



United Nations Secretary-General Appoints High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation

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United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres today announced the launch of a High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation.

“The scale, spread and speed of change made possible by digital technologies is unprecedented, but the current means and levels of international cooperation are unequal to the challenge,” Mr. Guterres said.

“Digital technologies make a significant contribution to the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals and they cut uniquely across international boundaries. Therefore, cooperation across domains and across borders is critical to realizing the full social and economic potential of digital technologies as well as mitigating the risks that they pose and curtailing any unintended consequences.”

Ms. Melinda Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Mr. Jack Ma, Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group, have been appointed by the UN Secretary-General as Co-Chairs of the Panel.

The Panel has a total of 20 members, representing a cross-section of expertise from government, private industry, civil society, academia and the technical community. A full list appears below.

The Secretary-General has asked the Panel to contribute to the broader public debate on the importance of cooperative and interdisciplinary approaches to ensure a safe and inclusive digital future for all taking into account relevant human rights norms. The panel is expected to identify policy, research and information gaps, and make proposals to strengthen international cooperation in the digital space.

“Technology is neither good nor bad. It’s just a tool—a very powerful tool—and what matters is how the world uses it. If all people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, have equal access to digital technology, they will use it to improve life for themselves and their families and raise their voices in conversations about what the future holds. Enabling this widescale empowerment is what this panel is about,” said Melinda Gates.

The Panel will hold its first in-person meeting in late September 2018 and is expected to submit its final report to the Secretary-General within 9 months.

In carrying out its work, the Panel will undertake a wide range of public consultations, including at least two public events and an open process inviting global inputs including through online engagement activities starting in September. It will be supported by a small Secretariat funded by donor resources, and based in New York and Geneva.

“Soon, every industry will be digitized, and this will have a tremendous impact on every aspect of life. In this digital era, data and technology are more broadly available, enabling entrepreneurialism, economic growth, and improved quality of life for those who have the access and training to leverage it. Global, cross-sector collaboration is critical to ensure the benefits of the digital era are possible for all,” said Jack Ma.



Members of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation:

Co-Chairs

- Melinda Gates (USA), Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Jack Ma (China), Executive Chairman, Alibaba Group

Members

- Mohammed Al Gergawi (UAE), Minister of Cabinet Affairs and the Future, UAE
- Yuichiro Anzai (Japan), Senior Advisor and Director of Center for Science Information Analysis, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science
- Nikolai Astrup (Norway), Minister of International Development, Norway
- Vinton Cerf (USA), Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist, Google
- Fadi Chehadé (USA), Partner at ABRY Partners
- Isabel Guerrero Pulgar (Chile), Director, IMAGO Global Grassroots and Lecturer, Harvard Kennedy School
- Marina Kaljurand (Estonia), Chair of the Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace
- Bogolo Kenewendo (Botswana), Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana
- Akaliza Keza Ntwari (Rwanda), ICT advocate and entrepreneur
- Marina Kolesnik (Russian Federation), senior executive, entrepreneur and WEF Young Global Leader
- Doris Leuthard (Switzerland), Head of the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications, Switzerland
- Cathy Mulligan (United Kingdom), Visiting Research Fellow Imperial College Centre for Cryptocurrency
- Edson Prestes (Brazil), Professor, Institute of Informatics, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul
- Kira Radinsky (Israel), Director of Data Science, eBay
- Nanjira Sambuli (Kenya), Digital Equality Advocacy Manager, World Wide Web Foundation
- Sophie Soowon Eom (Republic of Korea), Founder of Adriel AI and Solidware
- Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah (Australia), Secretary General, CIVICUS
- Jean Tirole (France), Chairman of the Toulouse School of Economics and the Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse

Ex officio

- Amandeep Singh Gill (India), Executive Director, Secretariat of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation
- Jovan Kurbalija (Serbia), Executive Director, Secretariat of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation

All panel members serve in their personal capacity, not as representatives of their respective institutions.