

18 February 2025



**ORAL STATEMENT**

*\*Check against delivery*

UN Global Digital Compact  
Stakeholder Consultation: AI Scientific Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance  
UN Headquarters, New York (Virtual Format)

*Delivered by: Laura O'Brien, Senior International Counsel, Access Now*

Excellencies, colleagues, thank you for this opportunity to contribute to this stakeholder consultation on the establishment and functioning of the AI Panel and Global Dialogue on AI Governance. Access Now is a grassroots to global civil society organization working at the intersection of technology and human rights. For reasons of length, today I will address four top level takeaways in response to your guiding questions and refer you to our written submission for further elaboration.

First and foremost, as previously captured by my colleague at APC, the use and abuse of AI can facilitate human rights violations while also exacerbating existing societal power imbalances, therefore creating new risks, which disproportionately affect marginalized people and communities. Both the Panel and the Global Dialogue should therefore center on the international human rights framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals in order to adequately address such risks and power imbalances.

Second, the Panel should be composed of individuals with the relevant scientific expertise from various linguistic and multidisciplinary backgrounds, with special attention to those from traditionally under-represented groups. As previously noted, the Panel should be fully independent and free from political influence. The composition of the Panel should reflect balanced geographical and gender representation in line with the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Access Now agrees with others that the Panel should “avoid making policy recommendations, but rather focus on synthesising and consolidating existing AI research through evidence-based impact, risk and opportunity assessment.” Priority should be given to human rights impact and human rights due diligence assessments as evidence-based impact, risk, and opportunity assessments. The Panel should be mandated to seek formal input from all stakeholders throughout the various stages of any reporting process in line with multistakeholder principles and best practices.

Third, the mandate of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance should not overlap with existing forums, particularly the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which the UN Global Digital Compact acknowledges is the “primary multi-stakeholder platform for discussion of Internet governance issues.” The Global Dialogue on AI Governance should therefore complement existing AI policy dialogues and feed them into the IGF as the main forum. The option for hybrid participation should be available with enough funding and support to ensure the safety, security, and equal participation of all stakeholders.

Finally, regarding both the Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, it is imperative that neither duplicate existing UN initiatives related to AI. The Panel should therefore leverage the existing expertise and outcomes from other relevant UN processes, such as those led by OHCHR, ITU, and

UNESCO, by integrating their outputs as relevant. Both should further consult with other UN agencies — such as UN Women, environmental agencies, and treaty bodies to consider the particularly unique risks and impacts of AI on individuals and communities at risk.

Thank you.



**Access Now** (<https://www.accessnow.org>) defends and extends the digital rights of people and communities at risk. As a grassroots-to-global organization, we partner with local actors to bring a human rights agenda to the use, development, and governance of digital technologies, and to intervene where technologies adversely impact our human rights. By combining direct technical support, strategic advocacy, grassroots grantmaking, and convenings such as RightsCon, we fight for human rights in the digital age.

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