

Internet Rights and Principles Coalition (IRPC) Submission of Inputs for the Global Digital Compact

[\[https://input.un.org/EFM/se/3995D1A472EC463708D84832FECA48F17A\]](https://input.un.org/EFM/se/3995D1A472EC463708D84832FECA48F17A)

About the IRPC

The [Internet Rights and Principles Dynamic Coalition \(IRPC\)](#) is an open network of individuals and organisations based at the [UN Internet Governance Forum \(IGF\)](#) working to uphold human rights on the internet and to embed internet governance decision making processes and system designs in human rights standards.

The coalition's main output document, the [Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet](#) (IRPC Charter) comprises 21 articles and draws on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other covenants that make up the International Bill of Human Rights at the United Nations. It connects existing human rights law and norms with rights-based aspirations for the online environment. The goal of the IRPC Charter is to provide a recognisable and authoritative framework anchored in international human rights for upholding and advancing human rights for the online environment.

The Internet Rights and Principles Coalition believes that the Internet Governance Forum dynamic coalitions (DCs) can support the Global Digital Compact by reaching out to the wider community.

Dynamic Coalitions provide a space for multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration and as bottom-up networks they are in a privileged position to facilitate discussions among different stakeholder groups that come together due to their interest in a specific area or issue of Internet Governance. These coalitions can also reach out more easily to individuals, groups and organisations that would be otherwise disengaged from Internet governance processes. Dynamic coalitions' representatives can bring expertise, lead discussions on the GDC thematic areas and contribute actively on the dissemination and wider implementation of the Global Digital Compact.

I. Details

Please select whether you are answering this survey for yourself or on behalf of an entity or organization

1. Individual
2. Entity/Organization

Geographic Scope of Activity

1. Global
2. Regional
3. Country

Contact information for submission

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II. Process of consultation/preparation

Describe the process you followed to collect, consult, and prepare your input.

What is the approximate number of entities that were engaged through process of consultation/preparation of input?

1. 0-25
2. 26-50
3. 51-100
4. More than 100 (400)
5. Please specify

What is the approximate number of people engaged through process of consultation/preparation of input?

1. 1-4
2. 5-25
3. 26-50
4. 51-100
5. 101-500
6. 501-1000
7. More than 1000 (please specify)

III. Inputs to the Global Digital Compact

There are seven areas of the Global Digital Compact mentioned in the [Secretary-General's Common Agenda](#) on which you are invited to submit inputs. In addition, if there are any additional areas that you feel should also be included in the Global Compact, please submit them under the category of "Other Areas" below.

For each area, we ask that you submit your views and inputs, organized along the following two aspects:

a) Core principles that all governments, companies, civil society organisations and other stakeholders should adhere to

b) Key commitments, pledges, or actions that in your view should be taken by different stakeholders – governments, private sector, civil society, etc. - in order to realize the above-mentioned principles (please be as specific and action-oriented as possible.)

While submissions in this form are limited to 2500 characters per text box, you may also submit any additional inputs or elaboration (submission to be made in PDF format) via email to digitalcompact@un.org. Please note, however, that while your submission will be made available online subsequently, it will not be part of automated data visualization results which is based on this form.

Please select the areas on which you would like to submit inputs

1. 1. Connect all people to the internet, including all schools
2. 2. Avoid internet fragmentation
3. 3. Protect data
4. 4. **Apply human rights online**
5. 5. Accountability for discrimination and misleading content
6. 6. **Regulation of artificial intelligence**
7. 7. Digital commons as a global public good
8. 8. **Other areas - Environmental sustainability**

For each area that you selected previously, we ask that you submit your views and inputs, organized along the following two aspects:

i) Core principles that all governments, companies, civil society organisations and other stakeholders should adhere to; and

ii) Key commitments, pledges, or actions that in your view should be taken by different stakeholders – governments, private sector, civil society, etc.

3. Protect data

a) Core Principles

- Everyone also has the right to data protection, including control over personal data collection, retention, processing, disposal and disclosure.
- Particular importance needs to be attached to the design and development and use of new technologies that may be used to collect, handle and store data of minority and vulnerable groups including children, women, homeless, refugees and displaced people to ensure that their rights are fully protected and that these tools will cause no harm.
- Article 9 of the Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet, “Right to Digital Data Protection” reaffirms that: “As enshrined in Art 12 of the UDHR everyone has the right to privacy. An important aspect of this right is that everyone has the right to protection of personal data concerning him or her. On the Internet, the right to protection of personal data includes:

a) Protection of Personal data (...)

b) Obligations of data collectors (...)

c) Minimum standards on use of personal data (...)

d) Monitoring by independent data protection authorities (...)

b) Key Commitment/ Pledges/ Actions

As enshrined in Article 9 of the IRPC Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet, “Right to Digital Data Protection”, stakeholders must uphold and safeguard the right to data protection in the online environment by observing the following key commitments

“a) Protection of Personal data

Fair information practices should be enacted into national law to place obligations on companies and governments who collect and process personal data, and give rights to those individuals whose personal data is collected.

b) Obligations of data collectors

The collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal data must all meet transparent privacy-protecting standards. Everyone has the right to exercise control over the personal data collected about them and its usage.

Whoever requires personal data from persons, shall request the individual's informed consent regarding the content, purposes, storage location, duration and mechanisms for access, retrieval and correction of their personal data. Everyone has a right to access, retrieve and delete the personal data collected about them.

c) Minimum standards on use of personal data

When personal information is required, only the minimum data necessary must be collected and for the minimum period of time for which this is required. Data must be deleted when it is no longer necessary for the purposes for which it was collected

Data collectors have an obligation to seek active consent and to notify people when their information has been forwarded to third parties, abused, lost, or stolen. Appropriate security measures shall be taken for the protection of personal data stored in automated data files against accidental or unauthorised destruction or accidental loss as well as against unauthorised access, alteration or dissemination.

d) Monitoring by independent data protection authorities

Data protection should be monitored by independent data protection authorities, which work transparently and without commercial advantage or political influence.”

Moreover, it is crucial that education and information on data protection is provided to designers and developers of new tools that aim at the collection, management to ensure that emerging technologies are, by design, compliant with the right to digital data protection.



4. Apply human rights online

a) Core Principles

The IRPC Charter identifies 10 Internet policy principles to help realise the vision of a rights-based Internet environment that stakeholders should adhere to:

- **Universality & Equality**
All humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights, which must be respected, protected and fulfilled in the online environment.
- **Rights & Social Justice**
The Internet is a space for the promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights and the advancement of social justice. Everyone has the duty to respect the human rights of all others in the online environment.
- **Accessibility**
Everyone has an equal right to access and use a secure and open Internet.
- **Expression & Association**
Everyone has the right to seek, receive, and impart information freely on the Internet without censorship or other interference. Everyone also has the right to associate freely through and on the Internet, for social, political, cultural or other purposes.
- **Privacy & Data Protection**
Everyone has the right to privacy online. This includes freedom from surveillance, the right to use encryption, and the right to online anonymity. Everyone also has the right to data protection, including control over personal data collection, retention, processing, disposal and disclosure.
- **Life, Liberty & Security**
The rights to life, liberty, and security must be respected, protected and fulfilled online. These rights must not be infringed upon, or used to infringe other rights, in the online environment.
- **Diversity**
Cultural and linguistic diversity on the Internet must be promoted, and technical and policy innovation should be encouraged to facilitate plurality of expression.
- **Network Equality**
Everyone shall have universal and open access to the Internet's content, free from discriminatory prioritisation, filtering or traffic control on commercial, political or other grounds.
- **Standards & Regulation**
The Internet's architecture, communication systems, and document and data formats shall be based on open standards that ensure complete interoperability, inclusion and equal opportunity for all.
- **Governance**
Human rights and social justice must form the legal and normative foundations upon which the Internet operates and is governed. This shall happen in a transparent and

multilateral manner, based on principles of openness, inclusive participation and accountability.

b) Key Commitment/ Pledges/ Actions

The 10 core principles identified above encapsulate the vision of a rights-based Internet environment put forward by the [Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet](#) and all governments, companies, civil society organisations and other stakeholders should adhere to these principles.

The IRPC Charter - on which the 10 Internet policy principles are based, interprets and explains universal human rights standards in the online context and re-emphasizes that human rights apply online as they do offline. Human rights standards, as defined in international law, are non-negotiable: States are legally obliged to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of their citizens.

Governments

Governments have the primary responsibility for realizing human rights within their jurisdictions.

- The duty to protect requires governments to protect against human rights violations committed by other actors, including businesses.
- States are also obliged to take appropriate steps to investigate, punish and redress human rights abuses which take place within their territory and/or jurisdiction.

Other stakeholders

Other actors also have responsibilities under the International human rights regime.

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights calls on “every individual and every organ of society” to promote and respect human rights. While these responsibilities do not equate to legal obligations they do form part of prevailing social norms which companies and other private organizations should respect.

Thus while the primary responsibilities under the IRPC Charter remain with governments, the Charter also provides guidance to governments about how they must ensure that private companies are respecting human rights, and guidelines to companies about how they should behave so as to respect human rights in the Internet environment. Drawing from the United Nations General Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), business enterprises as specialized organs of society performing specialized functions, required to comply with all applicable laws and to respect human rights.

6. Regulation of artificial intelligence

a) Core Principles

Human rights have been confirmed as a fundamental principle of Internet governance. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and related algorithms are remapping the future of this interconnection thus calling for the need to move from principles to operationalisation, and commitment to action. AI offers great potential in important areas such as medicine, food production, education, or tackling the climate crisis, but the harmful impacts of AI on human rights and the environment need to be addressed and mitigated. The mass data gathering, processing, use, and storage demands ever-growing energy consumption and AI has been used to speed up fossil fuel extraction with harmful environmental impacts. On the same token, human rights have been impacted by AI algorithm bias and other discriminatory processes, as well as impacts on the rights of privacy, security, and trust.

There is not a united response to the development, use and regulation of artificial intelligence; the lack of accountability, transparency, and a global or collective vision of AI adds the “techno absolutism” which undermines democracy. Moreover, power struggles between the developed “AI haves” countries and the developing “AI have nots” are paving the way to new forms of colonialism - data colonialism and data warfare, hindering the efforts to develop AI systems that ensure both human rights and environmental sustainability.

Taking into account the challenges highlighted above and considering that an unregulated, opaque and fragmented AI can be harmful to humans and the environment, we put forward the following principles:

1. Ensuring that AI is human rights-based and environmentally sustainable by design is crucial.
2. AI must be inclusive, sustainable, non-discriminatory and rooted in democratic processes, the rule of law and human rights to ensure no harm is inflicted on humanity and the environment. - Democratic control over AI is not only possible, but it is also the way to ensure the existence and enforcement of human rights
3. Transparency, accountability and clear regulatory frameworks are necessary, as well as dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders to ensure that fundamental rights are incorporated into AI systems and that assessments are carried out to ensure that those rights are upheld and protected throughout. In the pursuit of accountability, legal persons need to be held responsible for the output of AI systems.

4. Political, gender, and racial bias in data need to be firmly addressed and standards need to be set on the outputs. These need to be discussed publicly to ensure that discriminatory frameworks are not perpetuated and to shape the future of AI.

8. Other areas (please specify): Ensure an environmentally sustainable digital transformation

Specify area: Ensure an environmentally sustainable Digital Transformation

a) Core Principles

Drawing on Article 4 of the [Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet: Right to Development Through the Internet](#), the IRPC has been focusing on issues at the intersection of emerging technologies, human rights and environmental sustainability.

The main objective of this proposal is to ensure that the Global Digital Compact promotes an environmentally sustainable digital transformation.

a) Core principles

Human Rights and environmental sustainability are at the core of Internet Governance. As the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) look to connect the next billion, human rights and environmental sustainability must be fully considered in Internet Governance processes and embedded in the rules, policies, standards and practices that coordinate and shape the Internet. A human-centric digital transition that is diverse, inclusive, democratic, and sustainable is needed to ensure that Internet-connected technologies cause no harm to humanity and the environment.

Standardised methodology

A standardised methodology and indicators are vital to assess and monitor the environmental and social impact of digital technologies, to avoid greenwashing, and to promote transparency to enable evidence-based decision-making at the regulatory and political levels. International coordination is imperative in this regard.

Transparency, accountability, and regulation to harness the potential of technology.

Emerging technologies are essential to help achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to promote environmental protection. However, unregulated, opaque and fragmented technologies can also be harmful to people and the environment. More transparency, accountability and effective regulatory frameworks are necessary to harness the potential of technologies and mitigate their negative impact.

Multistakeholder dialogue and cooperation

Dialogue and cooperation among all stakeholders are crucial to developing human rights-based and sustainability-by-design approaches to new and emerging technologies.

Education for sustainability available to all

Education is an essential tool for promoting sustainability and informed choices. Digital sustainability education needs to be widespread across all sectors of society to help empower younger generations and to equip all stakeholders with the necessary skills to facilitate a green digital transformation.

b) Key Commitment/ Pledges/ Actions

- The IGF community has a responsibility to ensure that both are fully embedded in the Internet Governance practices and discussions to promote an inclusive and sustainable Internet for all.
- All stakeholders, particularly governments and the private-technical sector, must make environmental sustainability an integral part of all Internet policymaking agendas, and investment decisions into future technologies.
- The implementation of regulatory frameworks must be practical and effective and must ensure:
 - sustainability throughout the entire life cycle of technologies: from extraction and use of natural resources, design and production to their consumption and disposal;
 - the development and adoption of harmonised standards and transparent reporting to effectively measure the impact of Internet-connected technologies on the environment;
 - the adoption of international standards and harmonization of green procurement principles and good practices for digital services and technologies.
 - the promotion of sustainable innovation and sustainable business models that facilitate the transition to circular production and consumption.
- The technical community and the private sector must lead the way by including life cycle assessment experts in all teams and ensuring and promoting human rights and sustainability by design.
- Civil society has an important role to play by providing crucial education and raising awareness in their communities.
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration is vital for effective solutions. Dialogue and collaboration are key to avoiding siloed decisions, promoting the development of informed policy frameworks and creating a space for sharing good practices that promote rights and sustainability by design.

Any other comments on the Global Digital Compact?

Would you like to be included on the email list for updates on future developments on the Global Digital Compact? If so, please include the specific emails to be added.

1. No
2. Yes (please provide email)
3. Email: info@irpcharter.org

Would you like to submit additional documentation in support of the information you have provided in this survey?

1. Yes
1. No

The Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet