

UN AI Advisory Body calls for grounding artificial intelligence in universal principles, suggests tasks for a potential institution on AI governance

Today, 21 December 2023, the UN Secretary-General's AI Advisory Body launched its *Interim Report* Governing AI for Humanity. The report calls for a closer alignment between international norms and how AI is developed and rolled out. The central piece of the report is a proposal to strengthen international governance of AI by carrying out seven critical functions such as horizon scanning for risks and supporting international collaboration on data, and computing capacity and talent to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also includes recommendations to enhance accountability and ensure an equitable voice for all countries.

Co-chaired by Carme Artigas and James Manyika, the AI Advisory Body was appointed by Secretary-General António Guterres on 26 October 2023. The AI Advisory Body will publish its final report ahead of the Summit of the Future, in the summer of 2024.

“AI has tremendous potential to assist people from our everyday tasks to our most creative and ambitious endeavors, advancing science, transforming sectors critical to our prosperity, and helping address society’s most pressing challenges from climate change to expanding healthcare access to accelerating progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals” Mr. Manyika said.

“As AI is inherently an international matter in nature, there is a need for a global approach to a governance framework that respects human rights and hears the voice of all, including the Global South”, Ms. Artigas said.

“We need to ensure AI is governed in the public interest and rooted in multi stakeholder collaboration where the UN has a leading role to play. We are eager to see what the world has to say” she added.

A Global Governance Deficit

The interim report notes that, while several AI regulatory and policy initiatives have emerged, a more inclusive engagement is needed to create a level-playing field as many communities have been largely missing from these discussions.

The interim report also notes that data, computing power, and talent are currently concentrated among a small number of private sector actors in an even smaller number of states.

Guiding Principles

The interim report identifies the following principles that should guide the formation of new global AI governance institutions:

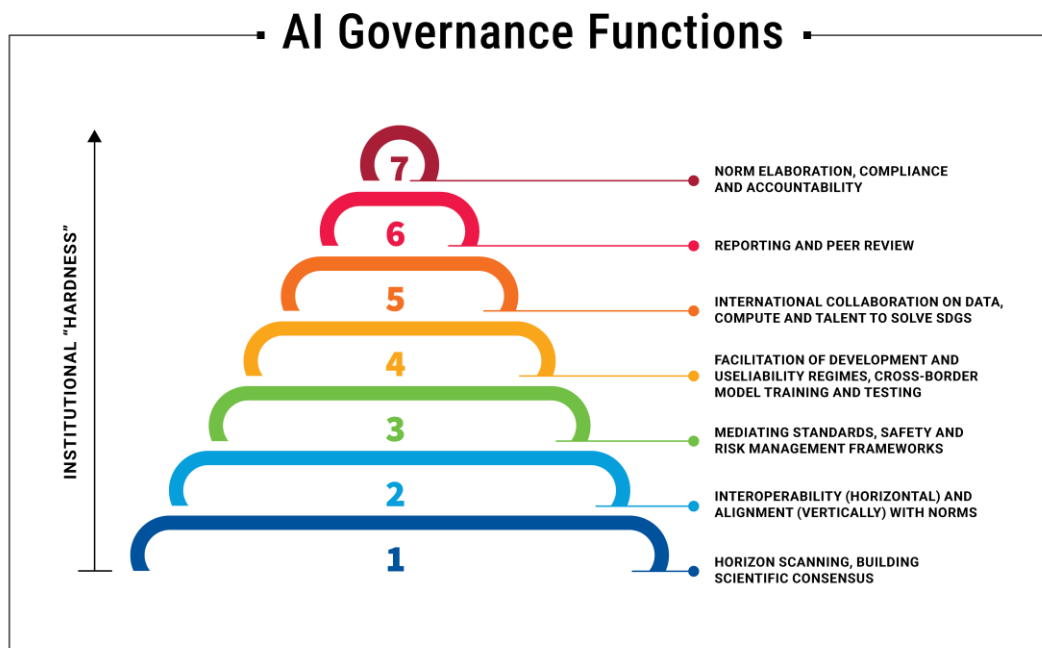
- **Inclusivity:** all citizens, including those in the Global South, should be able to access and meaningfully use AI tools.

- **Public interest:** governance should go beyond the *do no harm* principle and define a broader accountability framework for companies that build, deploy and control AI, as well as downstream users.
- **Centrality of data governance:** AI governance cannot be divorced from the governance of data and the promotion of data commons.
- **Universal, networked and multistakeholder:** AI governance should prioritize universal buy-in by countries and stakeholders. It should leverage existing institutions through a networked approach.
- **International Law:** AI governance needs to be anchored in the UN Charter, International Human Rights Law, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Institutional Functions

The Body identified what some functions of AI governance should entail. Among others, they include, regularly assessing the state of AI and its trajectory, harmonizing standards, safety and risk management frameworks, promoting international multistakeholder collaboration to empower the Global South, monitoring risks and coordinating emergency response, and developing binding accountability norms.

Each of these functions requires international cooperation among all actors involved.



Next Steps

The AI Advisory Body and its members will engage with all stakeholders over the coming months.

Individuals, groups, and organizations are encouraged to provide feedback via the online submission form below.

The deadline for submitting inputs is 31 March 2024, 11:59 pm Eastern Time.

The final report of the Body will be released in the summer of 2024, ahead of the Summit of the Future.

For more information: <https://www.un.org/ai-advisory-body>