# Consultation on the AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance

On behalf of the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL) and Global Partners Digital (GPD), we are writing regarding the establishment and composition of the **AI Scientific Panel** and the **Global Dialogue on AI Governance.** We welcome the commitment to ensuring meaningful representation of public interest civil society organizations, as well as human rights and democracy expertise, within these initiatives. Civil society expertise has been instrumental in researching and documenting real-life human rights impacts of AI systems and advocating for responsible AI governance. This expertise will remain critical for the effective functioning of the AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance.

Creating conditions for meaningful civil society participation is **essential for a rights-based, democratic, and effective global AI governance framework**. The AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue serve as crucial mechanisms for shaping the future of global AI policy, and civil society must be meaningfully included in these processes to ensure balanced, inclusive, and effective governance.

We present the following recommendations to **ensure rights-based processes**, with **meaningful civic participation** and representation of **relevant human rights expertise**.

# Consultation Response

*(Optional) Please provide a brief description of your organization / entity*

Global Partners Digital (GPD) is a social purpose company working to ensure that human rights underpin the development, use and governance of digital technologies.

The European Center for Not-for-Profit Law Stichting (ECNL) is a non-governmental organisation based in The Hague, the Netherlands working on empowering civil society through creating enabling legal and policy frameworks.

*Please describe the process you followed to collect, consult, and prepare your input.*

This consultation response is based on a study by Global Partners Digital and ECNL, "AI Global Governance: Assessment of governance mechanisms with a human rights approach". This study was developed based on analysis of public sources and a limited number of interviews with experts. The insights generated from this study are complemented by ECNL and GPD's own analysis of outcomes documents relating to the Scientific Panel and Governance Dialogue.

# Part 1:
# Questions relating to International Scientific Panel

*What should be the mandate of the multidisciplinary Independent International Scientific Panel on AI, to be established within the United Nations?*

The mandate of the AI Scientific Panel should focus on 3 key elements: (i) evidence gathering; (ii) benchmarking for the assessment of risks and opportunities of AI; and (iii) guidance for conducting human rights impacts assessments.

First, the Panel's mandate, as well as the governance structure which underpins it, should prioritise the collection of scientific evidence coming from hard and social sciences to assess the impacts and risks of AI deployment in a diversity of geographic contexts and fields of application. The Panel should leverage rather than replicate the work done by civil society, intergovernmental organisations, academia, private sector and states collecting evidence of the positive and negative impacts of AI development, deployment and use. Mechanisms of open consultation should be implemented to ensure the ability of external actors to submit relevant information.

The work structure of the Panel should avoid focusing on the building of consensus outcomes providing opportunity for the evidence gathered to be weighted according to different methodologies that will be also collected and proposed by the Panel. Our [research](#) assessing governance mechanisms for AI governance positively evaluated the model of the UK AI Safety Institute and the commitment to being explicit about where expert consensus exists or acknowledging disagreement in the wider expert community, and present the debate in an objective manner, which prevents some of the challenges that the work of the Intergovernmental Climate Change Panel has confronted in this matter.

Second, the mandate of the Panel should include the gathering and benchmarking of methodologies for the assessment of risks and opportunities of AI. The work of the Panel should reflect ongoing global and regional standardization setting efforts such the ones conducted by ISO, IEEE, NIST, OECD AI Observatory, AI Safety Summits, G7, among others.

Additionally, the Panel should develop robust benchmarks for assessing and auditing AI systems as has been recently [called](#) for by the International Network of AI Safety Institutes. To enhance AI accountability, the panel should also create transparency metrics that provide clear and measurable indicators for evaluating AI system transparency.

Third, the mandate of the Panel should specifically develop guidelines for conducting human rights impact assessments for AI development, deployment and use, ensuring alignment with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), and in these efforts, the panel should be supported by the UN human rights mechanisms such as the OHCHR through its advisory service on human rights in the digital space, and leverage existent human rights impact assessment methodologies – such as the HUDERIA methodology developed by the Council of Europe and the frameworks developed by UNESCO in the implementation of its Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, among others.

*What should be the size, composition and governance structure of the Panel?*

The Scientific Panel must ensure stakeholder, multidisciplinary and geographically balanced representation. Furthermore, gender balance and diversity should be key principles in membership selection.

The size of the Panel should allow for diverse expertise while maintaining efficiency. The size of the Panel should allow it to achieve its balanced composition, but avoiding a number that makes it difficult for them to work and deliberate, such a number will probably be around no less than 50 and no more than 100. Thematic working groups should be utilized to ensure in-depth discussion while maintaining an effective overall governance structure.

Related to the governance structure, the UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET) should serve as the secretariat, accompanied by an advisory council integrated by a OHCHR representative, a representative of 2 other intergovernmental agencies, an academia representative and a civil society representative. The Council would work with ODET in defining the

strategic work plan proposed to the panel for each year, and it will serve for a two year period.

Recognized expertise in AI should not be narrowly defined as technical or computer science expertise. Given the wide-ranging societal impacts of AI, the AI Scientific Panel within the AI Scientific Panel must include expertise in human rights, democracy, labor rights, and environmental justice. In particular, we urge:

**Balanced stakeholder representation** between members appointed by civil society organizations (CSOs), independent experts nominated by private sector (according mechanism explained below), technical standard setting bodies, academia, intergovernmental organisations (OHCHR, ITU, ILO, UNESCO, OECD) and States, ensuring that no single group dominates decision-making.

**Balanced representation of human rights experts**, reflecting the broad deployment and impact of AI on society.

**Inclusion of expertise in AI accountability mechanisms**, including transparency and access to justice.

**Representation of communities affected by AI systems**, including marginalized and vulnerable populations such as women and non-binary persons, racialized groups, LGBTQIA+, migrants, workers, and persons with disabilities, among others.

**Representation of experts and communities from the Global Majority.**

In order to facilitate diversity of representation, we recommend providing resources to support participation in the panel. Diversity of representation is difficult to ensure in a structure based exclusively on voluntary commitments, since under-represented stakeholders and communities affected by AI systems are less likely to be able to participate or sustain engagement.

The AI Scientific Panel will have significant influence on AI governance. Clear and transparent processes must be established to ensure fair representation and legitimacy.

**a. Develop and publish Terms of Reference**

Including:

- The types and number of members envisioned for different categories of stakeholders, disaggregated per region and country.
- Selection processes, criteria for membership, and rules for conflict of interest management.
- Duration of mandate of panel members and timescale for the selection of new members.
- Mechanisms for establishing thematic working groups and avenues for continued participation.
- Mechanisms for ensuring global representation and linguistic and regional diversity.

**b. Ensure a fair, transparent, and inclusive selection process**

To ensure accountability and inclusiveness, members should be selected through a public call for applications. An independent nomination committee should be established, composed of members from each stakeholder group, to oversee the selection of panel members. Stakeholders may be encouraged to develop their own dedicated mechanisms to manage the nomination of candidates from within their stakeholder groups. The selection process should include:

- **Predefined selection criteria** that balance technical and social sciences disciplines (including human rights, labor, environmental and sustainability experts) to ensure socio-technical expertise, and representation from the Global Majority.
- **A transparent procedure** detailing the envisioned membership distribution across different stakeholder groups.
- **Publication of selected members** along with their declarations of interests.

**c. Ensure equal representation of public interest civil society organizations**

Public interest considerations, especially respect for human rights, the environment, democracy, and the rule of law, should be reflected in the composition of the multidisciplinary AI Scientific Panel. This mechanism should ensure that representatives do not solely serve Member-State or business interests but contribute to the broader public interest.

To achieve this, we recommend:

- **Conflict of interest rules should be adopted and signed by the Panel members**, including mandatory declarations of funding sources and ongoing assessments throughout the mandate of Panel members.
- **Exclusion of directly industry-funded Panel members.** Private companies and industry associations should be prevented from directly funding the participation of Panel members (according to Conflict of Interest rules). They should be encouraged to offer a Trust Fund in support of a group of independent experts nominated by the private sector.
- **Ensuring diverse leadership** within the AI Scientific Panel, including the following:
    - Election of a co-chair representing civil society or academia;
    - Elevated representation of women and non-binary persons, racialized persons, LGBTQIA+, and disabled persons, among others;
    - Balanced representation of members from the Global Majority and Global North.

*What types of evidence-based impact, risk and opportunity assessments should the Panel deliver, and with what frequency?*

As mentioned in our earlier response, the panel's impact, risk and opportunity assessment should benefit from ongoing global and regional standard setting efforts. The panel should develop robust benchmarks for evaluating AI systems, including multilingual AI models and specific criteria to ensure fairness and non-discrimination for marginalized groups and those in the Global Majority. To enhance AI accountability, the panel should also

create transparency metrics that provide clear and measurable indicators for evaluating AI system transparency, fostering greater accountability and trust in AI design and development.

Additionally, specific guidance should be produced by the Panel to assess human rights impacts. The human rights impact assessment guidance should be produced with the support of UN human rights mechanisms such as the OHCHR, and other UN agencies such as UNESCO.

If the approach taken for the Panel is to produce an annual report and quarterly thematic research digests – as proposed in the AI Advisory Body's Final Report – we recommend that the annual report is dedicated to publishing and updating guidelines on human rights impact assessment and methodologies benchmarkings, while the thematic reports could usefully explore different use cases, or sector-specific insights, and provide guidance on the application of benchmarking and impact assessment to the use of AI in different areas of life.

If the recommendation of the AI Advisory Body's Final Report – that the panel should focus its quarterly thematic research digests "on areas in which AI could help to achieve the SDGs" – is taken forward, we urge that in all cases the panel's approach be grounded in human rights impact assessment, exploring cases where AI may enhance or undermine the achievement of the SDGs, and whether the use of AI is the best means of achieving the desired result and proportionate to the aim pursued.

## Part 2:
## Questions relating to Global Dialogue on AI Governance

*What should be the mandate of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, to be established within the United Nations?*

The Global Dialogue on AI Governance should be anchored in international human rights law as the foundational legal basis for governing AI, ensuring that AI systems are developed and deployed in a manner consistent with human rights. It should prioritise coordination and complementarity with the existing work of the UN human rights mechanisms, including the relevant resolutions from the Human Rights Council and General Assembly, the OHCHR and special procedures reports, and initiatives such as the B-Tech Project. The Dialogue should be focused on bringing existing guidance and interpretive work by UN bodies into conversation with stakeholders and with other UN agencies responsible for aspects of AI governance such as the ITU, CTSD, ODET and UNESCO.

Substantively, the Global Dialogue should foster dialogue to identify prohibited AI systems, including facial and emotion recognition in public spaces, predictive policing, and social scoring, among others, to prevent applications that are fundamentally incompatible with human rights. Furthermore, it should prioritise the establishment of a multistakeholder consultation process to establish guidelines for a rights-based and transparent process for sourcing and deploying AI systems, ensuring accountability at every stage.

Procedurally, if the approach proposed by the AI Advisory Body's final report – that the dialogue priorities engagement "between non-likeminded countries, and between States and stakeholders" – is taken forward, the dialogue must ensure a multistakeholder approach, ensuring open, inclusive, transparent and accountable modalities. The dialogue should not replicate the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly – which provide for only restricted engagement by non-governmental actors – and should instead be integrated within and utilise the open and bottom-up structure of entities like the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). Priority should also be given to

ensuring dialogues which take place during the IGF as the principal forum for multistakeholder dialogue on public policy issues related to the Internet.

Finally, the Global Dialogue on AI's mandate must include enabling meaningful stakeholder participation in AI governance, with an emphasis on the participation of civil society and affected communities, especially from the Global Majority. The recommendations of the NETmundial+10 outcome document should be applied to ensure meaningful and substantive stakeholder engagement.

*What types of outcomes should the Dialogue achieve?*

As earlier mentioned, the Dialogue must be focused on ensuring international human rights law as the foundational legal basis for governing AI, with the aim that AI systems are designed, developed and deployed in a manner consistent with international human rights law and standards. This requires integrating existing human rights obligations into AI governance structures and decision-making processes at both national and international levels. To achieve this, the Dialogue should support the development of monitoring mechanisms capable of systematically tracking AI regulatory developments across all UN member states. These mechanisms should provide comprehensive, up-to-date insights into legislative, policy, and enforcement trends, identifying gaps and challenges in implementation.

Furthermore, the Dialogue should facilitate the use of UN accountability mechanisms—such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and UN Treaty Bodies—to ensure that human rights obligations related to AI governance are effectively translated into concrete state actions and legally binding frameworks. This would help establish a consistent, rights-based approach to AI governance, reinforcing accountability, transparency, and compliance with international human rights standards.

The Global Dialogue must ensure civil society and human rights expertise. As described earlier, the dialogue must ensure a multistakeholder approach, ensuring open, inclusive, transparent and accountable modalities.

**a. Ensure equal representation of public interest civil society organizations**

Public interest considerations, especially respect for human rights, the environment, democracy, and the rule of law, should be reflected in the composition of the Global Dialogue.

To achieve this, we recommend:

- **Balanced stakeholder representation** between civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector, technical standard setting bodies, academia, intergovernmental organisations (OHCHR, ITU, ILO, UNESCO, OECD)  and States, ensuring that no single group dominates the dialogue.
- **Exclusion of industry–funded stakeholders from the "civil society" category**. This includes industry associations, think tanks majority–funded by industry, and entities whose strategic objectives are influenced by corporate funding.
- **Ensuring diverse leadership** within the Global Dialogue, including the following:
    - Advisory Council integrated by a OHCHR representative, a representative of 2 other intergovernmental agencies, an academia representative and a civil society representative. The Council would work with ODET in defining the Agenda for each meeting and it will serve for a two year period.
    - Elevated representation of women and non–binary persons, racialized persons, LGBTQIA+, and disabled persons, among others;
    - Elevated representation of members from the Global Majority.

**b. Guarantee social sciences, rights–based and diverse expertise beyond computer science**

Recognized expertise in AI should not be narrowly defined as technical or computer science expertise. Given the wide-ranging societal impacts of AI,

the Global Dialogue must include expertise in human rights, democracy, labor rights, and environmental justice.

In particular, we urge:

- **Balanced representation of human rights experts**, reflecting the broad deployment and impact of AI on society.
- **Gender balance** in participants selection.
- **Representation of communities affected by AI systems**, including marginalized and vulnerable populations such as women and non–binary persons, racialized groups, LGBTQIA+, migrants, workers, and persons with disabilities, among others.
- **Representation of experts and communities from the Global Majority.**

*What should be the format of the Dialogue?*

The Global Dialogue will have significant influence on AI governance. Clear and transparent processes must be established to ensure fair representation and legitimacy.

The Dialogue should take place within existing UN conferences and forums, ensuring coordination rather than duplication of existing workstreams.

The Dialogue should be flexible in format to adjust to different convened discussions, it could cover more overarching and transversal issues in some opportunities as well as areas of specific impacts or opportunities, using existing fora that works on different sectors (environmental protection, child protection, labor, health, education, finance, etc.)

The Dialogue should ensure it has a mechanism or platform to support intersessional work or partner with other forums (like IGF) that are able to support intersessional work in some of the thematic or workstreams identified as relevant.

**a. Develop and publish internal procedures**

We recommend developing and publishing internal procedures that outline:

- The way in which the Advisory Council will be selected.
- The call for proposal and selection process for the identification of the agenda and participants for the meetings.
- Mechanisms for establishing thematic working groups and avenues for continued participation.
- Mechanisms for ensuring global representation and linguistic and regional diversity.

**b. Ensure a fair, transparent, and inclusive selection process**

To ensure accountability and inclusiveness, participants should be selected through a public call for applications. The selection process should include:

- **Predefined selection criteria** that prioritize human rights expertise and representation from the Global Majority.
- **A transparent procedure** detailing the envisioned participation distribution across different stakeholder groups.
- **Publication of selected participants**.

## Part 3:
## The establishment and functioning of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance

*What should be the relationship between the Panel and the Dialogue?*

We note the recommendation of the UN AI Advisory Body that the relationship between the Panel and Dialogue be comparable to the relationship between IPCC and the United Nations Climate Change Conference. We see merit in ensuring coordination between the outcomes of

the Panel and the Dialogue, with the Panel providing input on impact assessments, standard-setting and benchmarking of AI systems, to inform the Dialogue and discussions of ensuring rights-based, sustainable and human-centric AI governance.

*How can the Panel and Dialogue effectively draw on and leverage existing initiatives within the United Nations? How can the UN system best support the Panel and Dialogue in a coordinated manner?*

As recognized in a joint civil society letter, it is important to ensure the GDC – including the AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance – is properly resourced and that that any new mechanisms or processes are open, inclusive and transparent in their design, and facilitate meaningful stakeholder engagement (see here: https://www.gp-digital.org/joint-statement-civil-society-concerns-and-priorities-for-global-digital-compact-implementation/).

To ensure effective system-wide coherence and collaboration, it is important that any new mechanisms do not duplicate or delegitimize existing processes, such as the WSIS or the IGF as one of the institutional outcomes of the WSIS process. We recommend that the GDC and the AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance be integrated and implemented through the decentralised implementation structure of the WSIS. Furthermore, the Governance Dialogue should be modelled on the Internet Governance Forum's bottom-up and participatory approach, and priority should be given to hosting the Dialogue within or on the margins of the IGF. To achieve this enhanced coordination, the IGF should be granted a permanent mandate, supported by greater financial resources to ensure its impact and sustainability.

As mentioned earlier, both the Panel and the Dialogue should ensure effective system-wide coherence and collaboration, including with key UN bodies such as the OHCHR to ensure strong guidance relating to the application of international human rights law to the internet and digital technologies.

*Please use this space for any additional comments*

While CSOs participating in the AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue will play a key role, these bodies should not be the sole mechanisms for civil society engagement. Broader consultation mechanisms must be created to ensure an open and participatory approach.

We recommend:

- **Regular, structured consultation mechanisms** to allow broader civil society engagement, particularly from underrepresented communities and those based in the Global Majority.
- **Public forums and consultations** to gather input from affected populations and grassroots organizations.
- **Transparency mechanisms** that ensure civil society organizations can contribute to the agenda-setting and decision-making processes of both initiatives.

These recommendations are essential to ensure that the AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance foster inclusive, rights-respecting, and democratic AI governance. We remain available for further engagement and discussions on these crucial matters.