AI: Risks, Rights and Responsibilities Panel

*Saving Global Human Rights: A “Global South+AI” Strategy*


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Declaration

30 Rights and Freedoms

Universal

Indivisible

Inalienable

Interdependent

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

A UNIVERSAL recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

It is essential, therefore, that these rights be protected by law.

It is essential to promote the development of friendly relations among nations.

The recognition of these rights is fundamental to the realization of human rights and freedoms, the dignity and worth of the human person, and the equal and inalienable rights of men and women and the interdependence of the human being with their environment.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a universal standard of conduct for all peoples and all nations.

The United Nations has pledged itself to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and freedoms.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is of the greatest importance for the full realization of the Charter.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the cornerstone of international human rights law.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the basis for the development of human rights and freedoms.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the foundation of international law.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a foundation for the protection of human rights.

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On February 4, 2022, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping convened at the opening of the Sochi Winter Olympics and issued a Joint Statement detailing their nations’ shared positions.

**On Human Rights:** “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights set noble goals in the area of universal human rights . . . which all the States must comply with and observe in deeds. At the same time, as every nation has its own unique national features, history, culture, social system and level of social and economic development, universal nature of human rights should be seen through the prism of the real situation in every particular country, and human rights should be protected in accordance with the specific situation in each country and the needs of its population.”
China/Russia “Sochi Declaration” 2022

- **On Democracy:** “A nation can choose such forms and methods of implementing democracy that would best suit its particular state, based on its social and political system, its historical background, traditions and unique cultural characteristics. It is only up to the people of the country to decide whether their State is a democratic one.” “Russia and China . . . have long-standing traditions of democracy, which rely on thousand-years of experience of development, broad popular support and consideration of the needs and interests of citizens.”
OUTLINE

1. Introduction: A Wake-Up Call
2. Foundational Norms and Democratic Backsliding
3. Global South Ascending
4. UN Development Initiatives at Core
5. Human Rights, UN Development Goals and AI
6. Preserving Human Rights in a Polarized World
7. A “Global South+AI” Strategy
8. Conclusion: The Uncertain Future of Human Rights


https://globindian.wordpress.com/east-vs-west/
1. Introduction

- Class of AI Problem: “Alignment” of AI with “Human Values”\(^2\)
- Normative Systems and Geopolitics
- Problem: Human Rights as Special Case
- Geopolitical World Changed Since 1948 (48-0-8-2) vs. 193 (2024)
- The UN, the “Global South” and AI
- Human Rights Future Uncertain

"No declaration of human rights will ever be exhaustive and final. It will ever go hand-in-hand with the state of moral consciousness and civilization at a given moment in history“.

French philosopher Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) in his text "On the Philosophy of Human Rights".

Some “Rights” Debated but NOT Adopted

• Right to minimum wage
• Right to form a union
• Right to strike
• Right to free choice of employment
• Right to rest and leisure
• Right to a fair trial

What new rights await discovery???
Human Rights and AI

"While ethics provide a critical framework for working through particular challenges in the field of artificial intelligence, it is not a replacement for human rights, to which every State is bound by law."

David Kaye - UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

“Human rights have so far been largely overlooked in the governance of AI. . . This is an error and requires urgent correction.”

2. Foundational Norms and Democratic Backsliding

- A World Divided into Ideological Blocs (East/West)
- Geopolitics Driven by High-Level, Contesting Value Systems
- Human Rights As Both Moral and Legal Norms
- Human Rights Work With Development Goals
- Human Rights Values and Democratic Backsliding
- Human Rights Policies Offer Demonstrable Benefits
Human Rights and Economic Development

- Studies of the economic effects of implementing human rights have shown that freedom and participation rights affect economic growth positively in the long term. These are the main conclusions drawn from two studies made at the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

- Other studies have shown that basic rights like freedom of assembly and association, as well as electoral self-determination, have a positive impact on the economic prosperity of developing nations.
DEMOCRACY IS STRONG AND HUMAN RIGHTS ARE SAFE . . . RIGHT???

WELL, MAYBE NOT SO MUCH!
Democratic Backsliding

- According to Freedom House, global levels of democracy have declined 17 years in a row. The Economist’s 2023 Democracy Index, which scores 167 countries on five selected indicators of political and civil rights, shows a steady decline every year since 2015, with more than one-third of the world’s population now living under authoritarian rule and just 6.4% enjoying full democracy. The World Justice Project’s latest Global Rule of Law Index finds that two-thirds of the countries it surveys have slipped in their “fundamental rights” scores since 2015.

- The Bertelsmann Transformation Index compares the quality of democracy, market economy and governance in developing and transition countries. The 2022 edition examines 137 countries. For the first time since 2004, autocracies outnumber democracies among the selected states. One in five democracies has seen its quality decline over the past ten years, including India, Brazil, Bulgaria, Poland, Serbia and Hungary. [https://thinktankreport.kas.de/en/2022-3-democracy/index.html](https://thinktankreport.kas.de/en/2022-3-democracy/index.html)
Political backsliding among formerly stable democracies in the last 10 years

- Poland: -1.7
- Bulgaria: -1.3
- Brazil: -1.1
- Hungary: -2.0
- India: -1.9
- Serbia: -1.8

8 in 10 people lived in a Partly Free or Not Free country in 2021.

The share of the world’s population living in Free, Partly Free and Not Free countries.

https://thinktankreport.kas.de/en/2022-3-democracy/images/01_illustration_01.svg
Democratic Backsliding

The State of Democracy

Global Democracy Index rates, by country/territory (2022)*

Full democracies
- 9.00-10.00
- 8.00-8.99

Flawed democracies
- 7.00-7.99
- 6.00-6.99

Hybrid regimes
- 5.00-5.99
- 4.00-4.99

Authoritarian regimes
- 3.00-3.99
- 2.00-2.99
- 0-1.99

No data

* takes into account electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation and political culture

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit
HUMAN RIGHTS???: NICE IDEA . . .

BUT ARE THEY REALLY OF ANY USE???
Human Rights Policies Provide Positive Benefits

• The main practical benefit of adopting “human rights” is the avoidance of chaos in their absence. An anarchic global polity, and national systems abiding by no rules other than “the end justifies the means”, is inherently disruptive, a disadvantage to all. (UNESCO, 2018)

• “Human Rights” are one of the “Three Pillars” which support a peaceful international order. (United Nations, n.d. “Three Pillars”) [with Security and Development]

• In their absence, barbarous events have occurred, e.g., genocide in World War II

• Without them as treaty commitments there are no limits on State’s behavior, leading to dictatorship and global destabilization

• Human rights violations drive conflicts at all levels social and political levels

• Collective agreements in support of rights-based values help preserve global order in a diverse world
Human Rights Policies Provide Positive Benefits, Cont.

- Human rights promote peace and non-violence and are conducive to conflict reduction and resolution
- They help secure the necessary material conditions of human life and well-being to bring peace and prosperity. They are a key component to economic prosperity
- The values of tolerance, equality and respect help reduce social friction, increasing efficiency within society
- Rights-based rules can reduce abuse and exploitation, helping avoid social discord.
- They help meet minimum requirements for a life of dignity and support a personal and national sense of coherence, stability and well-being
- Their core values of justice and fairness have been recognized in the legal codes of a vast majority of nations for millennia and support a stable and viable society
GLOBAL SOUTH? AGAIN??
THE POOR ARE ALWAYS WITH US.
WHO CARES?

PERHAPS YOU HAVEN’T BEEN PAYING
ATTENTION . . . MAYBE SLEEPWALKING?
3. Global South Ascending

• Geopolitical Power Blocs: West and East

• What is the “Global South”? 

• What are leading “Global South” multilateral organizations? (e.g., G-77 [135], BRICS, IBSA, SCO, Turkic States, African Union)

• What does it mean to say the “Global South” is “Ascending”?

• Where and how is the Global South exercising its growing power?

• What is the key role of AI and ICTs in the South’s development?
Figure 1: Countries of Global South and Global North

Source: Roland Berger Institute

file:///C:/Users/rdt4/Desktop/roland_berger_quarterly_global_south.pdf
Fastest Growing Economies in 2024
Real GDP growth projections

Source: IMF
World Economic Outlook
October, 2023

ASTOUNDING LITTLE KNOWN FACT!

THE U.N. DOES MATTER!
4. UN: Development and Multilateral Reform

- Centrality of UN to Human Rights’ Future: Centrifugal forces leading to decoupling?
- Development is at the heart of the UN (Declaration on “Right to Development”, 1986; treaty under discussion 2024)
- Millennium Development Goals (2015) (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (2030) (SDGs)
- Relationship Between SDGs and Human Rights
- Tensions Between Multilateralism and Multistakeholderism
- Ongoing UN Structural Reform Process (“Enhanced Multilateralism”)
- Summit of the Future and Beyond (2024)
UN Development Goals: 2000-2030

**Millennium Development Goals: 2000-2015**

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

**Sustainable Development Goals: 2015-2030**

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnerships for the goals
5. Human Rights, the SDGs and AI

- AI and the South
- Data (Governance) Policy and the WTO
- AI, ICT’s and SDGs keys to Development
- AI and Values Alignment
- Embedding Human Rights Values in AI
- Human Rights as Legal Regime

https://www.ictworks.org/national-artificial-intelligence-policy-Rwanda/
Emerging Economies Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem

LAC
- Startups (8)
- University (21)
- Social sector (2)
  - Accelerators and investors (2)

SSA
- Startups (29)
- University (111)
- Social sector (4)
  - Accelerators and investors (1)

ASIA 395
- Startups (22)
- University (21)
- Social sector (7)
  - Accelerators and investors (1)

MENA 55
- Startups (286)
- University (92)
- Social sector (5)
  - Accelerators and investors (9)

Asia

K4A
IDRC
CRDI
Canadi
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
CITY.AI
www.k4all.org/ai-ecosystem
India, US and WTO Data Policy

- India has stood apart from WTO digital trade negotiations noting the
  asymmetrical nature of the global digital economy and issues of equity.

- By not joining digital trade treaties, it could adopt data localization or other
  requirements to regulate data flows for policy reasons.

- Data are seen as a national asset, not an individual right. National
  treatment of data requires weighing and balancing factors such as the policy
  objective, the impact of the measure, and it proportionality.

- It asserts ‘data sovereignty’, where the government has sovereignty over
  data generated by its citizens within its borders, and opposes ‘data
  colonialism’, which holds foreign platforms seek to extract data from
  developing country citizens to use to dominate the Internet.

- India was very gratified to see the recent U.S. reversal of position at the
  WTO on data flows and has taken it as a validation of its positions. (USTR
  leans into “localization”)
6. Saving Human Rights in a Polarized World

• Persuadable transactional South is key
• Human Rights must be seen to work with SDGs and AI to support Development
• Human Rights values should be embodied in binding juridical forms with appropriate metrics

• Rational self-interested governments should support juridical human rights commitments with accountability
• Well-being approach offers non-instrumental balance combining qualities of human rights and SDGs
IS THERE AN ALTERNATIVE, NON-IDEOLOGICAL, NON-INSTRUMENTAL, PRUDENTIALLY EFFICACIOUS NORMATIVE FRAMING FOR H.R. VALUES?

WHEW!!!!!!

I’M GLAD YOU ASKED . . .
Well-being

• The concept of “Well-being” is a widely recognized, non-instrumental standard (i.e., an end, not a means) against which to measure the overall quality of life in a state or community. It is a unifying concept and captures both objective and subjective factors. Each society defines its own idea of ‘Well-being” and sets its own aspirational goals and metrics. Well-being, like the SDGs, is grounded in commitment to a broad set of defined and attainable metrics.

• Many of the values underlying human rights can be found implemented in tangible projects to advance human Well-being through economic and social development projects, notably in the South. Has appeal for transactional adopters of human rights values in the South.

“Australia launches a Wellbeing Framework and Dashboard to Measure What Matters”, August 25, 2023
7. A “Global South+AI” Strategy

Recommended Policy Actions

- **Adopt a Comprehensive “Global South+AI” policy for advancing Human Rights and Well-being**
- Support Both Moral and Juridical Aspects of Human Rights
- Demonstrate Tangible Benefits of Human-Rights-Values Based Policies
- Pair Human Rights with SDGs to Accelerate Development
- Expand the Human Rights Juridical Framework
- Focus on Advancing Development of the South
- Accept South’s Political Diversity and Multiplicity
- Support South’s Development Policies
- Build AI and Data Market Initiatives in the South
- Emphasize Expansion of Juridical Human Rights at All Levels
- Promote Sustainable Development Initiatives
- Adopt an Integrated Approach to SDGs, Human Rights and AI
- Cautiously Engage UN Structural Initiatives
8. Conclusion: The Uncertain Future of Human Rights

- The question is simple: Who gets to define humanity’s future “human rights”, the West or the East? There is cause for concern that the answer is not going to be “the West”.

- China is offering a future in which countries would be free of responsibility for upholding “universal values” defined by a handful of Western countries. “Different civilizations” have their own perceptions of shared human “values” according to China’s President Xi. Countries should not “impose their own values or models on others”.

- Beijing argues that governments’ efforts to improve their people’s economic status equates to upholding their human rights, even if those people have no freedom to speak out against their rulers.

- The values embodied in the UDHR are a blueprint for peace and economic development, but they are not self-evident or self-executing. There is hope, but it depends on the good will of many in the South yet to be persuaded.
Wake Up!!!!

This Presentation ends with a short wake-up call to which attention must be paid if human rights values are to be saved:

“Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free.”

14th Dalai Lama, Nobel Lecture, 1989
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