial intelligence.

It encourages Indians with skills to find quality jobs, to invest in sectors and research that could maximize social impact and economic growth, and to extend Indian-made AI solutions to the rest of the developing world.

## Mexico

Officially the United Mexican States, is a country in the southern portion of North America. Released in June 2018, *Towards an AI Strategy in Mexico: Harnessing the AI Revolution*, is a lay out of the foundation for national AI strategies in Mexico. Commissioned by the British Embassy in Mexico, funded by the UK’s prosperity Fund, and developed by Oxford Insights alongside C Minds in close collaboration with the Mexican government. The report shows the current AI state in the country and how it could potentially be developed at a regional or even national level.

The report is based on more than 60 interviews with the local Mexican AI experts, and it gives 5 recommendations groups: data and digital infrastructure, government and public services, capacity, education and skills, research and development and ethics

## **United Arab Emirates (UAE)**

The UAE is located in Western Asia; the Middle East. It is the first country in the Middle East to create and launch an AI strategy. It is also the first country in the world to create a Ministry for Artificial Intelligence.

The UAE launched its strategy in October 2017, the strategy is the first largest initiative (UAE Centennial 2071 Plan). The ultimate and primary goal is to use AI to enhance government efficiency and performance.

The Emirati government will invest in nine different sectors: health, transport, renewable energy, technology, water, education, environment, traffic, and space. In doing so the government diversifies the economy, and would want to position the UAE as global leader in the application of artificial intelligence.

## **United States of America (USA)**

The United States of America is a country in North America, The United States is known to be champion and defender of the values of freedom, the rules of law, guarantee human rights, rights to privacy and respect of any property.

AI the USA is developing to reflect the fundamental American values with the goal being to ensure that AI technologies are understand-able, robust, trustworthy, and safe; in addition to that, the impact of the AI technologies should be considered including implications for the workforce and assurances that AI will be developed responsibly.

The USA is addressing these challenges through R&D programs. Engagement with the board stakeholders, along with International discussions on the development of AI.

As part of the American AI Initiative, Federal agencies will encourage public trust in AI systems by endowing guidance for AI development and used across diverse types of devices, technology, and industrial sectors

The White House offered, in January 2020, guidance for the regulation of AI applications, which will then help the Federal regulatory agencies to develop and maintain approaches for the safety, trustworthiness in the creation and adoption to new AI technologies.

DARPA's Explainable AI (XAI) program aims to create machine learning techniques that produce more explainable solutions while maintaining high performance and appropriate levels of trust in the system.

NSF's Program on Fairness in Artificial Intelligence in Collaboration with Amazon will fund research on fairness in AI, with the goal of contributing to trustworthy AI systems that are readily accepted and deployed to tackle grand challenges facing society.

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

The *A/HRC/RES/42/15* resolution, acknowledges the right to privacy in the digital age, describes racial discrimination and emerging digital technologies. It also portrays the protection, promotion, and enjoyment of Human Rights on the internet.

The existing regulatory framework applicable to AI and data processing is mainly grounded on the Council of Europe Convention 108 -Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data. The Council of Europe report recommends that AI data-centric development should be based on the principles of the Convention 108 as the foundations for the development of digital society.

The resolution also consolidated text of the Convention for the Protection of individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data.

## Possible Solutions

One could create a legal framework and international regulations that requires HRIA (Human Right Impact Assessment) to be directed in relation to artificial intelligence systems that have been/may be captured, developed and/or deployed by public authorities.

It is also possible to demand open acquirement standards and transparent process to the use of AI systems in order to insure that Ensure AI actors “know and show” that they are meeting their responsibility to honor the human rights, including transparency, due diligence processes that involve the identification of the human rights risks associated with their AI systems, and taking effective action to prevent and/or allay the harms posed by such systems.

It is also possible to prevent discrimination risks with the use of AI systems, with a high level of surveillance when using AI systems in the context of law enforcement, especially to avoid profiling individuals belonging to specific groups.

A possibility is to process and review existing data protection laws to determine whether they sufficiently protect the right to respect privacy and the right of data protection in the con- text of AI systems.

However, we must take into account the full range of international human rights standards potentially engaged with the use of AI, be apprehensive of the impact AI-driven content can have on the exercise of the right to freedom of expression, access to information, and freedom of opinion.

A secure database that will not leak information, and be used against any user or country, could provide users with the safety necessary to protect their rights.

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