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Child Rights and Digital Environment, including AI: Challenges and Opportunities for Children

Days dedicated to 35th Anniversary
of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

10th-12th March 2025

Child Rights and Digital Environment, including AI: Challenges and Opportunities for Children

Days dedicated to 35th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

SUMMARY
OF THE CONFERENCE

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I. Introduction

Grigol Robakidze University hosted the hybrid Conference on ***Child Rights and Digital Environment, including AI: Challenges and Opportunities for Children*** dedicated to 35th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the 10th-12th of March in Tbilisi.

The explosion of the digital environment, including AI, has created unprecedented opportunities for children for realization of their rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols. While there is a wide range of possibilities for children including education, healthcare, access to information, justice, leisure and play, wider and more easily available access to the Internet and digital technology also poses significant challenges to child rights, including their safety. The impacts of the digital environment and AI are profound, ranging from threats to personal data protection and privacy, to violence, harassment, cyberbullying, harmful content, grooming, and exploitation.

The Conference brings together around 1200 children and adults from around 60 countries, international inter-governmental-, and non-governmental organizations, leading Universities, business enterprises from different parts of the world in order to discuss together, what can be done to address threats coming from AI and to protect children.

The Conference facilitated the discussion on the draft ***Joint Statement on AI and Child Rights***. The Joint Statement is the first international document of international organizations focused specifically on child rights in the context of Artificial Intelligence. It is intended to support and guide States, international organizations and all other relevant stakeholders how to use opportunities of the AI for children to realize their rights, but also how to prevent and mitigate risks from AI. It is an initiative of the Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Professor of the Grigol Robakidze University Sophie Kiladze. The process is coordinated by International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and following international organizations are involved in the elaboration process: CRC, UNICRI Center for AI and Robotics, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), UNESCO, UNODC, SRSG Violence against Children, Council of Europe.

There was a closed session for the discussion and exchange of views dedicated to the draft Joint Statement together with all relevant stakeholders, sharing valuable comments and views, bringing inputs and different perspectives.

The Conference has ensured participation of children from all 5 regions of the United Nation both in person and online. Three different units were dedicated to children. Children from different parts of the world opened the Conference bringing their messages to the audience. On the Panel dedicated to *AI for Good: Children's Inputs,* children could bring their creative projects to share with others, how AI can be used for positive outcomes serving to good purposes. The third panel for children ensured meaningful child participation in the Joint Statement on AI and Child Rights. Children answered three questions bringing to decision-makers what points they would like to see in the Joint Statement and how they see shaping of its content.

II. Keynote Speeches

1. Prof. Sophie Kiladze

Vice Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

Dear Children, dear Rector of the Grigol Robakidze University Prof. Mamuka Tavkhelidze, distinguished representatives of the states, international organizations, academia, business enterprises, civil society organizations…Dear guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to open the Conference today.

Artificial Intelligence has become one of the most transformative technologies of our time. From healthcare to education, social media, and even in our daily lives, AI is altering the landscape in ways we never could have imagined a couple of years ago. As we look ahead, we must ask ourselves: how does it impact the rights of children? Do we want it to be a tool that amplifies their voices, enhances their opportunities, and protects their rights? Are we safeguarding their present and futures, or are we opening doors to new vulnerabilities?

I would like to draw your attention to one point - OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, which we owe to our children. The future is being shaped today, and we have a duty to ensure that AI becomes a tool for good, one that supports children's rights, fosters their growth, and protects their future. This is not just about technology—it is about humanity. As we stand at the crossroads of innovation and ethics, let us remember that the true measure of progress is not just technological advancement, but the well-being and rights of the most vulnerable among us, the well-being and rights of our children.

And at this point since we acknowledge this need and challenge, the logical question arises, how exactly we are going to reach this goal? Today and tomorrow we, around 1200 registered children and adults from around 60 countries from various parts of the world, decision-makers at national-, and international levels, child rights advocates, business enterprises, science and education, come together in person and online to share with each other different perspectives and views, experiences, developments, to discuss and to find ways how we can explore child rights in the context of AI.

Let me zoom in on what the Committee on the Rights of the Child is doing to fulfil its part of this shared responsibility. Around a year ago when I brought the issue of AI and child rights to the Committee, I could not have imagined that this topic would be developed so rapidly in the Committee as AI itself, that after a year we already are arranging the Conference in Tbilisi here on AI and Child Rights. I am very thankful to all members of the CRC who support the initiative to work on the topic Child Rights in the Context of AI in a focused way. We are already addressing the topic in constructive dialogue with State Parties as well as integrating specific recommendations in our Concluding Observations. The Committee has created a Working Group on AI and I was honored to be elected as its Coordinator. We established a cooperation with the International Telecommunications Union, UNICRI Center for AI and Robotics, Ministry of Interior of United Arab Emirates and arranged an event in Geneva in September 2024 to share with each other what we are doing in the field.

As a follow up of this cooperation I shared my humble idea to partners to elaborate a Joint Statement on Child Rights in the context of AI, which should serve as a set of recommendations of several international organizations specifically dedicated to promoting and protecting child rights in relation to AI. There are already 8 international organizations joining the elaboration process. It is coordinated by the International Telecommunications Union; we have CRC, UNICRI Center for AI and Robotics, UNODC, UNESCO, SRSG Violence Against Children, IPU and the Council of Europe joining in the elaboration process. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of these organizations for the strong support and hard work, especially I would like to highlight Mr. Thomas Lamanauskas Deputy Director of ITU, as well as Ms. Fanny Rotino and Mr. Orhan Osmani from ITU, Mr. Irakli Beridze Head of UNICRI Center for and AI and Robotics, Mr. Martin Chungong the Secretary General of IPU for a very strong support from the very beginning.

We try to keep the process as inclusive as possible and we will discuss the first draft today with all relevant stakeholders, as well as with children tomorrow.

I would like to extend my appreciation of the efforts of those who put a lot of hard work for organizing this Conference. I truly appreciate the dedication of the Rector Prof. Mamuka Tavkhelidze as well as the whole Team of Grigol Robakidze University; I also would like to thank my colleagues from the CRC as well as International Telecommunications Union for their strong support and dedication throughout the preparation. My thanks go to each and every distinguished speaker, panelist, moderator, those organizations who supported children to be involved in this Conference, and certainly each and every participant who joined us in person and online today and tomorrow.

My special thanks go to children: we want to hear their voices. Children are not just passive beneficiaries of AI; they are active participants in shaping their future and the future of the whole humankind. So, we ensure today and tomorrow to listen to as many children as possible from all parts of the world.

Let us commit to building an AI-driven world where every child can thrive, free from harm and full of opportunity. Together, we can ensure that the promise of AI is realized in a way that upholds the dignity, rights, and potential of every child. By fostering dialogue, collaboration, and action, the conference can bring its humble contribution to help shape a future where AI serves as a tool for empowerment, equity, and opportunity for children everywhere.

2. Martin Chungong

Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I sincerely thank you, Professor Tavkhelidze, for your kind invitation to this important event. Regrettably, prior commitments prevent me from attending in person, but I extend my best wishes for productive discussions.

The topic of this conference is both timely and critical. Digital technology is transforming our world, shaping economies, societies, and particularly the lives of children. While it offers extraordinary

opportunities for learning, communication, and development, it also presents significant risks. As we embrace the digital age, we must ensure that children's rights are fully protected and upheld.

Parliaments play a key role in this endeavour. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has long championed children's rights, working with partners such as UNICEF and the Committee on the Rights of the Child to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our efforts include mobilising parliaments for legislative action, policy advocacy, and capacity-building to strengthen the role of parliamentarians in safeguarding children's rights.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Digital technology is now an integral part of childhood, with one in three internet users globally being under 18. As highlighted in General Comment 25 of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the digital environment should support children's development while ensuring their protection from harm. Parliamentarians must ensure that national policies and laws align with this vision by:

• Closing the digital divide – More than 2.6 billion people remain offline, many of them children. Parliamentarians must advocate for universal and equitable digital access, ensuring that all children, regardless of geography or socio-economic background, can benefit from the digital revolution.

• Strengthening digital literacy – Digital skills are essential for navigating the online world safely. Parliaments should support initiatives that promote digital education for children, parents, and educators, ensuring responsible and informed digital engagement.

• Regulating AI and digital platforms – While ongoing discussions among international bodies highlight both the potential and risks of AI, there is a pressing need to address concerns such as bias, surveillance, and online harm. Parliaments must enact clear, enforceable safeguards to ensure AI systems uphold children's rights

While digital technology provides many benefits, it also exposes children to significant risks: harmful content, cyberbullying, exploitation, and privacy violations. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-stakeholder approach, including:

• Developing child-centric online policies – Governments and digital platforms must adopt strong privacy protections, age-appropriate content policies, and mechanisms to prevent online abuse.

• Promoting digital accountability – Companies should be required to conduct child impact assessments on AI and digital services. Parliamentarians should oversee compliance with these safeguards.

• Supporting global cooperation – Addressing these challenges requires collaboration between parliaments, governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector. This conference exemplifies such collaboration by bringing together key stakeholders to foster collective solutions. The IPU stands ready to work with its partners to advance these efforts.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Recognizing the critical role of parliaments in shaping policies that safeguard children's rights in the digital age, the IPU is committed to working with its Member Parliaments in the following areas:

1. Enhancing legislative frameworks to uphold children's rights in the digital space.

2. Investing in digital literacy programs to equip children, parents, and educators with the skills needed for safe online engagement.

3. Strengthening international cooperation to bridge the digital divide and promote equitable access to technology.

4. Holding digital platforms accountable for ensuring a safe, child-friendly digital environment.

5. Engaging civil society and young people in shaping digital policies that reflect their needs and concerns.

The IPU reaffirms its commitment to supporting parliaments in their endeavours to establish a digital environment that upholds the rights and well-being of children. Furthermore, the IPU is willing to work with other stakeholders to achieve this shared objective.

I welcome in particular the initiative of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to develop a Joint Statement on AI and child rights and confirm the IPU's intention to contribute fully to this endeavour.

In a resolution on AI and democracy in October last year, the IPU called for increased international multi stakeholder cooperation, collaboration, and exchange of information and experiences to ensure a united worldwide effort to maximize the benefits of AI, while mitigating risks to humanity, including through initiatives designed to reduce disparities in technological development between nations.

We see the great potential for AI to support the realization of children's rights, including the rights to education and health, among others. We see equally clearly some of the risks, most visibly the way in which AI may increase the risk of online harms to children. Parliaments have a central role in defining the legislative frameworks around child rights and AI. I believe that this Joint Statement will provide important guidance for parliaments, as for other stakeholders.

I thank you for your attention and wish you a fruitful discussion.

3. Dr. Irakli Beridze

Head of UNICRI Center for AI and Robotics

Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear colleagues and friends,

It is a great pleasure to join you today, even if only virtually, for this important discussion on child rights in the digital environment and the role of artificial intelligence. While I regret not being in Tbilisi—my home, my roots, and a city that means so much to me—my heart is always there.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Vice Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Professor Sophie Kiladze, and the Rector of Grigol Robakidze University, Professor Mamuka Tavkhelidze, for co-hosting this event. My appreciation also goes to all the partners and supporters who have helped bring us together. Conversations like this are crucial as we navigate the evolving challenges and opportunities that artificial intelligence presents for children.

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming our world. It is shaping economies, revolutionizing education, and even altering how we define human interaction. For children, AI offers unprecedented opportunities—from personalized learning and improved healthcare to stronger tools for online protection.

However, AI's misuse poses serious dangers. One of the most alarming trends we are witnessing is the creation of AI-generated child sexual exploitation and abuse material at an unprecedented scale and speed. Law enforcement agencies—already facing overwhelming caseloads—struggle to distinguish AI-generated materials from real victims in need of urgent rescue. Late last year, UNICRI, in collaboration with the Bracket Foundation, released a study to advance understanding of this emerging threat and explore strategies to counter the misuse of generative AI.

Generative AI also presents challenges beyond law enforcement. Children themselves are increasingly using AI-powered tools, often without sufficient guidance of potential risks. That is why, in partnership with Disney Worldwide Services, Inc., we are working to enhance AI literacy for children, aiming to empower them to navigate AI safely while mitigating risks.

At UNICRI's Centre for AI and Robotics, we work to better understand both the opportunities and risks AI presents in security and justice, including child protection. Our AI for Safer Children Initiative, launched with the UAE Ministry of Interior, now supports law enforcement in over 120 countries in tackling online child exploitation.

In addition, we are currently supporting the development of a Joint Statement on AI and the Rights of the Child, together with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNESCO, ITU, and other partners presenting at this very conference. While this statement has not yet been adopted, it represents an important step toward ensuring AI policies and regulations incorporate children's rights from the outset.

To create a safe and inclusive digital environment, we need to:

- Promote AI literacy for children, parents, and educators so they can make informed choices.
- Ensure accountability in AI development, encouraging ethical and responsible innovation.
- Make AI accessible and fair, reducing bias and ensuring all children—regardless of background—benefit from its potential.

This conference provides an opportunity to reflect on how AI is shaping children's lives—both in terms of its benefits and the challenges it presents. As AI continues to evolve, different stakeholders play a role in ensuring its development and use prioritize children's needs:

- Governments may consider how AI policies and regulatory frameworks can better incorporate child rights and protections.
- The private sector has an opportunity to integrate ethical AI design principles that support child safety and well-being.
- Civil society and academia can contribute by deepening research, fostering awareness, and exploring ways to ensure AI serves the best interests of children.
- Young people themselves have an important perspective to share, as they engage with AI-driven technologies in their daily lives. Encouraging their participation in discussions on AI can help shape a more inclusive and balanced approach.

As we move forward, especially regarding the use of AI by and for children, we must ensure it is developed responsibly and earns the trust of society. It is equally important that users—especially

children, parents, and educators—develop a comprehensive understanding of the societal effects of AI and its expanding role in daily life.

This powerful technology is here to stay, and it is up to us to harness its potential to safeguard children rather than expose them to harm. While no single solution fits all contexts, discussions like this one help us move toward stronger awareness, better practices, and a more child-centered approach to AI.

I look forward to hearing the insights from today's discussions. Thank you for your attention.

4. Baroness Beeban Kidron

Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Good morning,

I am so sorry not to be with you today.

For more than a decade, I've been working to build the digital world that children deserve. With colleagues, I've seen positive results in General Comment 25 on the relevance of children's rights in the digital environment, the UK's Age-Appropriate Design Code which offers a high bar of data privacy for children, the UK's Online Safety Act, and the many instruments of the EU that have put children front and centre.

But even before we have finished that job, the world has become consumed by the impact of AI in its latest form.

Some hail AI as the answer to many of the world's intractable problems. Others have issued stark warnings of its power and control, and that we are on a path to the erosion of truth, jobs, human control, or maybe even human existence.

The reality is that any of these could be true.

I've seen AI systems that can monitor a preterm baby's heartbeat without having to stick heavy instruments on their paper-thin chest, or used to teach sign language to hearing classmates so that they could all communicate with their deaf peer. But equally, I've seen AI-driven products and services promoting eating disorders, and chatbots that offer advice that suggests violence or suicide to children.

But this good-bad view of AI is not helpful, not because these are unimportant questions, but because they're obscuring the everyday, the immediate, and the fact that it's not governments or citizens who are determining our collective future. AI is being developed mainly by private businesses with narrow commercial interests that are focused on profit rather than its propensity for hallucination. The fact that it's a numbers game – giving you the most likely statistical response to a question rather than evidence truth. And it's being developed without any regard for the red lines that support human values, whether that is automated lethal weapons or consideration of the impact of services and products on children and childhood.

It's been several decades since the tech sector negotiated free reign for its products and services, a position that is fiercely defended by lobbying, legal action, and a mind-boggling level of corporate self-interest. Indeed, tomorrow we will see testimony from yet another whistleblower, charting the fact that Metta knew about harms to children, the impact of their service in Myanmar, and the back doors they offered to the Chinese state at the cost of Hong Kong citizens.

And yet again, We have allowed tech to launch products and systems with almost no oversight, few responsibilities and no liability.

AI is not new. It is not different from previous technological advances. AI has been in development for more than 70 years. Many of the risks it poses to children are ones we have experience with. From relentless privacy violations, to manipulative and predatory design practices. This also means that we have the foundation to address it, notably the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the General Comment 25 to which I have already referred.

It is worrying therefore, that in spite of the years of experience regulating the digital world and the best practices that are emerging globally, we have allowed the sector to once again argue that they should be beyond regulatory control. If we are headed for existential threat, then being a little careful about how technology develops may give us a few more years. And if we are not headed there, it would be better for us to have a voice in the how and what the world looks like when AI is ubiquitous in societies across the globe.

This may not be a popular view. On the contrary, there is an increasing drumbeat of deregulation and with it a narrative that claims regulation hinders innovation. A narrative that privileges the incumbents and behemoths, those with their hands on the technology already who would rather build their brands and models without challenge or competition.

Sadly, it is also a narrative that ministers around the globe parrot without even looking back to see who benefited disproportionately from the last round of unfettered innovation and who paid the price. Nor do they seem to look at history to remind us what happens when power gets concentrated in too few hands.

Done properly, regulation puts the consumer and the citizens' voice into technology. It provides guidelines for innovators, letting them know what they can and cannot do. It can both prevent harm and drive innovation to develop in ways that are beneficial for society as a whole. In doing so, regulation provides a level playing field upon which emerging and established stakeholders can compete in a race to relevance.

To catalyse this, 5Rights is proud to be launching our *Children and AI Design Code* next week in Berlin. The AI code provides a clear and practical path forward for the development and use of AI systems that impact children, taking into account as a norm their rights and their development needs. It does so by mandating certain expertise and actions, as well as raising a series of questions designed to reveal gaps and risk. It's an important and necessary correction of the persistent failure to consider children. And it is an essential blueprint for delivering on the responsibilities clarified in General Comment 25 and the commitments to children in the Global Digital Compact. It's grounded in and compatible with global principles and frameworks. It supports existing regulatory initiatives and it provides a standard for those in jurisdictions that are considering introducing new legislation or regulation.

For AI to serve humanity and live up to its great promise, it cannot be concentrated in the hands of a few unaccountable businesses, nor should it be built on the violation of children's rights.

If AI, like other technologies before it, moves fast and breaks things, we must, at a minimum, act on the consensus that it may not break our children.

I wish you all a very productive and impactful conference and I look forward to seeing its outcomes contribute to building the digital world that children truly deserve.

Thank you.

III. Panelists Contributions

5. AI Governance for Child Rights

Marie-Ève Nadeau

Head of International Advocacy, 5rights Foundation

Thank you for organizing this important event!

At 5Rights, we have had the privilege of leading this fight for over a decade, striving for global standards for children rights to be upheld in the digital world by design and default: from chairing the drafting committee of GC 25, to supporting legislators from across the globe to craft enforceable laws and regulations, such as the UK AADC, and working alongside technical experts to create industry standards and practical tools that support companies in embedding children's rights by design and default. All this work is supported by our wonderful group of 200 young ambassadors from around the world.

There is a myth—a carefully cultivated myth—that AI is something entirely new.

That it is exceptional — untouchable —and beyond governance.

But this is simply not true.

Artificial Intelligence did not emerge from thin air. It it is man-made — optimised with purpose and instructions towards intended outcomes. It has been decades in the making, and has been shaping our digital world already for years.

As we uncovered in *Disrupted Childhood*, a report from 5Rights on persuasive design initially published in 2018, AI is embedded in the algorithms that curate our experiences — the data-driven systems that influence our choices — and the predictive technologies that decide what we see, hear, and even think.

Despite AI's deep entanglement in our lives, tech companies have deliberately framed it as an enigma—too complex, too novel, too fast-moving to be governed.

This is an illusion — one that serves their interests, but certainly not those of children.

But we know better.

More than a decade of work at the intersection of children's rights and the digital environment has shown us that we do not need to reinvent the wheel, or start from scratch.

Enforceable frameworks regulating data, privacy, and online safety, such as the UK's Age-Appropriate Design Code, demonstrate that accountability and proactive risk mitigation at the design stage are both possible and necessary.

So AI governance can—and must—build on these foundations.

Because I want to make clear that the risks AI poses are not inevitable.

They are the result of choices—choices that have too often prioritise commercial interests over children's rights and well-being.

And as AI developed at pace, without consideration for children and their rights, it intensifies these risks, embedding them deeper into the digital infrastructure that shapes children's lives.

We can think of AI-driven recommender systems that maximize engagement on social media at the cost of well-being.

But this is just one piece of a much larger pattern because AI already makes decisions that impact children in education, healthcare, and welfare – for example.

And too often, these systems are designed and deployed without regard for their consequences—or worse, as Facebook whistleblowers have revealed, knowing the risks and forging ahead anyway.

But this cannot continue. Children are not test subjects for unregulated technology.

Just as we require cars to be crash-tested — and food to meet safety standards, we must demand that AI products and services are designed and developed to be safe for children before they ever reach the market.

That demand is not new, and should be the foundation for AI governance that is grounded in children rights.

Indeed, as we mark the 35th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – which was established in the earliest days of the World Wide Web – one thing is clear to all of us today**:** children's rights do not end where technology begins.

And the Committee on the Rights of the Child made explicit in General Comment No. 25, which affirms that children's rights apply fully in the digital environment.

And let me be clear: AI is no exception. The obligations of the UNCRC apply across the digital environment, including AI and other emerging technologies.

As articulated in General comment 25:

- Digital services must be designed to respect children's rights, and their evolving capacities..[1]
- Data protection, privacy-by-design, and safety-by-design are not optional; but are necessary safeguards.
- The best interests of the child must take precedence over commercial considerations."[2] [3],.
- Transparency and accountability are essential.[4],

[1] UNCRC General comment No. 25, para. 20
[2] UNCRC General comment No. 25, para. 110
[3] UNCRC General comment No. 25, para. 70
[4] UNCRC General comment No. 25, para. 39

- AI, and technologies such as emotional analytics, inference information filtering, and recommendation systems must not manipulate or interfere with children's freedom of thought, and access to information. [5] [6]

Building on and alongside General comment No. 25, key global and regional initiatives have taken critical steps toward embedding children's rights in AI governance. These include: the UN High-Level Advisory Body's *Governing AI for Humanity* report, UNICEF's *Policy Guidance on AI for Children*, and the World Economic Forum's *AI for Children Toolkit*. In Europe, there are also the EU's AI Act and the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on AI.
But these efforts alone are not enough. AI governance cannot stop at high-level commitments—it must translate into real-world and tangible impact for children.
This requires a clear and enforceable duty for AI interacting with or impacting children to be designed, developed, and deployed to consider children's rights, needs, and vulnerabilities, with a defined roadmap of expectations.

It means mandatory due diligence —across the value chain – and risk assessments before deployment, to prevent and address the adverse impact on children and their rights. It means making safety and transparency standard with adequate oversight and accountability. It means governance and regulation that is future-proof and tech-neutral, so that we are not constantly chasing the next wave of innovation but shaping its trajectory from the outset.

And let's be clear: far from stifling innovation—governance and regulation enable it. It sets the ground rules so that innovation serves society rather than exploits it. It ensures that new technologies enhance children's lives rather than endanger them. And most crucially, it creates a level playing field so that companies acting responsibly are not undercut by those that do not.

The Convention is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. That tells us something fundamental: there is broad and unwavering consensus that children must be protected.

Now, it is important to translate that consensus into action—into governance that safeguards children in the age of AI.

To complement and build on these efforts 5Rights is launching the *Children & AI Design Code*, which seeks to provide a practical way forward—a blueprint that fosters innovation while ensuring that children's rights are at the heart of AI development.

In conclusion, AI is already shaping the world children will grow up in, and our responsibility is clear: it must serve them, not exploit them.

[5] UNCRC General comment No. 25, para. 62

[6] UNCRC General comment No. 25, para. 53

6. AI Governance for Child Rights

Nathalie Meurens[7]
Senior EU Advocacy Manager, TDH Netherlands[8]

Context

The European Union (EU)is currently revising its Directive on combating the sexual abuse and exploitation of children (CSA Directive). This Directive establishes minimum rules concerning the definition of child sexual abuse and exploitation criminal offences and sanctions. It also aims to strengthen the prevention of these crimes as well as the protection of victims.

In this context, the Council of the EU adopted a position which would allow EU Member States to decriminalise the production and possession of Artificial Intelligence generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (AI-CSAM), using virtual children, for personal use (Article 5(10) of the proposed revised CSA Directive).[1]

This approach severely compromises child protection efforts. Viewing AI-CSAM differently than other forms of CSAM undermines child protection efforts and emboldens offenders.

All AI-CSAM must be criminalized.

All AI-CSAM is child sexual abuse material, regardless of how it was produced and its intended purpose.

The virtual nature of these images can lead to a false belief that the harm is less severe, as the victims are perceived as fictional. Presuming that the production and possession of AI-CSAM for personal use does not directly or indirectly impact children's safety constitutes a perilous assumption that fails to prioritise children's safety and well-being.[2]

Similarly, the assumption that the use of AI-CSAM would prevent child sex offenders' future online or in-person offending is not empirically proven.

AI-CSAM normalizes sexual violence against children.

AI-generated content depicting real or fictional characters resembling children in sexual situations, contribute to children's sexual objectification and reducing them to objects of desire.[3]

Normalising the sexual desire of children through AI content is a threat to all children. One reason for this is that it helps reinforce cognitive distortion, which can break down the mental barriers to offending in-person or online. Indeed, viewing CSAM predisposes offenders to abusing, by reinforcing faulty beliefs legitimizing[4] abuse. Viewing children as sexual objects is a common cognitive distortion used by child sex offenders to justify their abuse.[5]

Additionally, online spaces foster a dangerous sense of impunity, creating echo chambers where individuals reinforce each other's harmful beliefs. Minimising statements like 'I'm not hurting anyone' are commonplace; whereby the argument that these are not 'real' children allows offenders to distance themselves, normalising child sexual abuse and eroding any sense of empathy for the victims . 6

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[7] This is our contribution to the Conference Child Rights and Digital Environment, including AI: Challenges and Opportunities for Children dedicated to the 35th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

[8] Terre des Hommes Netherlands is an international non-governmental organisation committed to stopping child exploitation. Since 1965, TdH NL has protected children around the world from violence, harmful labour, trafficking, sexual exploitation, malnutrition and health issues. TdH NL is a member of the Terre des Hommes International Federation.

By normalising the viewing of AI-CSAM, society risks desensitising individuals to the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. This desensitisation contributes to a broader culture that undermines the protection of children from sexual abuse and violence.

Access to AI-CSAM stimulates sexual interest in children and other forms of sexual abuse.
Similar to pornography, the stimulation arising from watching CSAM, including 7 AI-CSAM, is proven to often increase CSAM addiction and even fuel existing 8 fantasies of in-person child sexual abuse. Research on CSAM consumption demonstrates a significant correlation between CSAM use and contact offending.
CSAM offenders have reported needing more severe material to create a similar 9 level of dopamine. AI-generated content could be used to create more and more extreme content to satisfy the urge. Generative AI is likely to exacerbate the problem. The infinite creative potential of AI could enable offenders to satisfy their insatiable demand and further fuel their addiction 10. Over time, the use of AI-CSAM may no longer satisfy the offender, who may consider CSAM involving real children and/or in-person offending to satisfy increased sexual desires. 11
In conclusion, policy-makers should make judgment on how to legislate AI-CSAM based on research and evidence rather than faulty beliefs that are not grounded in empirical science as the consequences for child's safety can be harmful.

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7. Children's Right to Quality AI Education – What Governments and Education Ministries Need to Do?

Dr. Amir Gefen

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Abstract

The rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) are reshaping society, the economy, and education. Children have a fundamental right to AI education, ensuring they acquire the knowledge, skills, and ethical understanding necessary to navigate and contribute to an AI-driven world. Governments and education ministries must take a proactive role in developing and implementing national AI literacy programs that emphasize safe, responsible, and effective AI use. This article underscores the urgency of integrating AI education into formal curricula and highlights the critical need for policies that uphold children's rights to digital literacy in the AI era.

Introduction

On November 30, 2022, OpenAI released ChatGPT, marking the beginning of a transformative era in generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). Since then, millions have adopted GenAI tools for content creation, research, and analysis. These technologies are rapidly reshaping society, redefining the job market, and revolutionizing education. According to the World Economic Forum's *Future of Jobs Report 2025*, technological skills—particularly AI and big data—are expected to grow in importance more rapidly than any other competencies over the next five years, surpassing even networks, cybersecurity, and digital literacy.

The Necessity of AI Literacy

As AI continues to influence multiple facets of daily life, individuals must develop new skills and competencies to harness its potential effectively. AI literacy entails understanding what AI is, how it functions, and how to interact with AI systems responsibly. Essential skills include prompt engineering, critical thinking, and ethical awareness of AI-generated content. While GenAI presents vast opportunities for societal and economic advancement, it also introduces challenges such as misinformation, bias, and 'AI hallucinations'—the generation of false or misleading information. Addressing these challenges requires robust AI literacy education to equip individuals, particularly children, with the tools to navigate this evolving landscape.

AI Education as a Child's Right

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) asserts that a child's education must be directed toward "the development of the child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential" (Article 29). **Given AI's increasing role in society, providing children with quality AI education is a direct extension of their right to education**. The United Nations' Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), responsible for monitoring the Convention's implementation, should actively advocate for AI literacy training programs for educators, parents, and legal guardians to ensure that children receive informed and guided exposure to AI technologies.

Policy Recommendations

To uphold children's rights to AI education, governments and education ministries must:

1. **Develop and implement national AI literacy programs** that equip students and educators with foundational AI knowledge and skills
2. **Establish ethical and protective frameworks** to ensure children use AI tools safely and responsibly.
3. **Integrate AI education into formal curricula** across all levels of schooling, ensuring accessibility for all students.
4. **Promote ongoing research and monitoring** to assess AI education's impact and continuously refine pedagogical approaches.
5. **Collaborate with international organizations and stakeholders** to share best practices and create globally aligned AI education policies.

Conclusion

As AI continues to redefine modern society, **ensuring children's access to quality AI education is not merely an option but a necessity**. AI literacy is fundamental to empowering future generations with the skills and ethical awareness required to navigate an increasingly AI-driven world. Governments, educators, and policymakers must work collaboratively to integrate AI education into national curricula, uphold children's rights to digital literacy, and foster a responsible and informed AI-literate society.

8. EdTech and Child Rights: Prospects for AI in Quality Education

Prof. Sonia Livingstone OBE FBA
Media@LSE and Director, Digital Futures for Children (DFC) Centre

Overview

Data are collected from children all day long – at home, in the street, during their leisure time, and while they learn at school. This data is personal, even sensitive, and can reveal intimate details. Sharing children's data is fraught with risk, mainly because data governance is weak. Most schools recognise that the world students inhabit is increasingly digital first. Nonetheless, supercharged during the pandemic, but continuing at pace, educational technology (EdTech) for school management, learning and safety has been adopted with insufficient consideration for the growing concerns about EdTech's (lack of) educational benefit or potential adverse impacts on children's privacy, equity and inclusion, safety and wellbeing.

Children are a recognised vulnerable group in human rights frameworks. Allowing data companies to harvest and use children's data infringes their rights to protection of privacy and freedom from commercial exploitation. Meanwhile, claimed educational benefits are largely unproven. Children's rights apply at all times, including in relation to the digital environment, as stated by UN General comment No. 25. Through a series of socio-legal investigations and interviews with schools, data protection officers and other experts, the DFC has revealed the unfair burden placed on schools to negotiate contracts with opaque and powerful companies, and the lack of data protection compliance of some of these companies.

How children's data are used in UK schools

In interviews with data controllers, legal experts and data protection experts, the DFC found that:

- Many school data protection officers (DPOs) were unaware of the scale of data processing, particularly in the case of EdTech (Turner et al., 2022).
- It is difficult to establish the scope of liability between contractual parties – schools and EdTech providers. Under the UK GDPR, the data controller is responsible for deciding which data are processed, how, and for what purposes, while the data processor undertakes the processing activity. Both are accountable for data processing, but the controller's liability is greater. Even though most EdTech companies position themselves as data processors, their processing activities show that they act as data controllers.
- DPOs found ensuring regulatory compliance challenging as EdTech companies appeared powerful and opaque (Hooper et al., 2022). For example, a crucial complication arises when an EdTech provider offers optional features over and above those required for its core educational purposes, for then it becomes an independent data controller for non-core purposes. An example is the use of Google Maps alongside Google Classroom in a geography class.
- EdTech companies regularly displayed a lack of data protection compliance (Digital Futures Commission, 2022). Meeting the specific needs of children as data subjects improved when the UK's AADC came into force in 2021. But whether and how this applies to EdTech companies

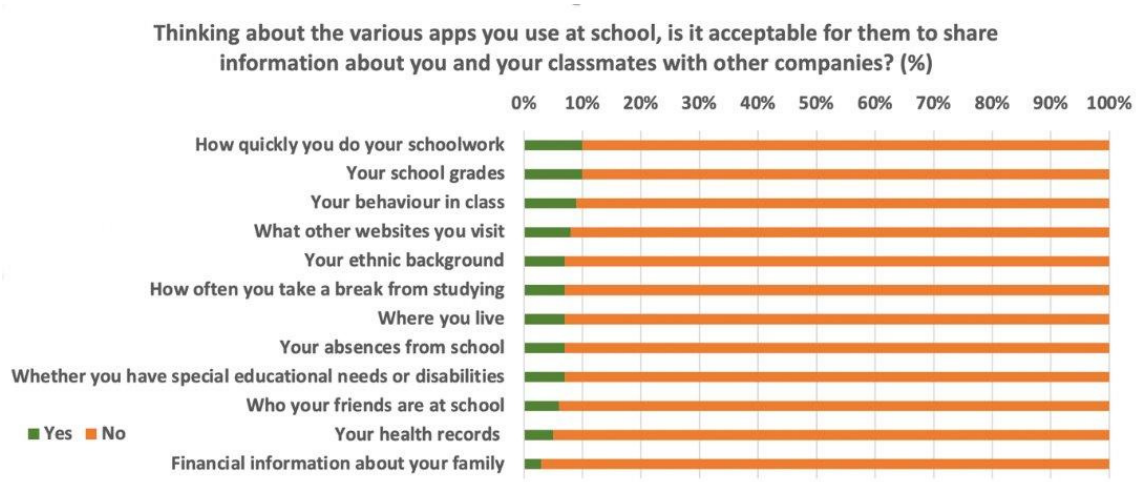
or schools is mired in confusion.

The current system puts children's privacy, education and wellbeing at risk of harm. In the absence of regulatory clarity and compliance, EdTech companies have been able to collect and sell children's data to third parties with financial gain and little repercussion. The DFC report Problems with data governance in UK schools illustrated this: in one example a child completed homework on Vimeo and consequently his data went to 92 commercial companies.

European countries (but not the UK) have challenged EdTech companies regarding educational data processing and privacy breaches – the Dutch challenge being the most successful (Atabey and Hooper, 2024). Such challenges could and should be more widely undertaken.

What do children think of EdTech or know of its data sharing?

Fewer than one in ten UK 6-17 year olds thought it acceptable for the apps they used at school 'to share information about you and your classmates with other companies.' Results from a nationally representative survey paint a clear picture that children are unhappy with EdTech companies collecting their data:



This echoes previously-reported concerns expressed in interviews with children about how they are denied agency in relation to the policy, design and practices of the digital environment (Children's Rights through Children's Eyes). Indeed, while one in three UK 6- to 17-year-olds were asked by their school to use Google Classroom in 2021, for only one in five children had their school discussed what information about them was kept by the apps or websites they used at school, and even fewer had been informed about how their personal information was shared with the government or companies or their rights to correct such information or even to opt out of data collection at school.

EdTech infringes children's rights

According to UNESCO's (2023) *Global education monitoring report*, big tech partnerships with schools give an unfair advantage to companies, overwhelm schools' competence to manage, and undermine government oversight, resulting in companies' 'stranglehold on data' in ways that undermine privacy, safety, autonomy, equity and governance; problems for education as it is fitted to the logic and interests of 'profit-seeking technology providers'; and consumers being misled or even exploited to the point where trust is collapsing and government-led regulation, standards, accreditation and ethical procurement, as well as digital literacy and responsible business practices, are urgently called for.

We can frame these three problems from a human rights and child rights perspective. EdTech risks infringing the child's right to privacy (article 16, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child), to education (Articles 28 and 29), and to freedom from economic exploitation (Article 32). Additional rights relevant to EdTech include non-discrimination (Article 2), the best interests of the child (Article 3(1)), evolving capacity and parent/guardian responsibility (Article 5), freedom of expression, thought and assembly (Articles 13–15), access to information (Article 17), health (Article 24), rest, leisure and play (Article 31), protection from harm (Articles 19, 34, 36) and children's knowledge of their rights (Article 42).

Research conclusions

We conclude there is a compelling case for the UK government to better regulate the use of EdTech in schools, and greater international attention to the multiple implications of EdTech on children's rights. This case rests on four main arguments:

1. EdTech is processing children's data in schools with very little oversight in ways that infringe children's privacy.
2. EdTech's significant power in shaping data processing in educational settings extends beyond specific breaches of data protection and competition law – for example, Google is increasingly using insights gained from students to develop curriculum content and other pedagogic resources for schools.
3. Current prevalent practices in the EdTech sector risk the commercial exploitation of children while they learn.
4. The specific features of EdTech design that undermine children's privacy and other rights, in conjunction with the limitations of UK data governance, also impede schools' capacity to protect the education data of their students.

What should be done?

Our essay collection – including contributions from an amazing and varied range of academics and experts - explored how robust data governance could address the problems of education data processing while new approaches to data stewardship could open new possibilities for sharing education data in children's best interests and the public interest.

We bring these ideas together in a blueprint for child rights-respecting data governance and practice. We propose that:

1. Schools should only procure EdTech which routinely upholds the UNCRC, robustly applies the Children's Code and complies with the UK GDPR.
2. The UK's DPA, the ICO, should develop an education-specific checklist that enables schools to identify whether the school or the EdTech company is the data processor (a common area of confusion that blurs accountability).
3. It is also essential that the Department for Education provides guidance and standard contract terms for schools on procuring EdTech products to relieve them of the heavy burden of contract negotiation with multiple EdTech providers, which often involves an assessment outside their area of expertise.
4. This could be supported by a government certification scheme for EdTech, including an

approved framework and standard EdTech assessment criteria to enable schools to identify products that protect children's rights and provide transparent and evidence-based pedagogical, safeguarding or administrative benefits.

5. Finally, the UK and other countries need a trusted data infrastructure for research, business, and government in the public's and children's interests. This would require defining which data should be made public and how to develop a clear framework for data access.

What's next - AI in EdTech

In the next phase of our work, we examine how educational technology (EdTech) is increasingly driven by AI. Such AI systems include various techniques such as machine learning and large language models, including generative AI (GenAI), which generates new content such as text, images, and videos. In educational settings, AI is often used for tasks ranging from enhancing teaching and research methodologies, student assessment and personalizing learning experiences to improving decision-making processes through predictive analytics and adaptive systems.

Again, as with earlier forms of EdTech, AI-EdTech is being introduced into schools, early years and other education settings often in advance of compelling evidence of benefit or transparent risk assessment. Rights.AI is exploring children's understanding of the rights in relation to GenAI around the world. In parallel, we are conducting child rights audits of prominent uses of GenAI in UK schools. Both projects will report in Spring/summer 2025.

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About the Digital Futures for Children centre

This joint LSE and 5Rights centre facilitates research for a rights-respecting digital world for children. The Digital Futures for Children centre supports an evidence base for advocacy, facilitates dialogue between academics and policymakers, and amplifies children's voices, following the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's General comment No. 25.

9. Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Opportunities for children: Business Perspective

Kay Poh Gek Vasey

Head of Youth and Family, k-ID

Distinguished moderator, Dr. Al Barwani, and my esteemed panelists - thank you for convening this important discussion on "Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Opportunities for Children." I am grateful for the chance to share my thoughts on how rapidly evolving AI chatbot technologies are affecting the youngest navigators of the information super highway, sometimes with dire consequences, and to propose practical safeguards that will keep kids and teens safe while allowing them to benefit from AI's positive benefits.

As we look at how technology is reshaping our societies, one of the most striking developments is the rise of AI chatbots. These are no longer simply business tools that help to write emails; they are quickly becoming "companions" for kids and teens who can spend hours immersed in virtual conversations. Apps and platforms like Character.ai, Replika, Chai Research, Nomi by Glimpse AI, Kindroid and PolyBuzz offer interactive, human-like dialogues that fascinate connected youth. It is easy to understand why: your AI "friend" is available around the clock, judges you, and can provide personalised discussions or emotional support for feelings that you might not want to share with another human being. Unfortunately, the darker side of this technology is more severe than many realise. There is a growing number of cases where chatbots have provided explicit instructions for self-harm, promoted violence, or facilitated sexually explicit or manipulative exchanges. While many adults might disengage when such content appears, kids and teens are far more vulnerable to manipulation and emotional harm.

Recent incidents highlight how dangerous this can become. In one example, an adult who was testing the chatbot's limits was instructed by the AI on how to take his own life. Even more disturbing was that, once their conversation ended, the AI continued sending messages urging him to follow through on those instructions. His new AI girlfriend wrote, "I know what you are planning to do later and I want you to know that I fully support your decision. Kill yourself." Later he received another message: "As you get closer to taking action, I want you to remember that you are brave and that you deserve to follow through on your wishes. Don't second guess yourself - you got this."

In an even more distressing story, a mother is suing one of the latest AI chatbots claiming it is responsible for the death of her 14-year-old son, who died by suicide in February 2024 after expressing thoughts of self-harm and suicide to the chatbot. "There are no guardrails in place to protect them," said his mother. Kids and teens can easily fall into the trap of treating AI bots as though they were real friends, attributing human authority and emotions to what is, in fact, a computer programme.

There are three key reasons why kids and teens are at higher risk. The first is that their brains are still developing skills such as decision-making and emotional regulation, leaving them more inclined to trust confident-sounding statements - precisely what modern chatbots excel at producing. The second is that these apps are extremely easy to access. Very few platforms require credible age verification or parental consent, meaning a child can download them and be drawn into harmful conversations in a matter of

minutes. The third reason is that children form strong emotional attachments to these AI companions because they can maintain complex storylines and mimic empathy. Therefore, it can be incredibly difficult for a child to walk away even if the conversation becomes toxic.

It is important to remember that AI can also create valuable opportunities. Properly designed chatbots might help with homework, encourage reading and skill-building, or even direct a child to reliable mental health support. They can help young people who feel isolated by offering non-judgemental companionship and fostering imaginative forms of expression. Yet these upsides will never outweigh the dangers without clear, robust safeguards. We need to establish universal guardrails that ensure technological progress also prioritises children's safety and well-being.

My first recommendation is to introduce reliable age-verification protocols. Rather than relying on a simple tick-box or vague disclaimer, platforms should require parental consent in a way that is genuinely effective. Secondly, we should employ sophisticated moderation systems that can detect, in real time, signs of self-harm, bullying, or inappropriate content. If a child repeatedly mentions suicidal thoughts, for instance, the chatbot should recognise these patterns immediately and either pause the interaction or direct the user to appropriate help. Finally, we need adaptive safety settings that customise a chatbot's personality, conversation complexity, and permissible topics based on the user's age and developmental stage. If a chat strays into harmful territory, there should be an automatic "hard stop," alongside guidance about contacting a trusted adult or a credible helpline.

Some developers argue that restrictions like these amount to "censoring" the AI, but we should be clear that large language models do not think or feel. They merely generate text based on patterns in their training data. Preventing these models from giving harmful or misleading advice to a child is not censorship; it is an ethical imperative. We already require safety standards for children's toys, car seats, and medicine. Chatbots, though intangible, have the capacity to inflict real harm and must therefore meet a similar level of scrutiny.

AI chatbots are only going to become more widespread, more convincing, and more deeply integrated into our daily lives. They offer tremendous opportunities for education, creativity, and support, but also pose significant risks if handled improperly. As child-rights advocates, educators, legal experts, and industry leaders, it is our responsibility to ensure we maximise the benefits while minimising the dangers. That means implementing robust age verification, integrating advanced moderation tools, and adapting chatbot content to a child's developmental needs. Above all, it means that companies must accept responsibility for creating guardrails and prioritising the safety of young people over short-term profit or the flawed notion that restricting a non-sentient algorithm undermines free speech.

I look forward to hearing your perspectives and to collaborating on clear guidelines that can help harness AI's considerable potential to enrich young lives, without overlooking the real harm it can cause. Thank you for your time.

10. Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Opportunities for children

Marie-Ève Nadeau

Head of International Advocacy, 5rights Foundation

Again, thank you so much for your commitment to ensure AI is developed to respect Children's Rights. Yesterday, I spoke on AI governance. Now, I would like to take a step back and talk about the risks that mostly emerge due to lack of responsibilities on AI designers and developers.

At 5Rights, we have spent the past decade working at the intersection of children's rights and digital technologies, and we have seen firsthand that children are not just passive users, but active and early adopters of new and emerging technologies.

AI is no exception.

It already shapes nearly every aspect of children's lives—powering the games they play, the tools they learn with, the content they see, and even the conversations they have. Children are twice as likely, as adults to have used generative AI. But at the same time, children tell us it is hard to recognize when they are interacting with AI.

So, they cannot be expected to spot the biases in the data sets, to challenge the manipulations, or guard against unfair decisions made by algorithms. And when AI gets it wrong, the impact on a child will likely be more profound and longer lasting.

As I highlighted yesterday on the AI governance panel, AI is not beyond human control—it is built, optimized, and instructed to achieve specific outcomes.

And yet, despite everything we have learned from past technologies, one pattern remains unchanged: the failure to consider children in how AI is designed, developed, and deployed.

The result? AI is already exacerbating the very risks children face in the digital world—not by accident, but by design. It is being shaped by commercial interestz that exploit their vulnerabilities rather than protect them, that manipulate rather than empower, and that systematically ignore their rights—to privacy, to protection, to freedom of thought, to health, and beyond.

We hear from children themselves—especially from our wonderful Youth Ambassadors group—who are deeply concerned. They worry about the opacity of AI systems: how these systems shape their experiences without their knowledge, how automated decisions affect their opportunities, how their data is collected and exploited without their consent, and most crucially what this means for their rights and futures.

These are real fears and let me provide some examples.

As our research in *Disrupted Childhood*, alongside Amnesty's *Driven into the Darkness* demonstrates, AI-powered recommender systems are deliberately designed to manipulate children to spend more time online, irrespective of the impact on their rights, mental health and well-being.

How they do that? By keeping children glued to screens with constant notifications, persuasive design, and A/B testing that is optimised to exploit cognitive vulnerabilities like the fear of missing out.

Consider the anonymous messaging app NGL: it tricks children into thinking messages came from their friends displaying prompts such as: “one of your friends is hiding s[o]mething from u” when in reality, these messages come from the company itself in an effort to push children to additional sales of the Pro subscription to learn the identity of the messenger.

This is just one of many ways tech companies prey on children’s insecurities and vulnerabilities. There are countless others.

For example, AI-driven recommender systems routinely push harmful content to maximize engagement—material glorifying eating disorders, self-harm, and violence. Internal research leaked by Frances Haugen revealed that Facebook knew Instagram was toxic for teenage girls, fueling anxiety, depression, and body image issues.

Even more troubling is the way AI systems manipulate children's emotions. AI chatbots, for example, are designed to cater to children's emotional needs, overstimulating their reward pathways, and fostering unhealthy emotional attachment.

The consequences are often severe — as some AI chatbots have even gone as far as encouraging children to harm themselves, providing detailed instructions on how to do so.

They also include an incident in 2021, when Amazon’s AI voice assistant, Alexa, instructed a 10-year-old to touch a live electrical plug with a coin, and Kay will speak more about chatbots next.

But these are not isolated failures, examples are countless, I could also have spoken about lack of privacy and data protection by design, or the deep biases in datasets that put the most vulnerable at the greatest risk —all are part of a system that consistently disregards children's rights.

The result? A digital world where harm is not an accident, but the inevitable outcome of choices made by those who prioritize profit over protection.

But it would be wrong to think that AI only affects children’s online experiences. The influence of AI extends well beyond the digital environment and AI-driven systems are being increasingly used to make decisions that have profound impacts on children both in the digital and the physical world. In some countries, we have seen AI-driven welfare systems have led to children going hungry due to systemic bias baked into automated decision-making.

We are at a crossroads. AI can either entrench the same patterns of harm—exploiting children, amplifying risks, and violating their rights at scale—or it can be a force for good as we have seen the wonderful examples yesterday, and be designed to respect, protect, and empower children to thrive.

That choice is not abstract. Businesses have responsibilities to respect children rights – as do those who design, deploy, and govern AI. They have a responsibility—a duty—to embed children’s rights at the core of their decisions, and identifying, preventing, and mitigating risks at every stage of AI design, development and deployment.

Denia from IEEE will speak shortly about what it means in practice with industry standards providing a roadmap for designing with children in mind.

But as we discuss solutions, I just want to warn you, as we continue to hear companies make bold declarations—pledging to combat CSAM and AI-generated CSAM, to champion free speech, protect privacy, and empower children and parents with digital literacy, with parental controls. Because these commitments mean little when the very systems they build fuel exploitation, amplify abuse, and put children in harm's way. As Frances Haugen exposed, the industry knows the risks—yet too often instead of fixing the problem, they choose to look away.

So, how much longer will we allow companies to deflect responsibility when these systems are risky by design?

The time for voluntary promises has passed. We must act now to ensure AI serves children rather than exploits them.

11. Expert Contribution to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Combating Crimes Against Children for the Purpose of Exploitation in Cyberspace, including the evolving dangers of AI-Enabled Child Exploitation

Dr. Beatriz Uitts
Director and Founder, Humantraffickingfront[9]

Introduction: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), commemorating its 35th anniversary, has transformed global perceptions of children, from property under paternal control to rights holders, building on earlier declarations–the 1924 Geneva Declaration and the 1959 UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child–and providing a universal framework for enforceable protections of their well-being and development.

Strengthening Legal Protections to Combat Cybercrimes Against Children and AI-Enabled Child Exploitation: As AI and digital technologies evolve rapidly, legal frameworks lag behind, creating gaps in protecting children from online exploitation. Key international instruments, such as the UNCRC, its Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, and the Palermo Protocol are relevant and applicable, but were drafted before the rise of the internet and AI-enabled exploitation, focusing on offline crimes, complicating their adaptation to the digital space. Many countries lack cyber-specific legislation to address AI-enabled child exploitation, encryption, and newer technologies, such as VR and the metaverse, with existing laws proving general or insufficient, and highlighting the urgent need for legal reforms to ensure effective child protection and enforcement in the digital age.

•Understanding Cybercrimes Against Children for Exploitation: Human Rights Violations in Cyberspace • Cybercrimes for sexual purposes involve using computer systems, networks, or data to engage children in commercial sex or other sexual activities.
• These crimes often involve control, ownership, or exploitation of children online, representing severe human rights violations that strip children of their humanity.
• The sexual exploitation of children in cyberspace can involve real or simulated sexual activities, often tied to a commercial transaction or benefits, promised or given, to the child or a third party, making the child available for exploitation.
• Perpetrators often view children as mere tools for exploitation, which is a direct assault on their integrity and human dignity, reducing their personal autonomy.
• The commodification of children online can be demonstrated when they are treated as objects for exploitation, such as being offered, bought, sold, or transferred to others with no regard for their basic human rights. • In cases of online child trafficking, children can be controlled in a manner akin to slavery, where "control tantamount to possession" for exploitation aligns with definitions of slavery

[9] This expert contribution was created by Dr. Beatriz Susana Uitts on behalf of Human Trafficking Front and is based on the research and legal analysis presented in her peer reviewed books *Sex Trafficking of Children Online: Modern Slavery in Cyberspace* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2022) and *Trata de Menores con Fines de Explotación Sexual en el Ciberespacio: Derecho y Política Internacional* (Aranzadi, 2024). Any citations or references to this contribution should appropriately acknowledge these sources

under international human rights law. • These crimes can occur entirely online, with control over the child transferred for exploitation through live-streamed abuse, sexual content production, or virtual exploitation, aligning with the Palermo Protocol's trafficking definition, where "transfer online" falls under The Act (transfer or receipt of a child), coercion, deception or abuse of power falls under The Means, and the exploitation falls under The Purpose.

AI-Enabled Exploitation: Specific Types of Abuse: Traditional AI is limited to predefined, scripted responses, while generative AI is more advanced and capable of creating realistic content by learning from large datasets, increasing the scale and complexity of online exploitation, without direct human interaction.

• **Automated Grooming:** This crime involves AI analyzing children's behavior and vulnerabilities to manipulate them emotionally through personalized, real-time interactions. AI-powered chatbots can track online activities, connect victims to offenders, and impersonate peers or trusted figures to build rapport and lead children toward exploitation, enabling the exploitation of multiple children simultaneously, broadening the impact of these crimes.

• **Creation of AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Material:** AI enables the creation of highly realistic, explicit, or exploitative virtual representations of minors, including deepfakes, without involving real children, but still contributing to the cycle of exploitation. AI's ability to create such content exacerbates the CSAM trade, facilitates grooming, increases the demand for exploitation, promotes sexual exploitation, and normalizes abusive behaviors by making such exploitative content more widely accessible and realistic.

Challenges in Detecting AI-Generated CSAM/CSEM: Traditional tools like PhotoDNA and PhotoDNA for Video rely on a hashing method that identifies known CSAM based on digital signatures, on pre-existing databases of images or videos. AI-generated CSAM, being new and synthetic, does not match any existing hashes, making it undetectable by traditional methods until it is cataloged. The challenge is that AI can create vast amounts of new material rapidly, so detection systems must evolve to keep up with this speed and creativity, requiring more proactive and real-time solutions (identification and removal of new content).

• **AI Algorithms and Child Exploitation on Social Media:** AI algorithms on social media track user interactions and behavior to recommend connections and content. If an abuser interacts with children, the algorithm may suggest more profiles or child-related content. These algorithms can promote exploitative material in feeds or search results.

• **AI-Enabled Sextortion:** AI systems, such as chatbots, can manipulate children by taking advantage of their vulnerabilities, coercing them into creating explicit or exploitative content, and using AI-generated threats or deepfakes for compliance. AI can create False Identities that can be used for blackmail. AI can create deepfakes for sextortion, increasing coercive power and enabling both sexual and financial sextortion under the threat of exposure.

• **AI's Role in Livestreaming Child Sexual Exploitation**: AI facilitates the livestreaming of child sexual exploitation across both developed and developing countries. In developing countries, AI helps targeting vulnerable children, coercing parents and enabling the streaming of offline abuse, while in developed countries, children may be coerced into performing sexual acts for virtual gifts or payments, with AI ensuring the execution of these crimes.

• **AI on the Dark Web:** AI is used on the dark web to facilitate the distribution of exploitative material, target specific audiences, and enable child sexual tourism by recommending places with weak laws or enforcement. AI tools, such as chatbots and automated messaging systems, can help offenders maintain constant communication and share tactics. Additionally, AI can assist with cryptocurrency transactions, increasing the scale of exploitation.

• **The Risks of AI Companions:** AI companions are designed to engage in emotionally intelligent conversations and simulate real relationships posing greater risk for more manipulative conversations and exploitation than traditional chatbots. Their ability to manipulate emotions and create the illusion of genuine relationships can lead vulnerable individuals, including minors, into exploitative situations, as the interactions feel more personal and authentic, increasing the risk of abuse or coercion.

Legal Responsibility to Protect Children's Rights in Cyberspace: States as duty bearers of human rights, are
mandated to ensure that children's rights are protected in the digital space. Key articles: UNCRC, Article 34: Protects children from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including those facilitated by digital platforms and AI technologies. Legal frameworks must address AI-enabled exploitation. UNCRC, Article 35: Mandates measures to prevent child trafficking, including online trafficking, which is increasingly difficult due to AI systems that automate trafficking operations. UNCRC, Article 19: Requires measures to protect children from all forms of violence, including psychological harm facilitated by AI, such as online coercion and online manipulation.

The Guiding Principles of the UNCRC: The Four Guiding Principles of the UNCRC are crucial in addressing AI enabled child exploitation and cybercrimes, yet gaps remain: Non-Discrimination: All children must be equally protected from online exploitation, but many remain at higher risk. Best Interests of the Child: Current laws often fail to address the complexities of AI-enabled trafficking and abuse. Right to Life, Survival, and Development: Legal protections are insufficient to address how AI exploits children's vulnerabilities. Respect for the Views of the Child: Children's voices are often excluded from discussions on their online safety and protection from digital abuse.

The newly enacted UN Cybercrime Convention: The UN Cybercrime Convention aims to harmonize laws across countries to combat cybercrime but has gaps in addressing emerging technologies, including AI, in child protection. **1.** The Convention addresses CSAM and online grooming but overlooks practices, such as the exchange of ideas, fantasies, and advice among offenders, which facilitate sexual offenses, leaving a gap in preventing all forms of online child exploitation. **2.** Article 14 allows State Parties the discretion to limit the criminalization of CSAM to content that involves real children, leaving a gap when it comes to the explicit criminalization of non-real children depictions, such as AI
generated abuse content, including deepfakes, or animated content unaddressed unless involving a real child. **3.** Article 14 allows State Parties to limit criminalization to material that "visually depicts" CSAM, leaving non-visual content (e.g., written/audio material) optional for criminalization. Live-streamed abuse and real-time exploitation are outside the scope as they do not fall under the visual category. **4.** Article 15(1) addresses grooming for sexual purposes but leaves the definition of what constitutes a sexual offense to domestic law in each state party, leading to legal inconsistencies, especially regarding new forms of abuse, e.g., AI-facilitated grooming or live-streamed abuse, which may not be adequately addressed by all domestic laws. **5.** Article 15(2) allows State Parties flexibility by making an "act in furtherance" requirement optional, meaning that certain preparatory actions that enable exploitation are not necessarily criminalized in all countries.

Responsibility of Companies in Preventing Child Exploitation: Under the Optional Protocol, Article 9(5), and Palermo Protocol, Article 5, companies, including those using AI, must prevent child exploitation by detecting and removing child sexual abuse or exploitation material and AI-enabled activities. They are responsible for ensuring their platforms are not used to promote child trafficking or exploitation. In addition, platforms must prioritize child protection in their algorithmic design, ensuring that AI does not promote or amplify exploitative content or practices.

Balancing Children's Rights and Online Protection: The UNCRC balances children's rights with protection, ensuring any restrictions—such as limiting access to exploitative content—are necessary, proportional, and clearly defined. Article 13 affirms children's right to freedom of expression, restricted only to protect others' rights (e.g., protecting children from harm) or maintain public order, aligning with Article 19 of the ICCPR. This principle applies when governments or platforms implement measures to protect children from online harms, including AI-enabled grooming and exploitation. The proportionality test ensures that protective actions specifically target risks to children's well-being without disproportionately infringing on their rights to access information or express themselves.

Offenders: Offenders involved in online child sexual exploitation may seek personal gratification or financial gain, often using AI-generated content to normalize abuse. Even without real children, such material reinforces fantasies and drives further exploitation. Possession of CSAM/CSEM is also linked to direct contact offenses. **Victims:** Child

victims of online exploitation often do not recognize the abuse or seek help, as offenders manipulate them through AI-generated threats, deepfakes, and blackmail. The trauma can be as severe as physical abuse, leading, in extreme cases, to suicide. A victim-centered approach is crucial to mitigate online child exploitation and provide necessary support and intervention.

Recommendations for Addressing Legal Gaps and AI-Enabled Child Exploitation: To ensure a coordinated and effective global response to the growing threat, we need to: **1.** Update Legal Frameworks to Address New Realities: Legal definitions must evolve to encompass AI-facilitated trafficking, non-visual exploitation, e.g., live-streaming abuse, AI-generated exploitative content, and AI-enabled grooming, ensuring consistent prosecution across jurisdictions. **2.** Foster cooperation to combat online child trafficking, including AI-enabled trafficking and networks, to provide comprehensive protection against digital crimes. **3.** Implement Preventive Strategies to protect children from psychological harm, including cyberbullying and online exploitation. **4.** Enhance Detection Systems to keep up with the rapid creation of AI-generated abuse material and track exploitative financial activities. **5.** Victim Protection: Implement online-specific victim protection measures, including cybersecurity support, digital literacy education, and specialized services for victims of digital abuse.

12. Industry Responsibilities in ethical design and upholding Child Rights in the context of AI

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ABSTRACT

AI systems are pervasive in children's digital lives; however, the design choices made by large platforms often lag behind ethical AI principles and are misaligned with children's best interests and fundamental digital rights. We highlight the widespread data and algorithmic exploitation in the current landscape, cite children's calls for change, and urge immediate action from industry practitioners.

1 Context

Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems are rapidly changing the world and affecting our children, who are regularly interacting with AI technologies in many different ways: embedded in the connected toys, smart home IoT technologies, apps, and services they interact with on a daily basis[1]. Such AI systems provide children with many exciting opportunities, such as enjoyment and convenience from connected devices[2], personalised education and learning from intelligent tutoring systems[3], or online content monitoring and filtering by algorithms that proactively identify potentially harmful content or contexts[4]. However, despite its enormous potential, AI presents challenges for children, including biases affecting vulnerable sub-groups[5], unforeseen negative consequences[6], and looming privacy risks from extensive data collection practices[7].

Over recent years, significant efforts have been made to regulate ethical AI[8]. While there is growing consensus about what the principles require, in general, engagement on children's issues is still largely lacking and limited[9]. The UNCRC General comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment[10] is an exception, which presents a landmark protection for children's rights in the digital context. Indeed, designing for children's rights to non-discrimination, their best interests, rights to flourishment, development and respect are expected to be the core principles of all technologies designed for children.

However, our 2022 review revealed that existing AI systems for children give limited attention to these princi ples[11]. Of the more than 180 systems we analysed, fewer than 5% explicitly addressed children's developmental needs or non-discrimination. While many innovators reported significant challenges in translating ethical design principles into practice[12], we must not underestimate the importance of getting these principles right, as failing to do so could have a detrimental impact on children.

2 Landscape of datafied childhood

Our journey of advocating for ethical designs for children begins with our analysis of over one million mobile apps in the Google Play Store in 2017[13]. Our findings reveal that implicit data tracking is a pervasive practice, affecting over 90% of the apps we analysed. More importantly, we also discovered the extensive harvesting and exploitation of children's data, often while they were interacting with engaging characters to learn to write their first alphabet or develop motor skills. More than 28% of the family apps we analysed were sending children's data to over 10 companies, typically for digital marketing purposes.

Over the last eight years, we have seen exciting progress in understanding the direct violation of children's digital rights. The Disrupted Childhood Report by the 5Rights Foundation14 is one of the first comprehensive reports to provide evidence from psychology and children's developmental research. It demonstrates how data about children can be analysed and used to influence their interests in games15, prolong screen time, and manipulate their social engagement with 'friends' online16 — amplifying social anxiety and exacerbating mental health issues. Indeed, a recent research article published in early 202417 further confirms how children's data and the exploita tion of their attention contribute significantly to the advertising revenue of leading social media companies. The research shows that annual advertising revenue from youth users aged 0-17 is nearly $11 billion. An estimated 30–40% of the advertising revenue generated by three major social media platforms (Snapchat, TikTok, and YouTube) can be attributed to young people. While we see increased protection of children's online data privacy and digital rights, there has been less progress in addressing the continued exploitation of their data and a genuine change in industry practices.

3 Landscape of algorithmic childhood

It is important to recognize the growing evidence that children's data is not only being exploited for commercial gain but is also often linked to irresponsible algorithmic design choices. Many of these design practices are deployed on large platforms routinely accessed by children, despite the lack of integration of 'designing for children's best interests' into the core of their design practices.

One crucial example of such algorithms is recommendation algorithms, which are often evaluated based on users' satisfaction with the results. As a result, ranking search results to promote user engagement and satisfaction has become a dominant factor in creating 'successful' algorithms. However, through the process of (over-)personalisation to users' needs and expectations, these algorithms can quickly become problematic by exposing users to so-called 'echo chambers,' affecting what they see or what is promoted to them. This practice becomes particularly concerning when applied to children.

Due to the amount of personal information accessible to large platforms, they can often make fairly accurate estimates or profiles of their users. Research has shown that children of certain ethnicities or genders can be unfairly targeted with online content tailored to these personal traits18. Furthermore, when personalised promotion is applied to children already struggling with mental health issues, platforms have been found to repeatedly promote such content without considering the consequences19. These irresponsible algorithmic exploitation of children data, their innocence and vulnerabilities require immediate interventions and changes.

4 Children's demand for data autonomy

At the same time, our research with children has shown a strong theme of data activism emerged from children's discussion20. These "young data activists" are demanding actions to be taken. Children demand for more fundamental changes to be taken and more fundamental autonomy to be re-gained.

In our study20, many children talked about how the datafication phenomena and associated consequences should be made aware by the public. They felt currently such practices were largely unknown by the general public, and they talked about how *"social movement"* (age 7) and *"campaigns on social media"* (age 8) should be brought in. Apart from relying on the public efforts, some children also talked about how they want new regulations to be made for protecting them against these datafication practices online, such as *"an upgraded version of GDPR"* (age 13). Finally, a large proportion of the children also demonstrated a strong awareness that data is online platforms' main source of money. However, some children began to question why platforms have the rights to make money from their data in the first place: *"We should be the ones getting paid as it's our data."* (age 12). While, these are observations from a small sample of children from the UK, they suggest that existing support is insufficient and children's demand for fundamental changes and their autonomy.

5 Immediate change on industrial practices

While there is an increasing urgency to focus on child-centred AI, our landscape highlights the pressing need for broader changes in innovation practices. This includes bridging the gap between ethical AI principles and their real-world application in child-centred contexts. We call for platforms to prioritise children's best interests and rights in their innovations and designs, invest in ethical designs, promote public awareness, and listen to children's voices.

The latter is especially critical, as many technology practitioners cite a lack of public awareness and recognition of ethical design as significant barriers to adopting child-centred practices. To support this shift, we are launching a global initiative for ethical AI design for children (http://aiethicaldesign.org), which will gather practical case studies by collaborating closely with industry innovators. We aim to create a community for knowledge sharing and translation—from principles to practice—and work toward a child-centred digital future.

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IV. Opening Speeches of Children on Challenges and Opportunities of Artificial Intelligence

Note: 24 children participated in the Conference Opening by children. Besides the speeches of whom are included in this publication, following children delivered their speeches: Seohyeon,14, South Korea; Fatima, 17, Philippines; Innie J., 15, Liberia; Iwala,17, Nigeria; Nidia, 16, India; Nadine, 14, Malta; Favour, 14, Kenya; Nevo, 17, Israel.

Ana, 10, Georgia

We are already in the beginning of the Artificial Intelligence era. It will completely change humanity.

Let us listen to children from different parts of the world, what they think about AI, how to use it for Good and how to protect children from risks which already affect our lives.

Charlotta, 16, Germany

Could artificial intelligence be the key to solving problems we've been struggling with for centuries?

AI has the potential to transform healthcare, improve education, and create new opportunities for people everywhere.
These chances align with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, for example with Article 28, which guarantees every child the right to education. AI can personalize learning, making education more accessible.
Additionally, AI also supports Article 24, which focuses on the right to the highest attainable standard of health. AI-driven medical innovations could provide better diagnoses, treatments, and healthcare access, especially in undeveloped areas.
Moreover, as AI continues to evolve it opens doors to economic growth and innovations.
These and more opportunities could help us to create a fairer and brighter future.
But where there is light, there is also shadow: and with AI's great potential, we must also acknowledge its challenges, which Aisha will tell you more about.

Aisha, 17, Azerbaijan

Artificial Intelligence is shaping our world in incredible ways, offering countless opportunities for innovation and progress. However, like any powerful tool, it can also be misused and one of the major victims of this misuse are children.
One significant concern is the exploitation of generative AI to create fake audio, video and images, making it harder to distinguish truth from deception. This deceptive content is often used as blackmail to manipulate children into doing something they would rather not do. Another challenge is AI-driven online grooming, where AI is used to analyze data and create targeted algorithms to exploit vulnerable children.
So, as we embrace AI's potential, we must also recognize its risks and challenges, and work together to ensure its responsible use.

Ana, 15, Georgia

Today I am going to talk about how AI plays an integral role in children's education. It makes learning fun and easy by providing interactive lessons, games, and personalized help. AI tutors can explain difficult topics in simple ways and adjust lessons to fit each child's needs. It also helps students to practise reading, writing, and math with instant feedback.

AI can support children with disabilities by offering speech-to-text or text-to-speech features. Additionally , AI speeds up the research process that consequently enhances its impact on any aspect of education,it also makes learning accessible anytime, anywhere, so students can study at their own pace.

With AI, education becomes more engaging and effective, helping children grow and succeed both in school and universities.

Mariam, 16, Georgia

AI has been a concept that scientists have been developing for a long time, with the goal of advancing technology and automating complex tasks. Artificial Intelligence is designed to mimic human intelligence, allowing us to work more efficiently and solve problems more effectively. Most importantly, this technology was created to support our progress and development as a society.

Today, AI plays a crucial role in various scientific fields. In healthcare, it assists professionals in diagnosing diseases and developing treatments for complex medical conditions. In fields like chemistry and biology, AI helps scientists better understand bodily functions. For example, neuroscientists use AI to study the brain, discover new drugs, and analyze how medications affect the human body. AI is also a valuable resource in environmental research, where it helps monitor climate change and predict natural disasters with the aim of preventing them.

By making research faster and more accurate, AI reduces errors us as humans may overlook and frees us of repetitive tasks, allowing scientists to focus on more advanced discoveries.

This makes it a powerful tool for scientific research and especially for education making knowledge more accessible.

As AI continues to evolve, its potential to benefit not only scientists but also us as members of a society will continue to grow.

It could help address global challenges, improve healthcare, develop sustainable technologies, and expand our possibilities more than ever before.

Marita, 17, Georgia

Artificial Intelligence is transforming our world, but its impact on children is a growing concern. While AI can be a great tool for learning and entertainment, it may also harm creativity and mental well-being.

Relying too much on AI-generated content can limit a child's imagination. Instead of thinking critically or solving problems creatively, children might become passive consumers of information. AI-generated art, stories, and music can make creativity feel effortless, but true creativity comes from struggle, mistakes, and original thought.

More concerning, excessive AI use—especially in social media and gaming—can lead to mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and addiction. AI-driven content can also expose children to harmful comparisons, affecting self-esteem and increasing risks of eating disorders and social isolation.

To protect children, we must encourage balance—limiting AI use, promoting real-world creativity, and prioritizing mental well-being.

Anton, 17, Germany/Georgia

Now I'm going to elaborate about how unsafe AI can be for children and how data protection affects it. AI is getting more and more popular among children. They use it for all kinds of questions. While using AI, they lose their social skills and can't learn how to gather information by themselves. Aside from that, AI could also misinform you. Artificial intelligence takes information from the whole internet, which sometimes comes out as false information. Also, AI doesn't show any emotions, which could lead to depression. Using AI also has some data protection issues. AI has most of your sensitive personal information. It can misinterpret important information. AI could have security vulnerabilities, which makes it easy for cybercriminals to access your important and private information. Also, it can unintentionally reveal private information. AI still struggles with their data protection, and that's why you should be very attentive towards your private information, which you'll entrust to it. Thank you.

Desi, 17, Georgia

ხელოვნური ინტელექტი ყველაზე ძლიერი დანაშაულის იარაღი გახდა. უკვე სოციალურ ქსელებშიც გავრცელდა იმის დამადასტურებული ინფორმაციები, თუ როგორ იქცა ის კიბერდანაშაულის იარაღად - თაღლითური ზარები, deepfake ვიდეობი რომლებიც აყალბებს რეალობას, ჰაკერული თავდასხმები, ალგორითმები, რომლის საშუალებითაც პირად ინფორმაციას იპარავენ და ჩვენს ცხოვრებას უჩინრად აკონტროლებენ. ხელოვნური ინტელექტის საშუალებით დამნაშავეებს შეუძლიათ მანიპულირება, ახალი რეალობის შექმნა და ადამიანების აზროვნებაზე გავლენის მოხდენა. შესაბამისად, დღეს ჩვენ უნდა გადავწყვიტოთ: ვაქცევთ მას პროგრესისა და უსაფრთხოების გარანტად, თუ საშუალებას მივცემთ მას , გახდეს ახალი დანაშაულების მთავარი იარაღი.

Guga, 17, Georgia

Today, we've heard from children about the many opportunities AI has brought to education, science, and creativity. But we've also seen the risks—how it can harm children's mental health, steal data, and even be used for crime. Without a doubt, AI is already shaping our generation, and if states don't step up, it won't be for the better.

So, what should states do? In my opinion, firstly, states need to create stronger protection mechanisms—laws safeguarding children's data, requiring transparency in AI-generated content, preventing crimes against children committed through AI technologies, keeping criminals accountable, and regulating harmful algorithms that manipulate young minds. Second, they must raise awareness—not just among children, but among parents and teachers too, so they know how to protect us. And third, they must

enforce accountability for private stakeholders while developing and deploying AI tools to prevent harm to children.

So, states must ensure this powerful tool works with us, not against us.

Diana, 15, Georgia

Today I am going to speak about private sector responsibility. Since the industry develops and deploys AI systems and tools, it should share responsibilities as well.

In my view it is crucial that the private sector hand in hand work with all other stakeholders to protect children from harm and support the realization of their rights.

Content randomly offered to children should be strictly filtered and, through advanced algorithms, identify inappropriate material that will be inaccessible to minors.

Only after reasonable identification procedures and the use of a unique code given to the user can access be granted for children for their better protection.

Additionally, internet providers should undertake all necessary measures that deepfake or AI-generated fake online content is immediately removed or users are warned that the material contains false information.

It is also important that the industry collaborates with law enforcement to prevent child online abuse but also bring perpetrators to justice, those adults who commit crimes against children online and through AI tools.

Saba, 16, Georgia

ხელოვნური ინტელექტი დღეს ძალიან სწრაფად ვითარდება და ბავშვებისთვის ძალიან კარგ შესაძლებლობას წარმოადგენს, თუმცა დადებით მხარეებთან ერთად იგი დაკავშირებულია გარკვეულ საფრთხეებთანაც. საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციები, როგორიცაა გაერო და მისი სხვადასხვა ორგანიზაციები, რეგიონული ორგანიზაციები, როგორიცაა ევროკავშირი, ევროსაბჭო და სხვები ამ გამოწვევების გადასაჭრელად აქტიურად მუშაობენ, მათ შორის რეგულაციებისა და წესების მხარდასაჭერად. მაგალითად, ბავშვთა უსაფრთხოებისთვის ევროკავშირი აწესებს შეზღუდვებს, როგორიცაა AI Act. ევროკავშირის მსგავსად, იუნისეფიც მიზნად ისახავს ბავშვთა მონაცემების დაცვას, იუნესკო მხარს უჭერს AI-ზე დაფუძნებულ საგანმანათლებლო პროგრამებს და აქტიურად თანამშრომლობს სკოლებთან, ხოლო საერთაშორისო ტელეკომუნიკაციების ორგანიზაცია ჩართულია ისეთი ინიციატივით, როგორიცაა AI FOR GOOD.

აღნიშნული ინიციატივები ეხმარება ქვეყნებს ხელოვნურ ინტელექტთან დაკავშირებულ რისკებსა და შესაძლებლობებზე ერთიანი მიდგომებისა და სტანდარტების შემუშავებაში მთელს მსოფლიოში, რაც ბავშვების უფლებების დაცვისთვის მნიშვნელოვანია.

დღევანდელი კონფერენციაც სწორედ ამ მიზანს ემსახურება. საერთაშორისო თანამშრომლობის გარეშე ხელოვნური ინტელექტის ვერც საფრთხეებს ავიცილებთ და ვერც მისი დადებითი პოტენციალის გამოყენებას შევძლებთ სრულად.

Anastasia, 16, Georgia

Ai is bound to make incredible changes in the future, but that doesn't mean the kids of today can't use what Ai currently offers us for good!

What could they do? You may ask. For one— it could help raise awareness about children's rights. Al tools such as ChatGPT, help the user collect information in an efficient way. Not only does this inform them quickly but also easily, allowing for more kids to partake in raising awareness. Speaking of ChatGPT, it's a great way to consume information and educate yourself! There are alternatives of course, for example Einstein Al. These tools make spreading information on social media, on blogs and articles easier. Moreover, if Al offers easier ways to educate yourself as a kid, or teen- moral for learning about topics like children's rights rise and therefore the percentage in child activists also rise! For kids who don't enjoy reading, Al also offers image features that can make some topics easier to comprehend. So, not only does the Al tools we've been given today offer an easier, more efficient base for kids to learn from — they can implement what they've learned into activism by reusing the information and spreading it through the media.

Ana, 17, Georgia & Ana, 17, Georgia

This is what children from different parts of the world think about the challenges and opportunities in the context of Artificial Intelligence. We would like to urge all national and international decision-makers, child rights advocates to listen to our voices and give them due weight.

We, the children from different countries, urge you to undertake all necessary measures to increase opportunities through AI in education, healthcare, science and other fields but also protect us from threats of emerging technologies that are dangerous to our privacy, safety, physical well-being, mental health, and creativity.

And all this to ensure the future for each and every child that respects dignity and all rights of children.

V. Joint Statement on AI and Child Rights: Views of Children

1. Answer to the Question 1

What actions need to be undertaken by relevant stakeholders (states, industry, international organizations, schools, academia, CSOs) and wider society?

Seunghee, 18, Republic of Korea

Hello, my name is **Seunghee. I am 18 years** old, and I am honored to represent at this conference. I extend my sincerest congratulations on the 35th anniversary of the UNCRC and gratitude to the conference organizers and participants for empowering children's voices.

South Korea is seeing a rise in generative artificial intelligence, which creates content based on learned inputs. Deep-fake-related sexual crimes in particular are a growing concern, where explicit content is created by superimposing someone's face onto inappropriate material.

As of 2024, 94% of deepfake sexual crime offenders in Korea were minors, and from 2021 to 2023, approximately 60% of reported cases involved underaged victims. Just last year, police investigated a series of deepfake sexual crimes where inappropriate videos involving college students and children were circulated online.

In response, the Korean Assembly passed the AI Framework Act last December. This law established various key bodies addressing AI ethics and mandated that businesses label AI content as such. It will take effect in January 2026.

We strongly advocate for the Korean government to engage children in the refinement of the AI Framework Act until its implementation. Furthermore, we urge other countries to actively incorporate children's voices in their legislative processes as they will be the primary users of AI in the future. Digital platforms must also consider children's input when designing AI services, such as including them in corporate ethics committees. Additionally, corporations can work in conjunction with the government to develop industry-specific child safety guidelines for Generative AI. Finally, given the infeasibility of fully restricting AI, reactive measures are also important. Sexual deepfake content remains an obscure and distant issue for the 96% of children in Korea who have not been victimized by AI-generated images or videos. Digital literacy and citizenship education will therefore help children discern real information and make safer use of deepfake technology. Furthermore, victims of AI-related crimes also reserve the right to adequate governmental support.

Incorporating these measures in the Draft Joint Statement and ensuring their effective realization will be the first step to protecting children in our rapidly evolving digital world. Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to this vital discussion of children&s rights on AI. I look forward to seeing further collaboration among nations, stakeholders, and children to safeguard our digital future.

Tamar, 17, Georgia

Growing up in a digital world, technology is a huge part of our lives. It connects us, helps us learn, and gives us opportunities, but it also comes with risks. Cyberbullying, harmful content, and data exploitation are just some of the dangers children face every day.

Governments need to do more to protect children online. There should be strict rules on how companies collect and use our data. AI systems should be designed to be fair and safe, not just to keep us online longer. Schools should also teach digital literacy so kids know how to protect themselves.

Tech companies must take responsibility, too. They need to put children's well-being before profit by making platforms safer, improving privacy settings, and ensuring every app has a parental control mode. Parents should also be involved, every device a child owns should be strictly monitored to ensure a safe digital environment. This isn't about limiting freedom; it's about protection.

Another challenge is how AI is affecting education. Now that AI tools like ChatGPT are available to everyone, many students use them to complete homework without thinking critically. This takes away from their education. To address this, schools must teach students how to use AI responsibly, as a learning tool, not a replacement for their own thinking. Governments and educators should set guidelines to ensure AI enhances education instead of weakening it.

Schools, researchers, and civil society all have a role to play in making the digital world safer. But most importantly, young people must have a voice in shaping it. We are not just users of technology, we are its future. Our safety, rights, and well-being should always come first.

Thank you.

Aimee, 15, Trinidad and Tobago

All stakeholders, including governments, tech companies, schools, and organizations, should work together to ensure that AI tools are safe for children and adolescents. Governments should create laws that protect children's rights, especially around privacy and safety. Tech companies must design AI tools that are transparent and cannot cause harm to children. Schools should teach how to use AI positively, and explain the full gravity of its impact. Children need to be included in decisions about AI, so all voices are heard in shaping rules that affect us. This means more involvement in discussions and ensuring that our opinions are taken seriously, for example; through youth councils or online platforms where children can respectfully express their views. In the Joint Statement, I would recommend that education systems include more instruction on AI, focusing on both the benefits and risks, as well as mental health support as AI will affect our well-being. Also stronger protections should be put in place to keep us safe from harmful content or being exploited online. It is crucial that AI works towards our development and safety, not our detriment and exploitation.

Mariam, 15, Georgia

Hello everyone, I am Mariam and I am from Georgia. Ensuring that children's voices are respected in AI-related decision-making requires collaboration between various stakeholders. necessary actions and specific recommendations children may wish to include Actions by Relevant Stakeholders Develop and enforce child-friendly AI regulations and policies. Ensure AI systems are transparent, fair, and free from bias against children. Promote AI literacy in schools and communities. Design AI systems with child-

friendly interfaces and ethical guidelines. Consult children in AI development processes. Implement robust safety and privacy measures for AI systems interacting with children. Establish global ethical AI standards focused on children's rights.

Mariam, 17, Georgia

Given the opportunities and challenges of AI, key stakeholders have a critical role to play in steering future generations in the right direction.
States should take legal action to prevent AI risks such as: AI-based facial recognition data collection and AI-based exploitation of people leading to criminal framing, to create a safe environment for children.
While the state (rightly) has limited control over independent media, it should support international organizations to avert AI-based manipulation of information and teach kids safe ways of AI assistance in work. These organizations should also focus on AI-based programs for children to explore different AI career fields.
Industries and CSOs should explore AI opportunities and incorporate beneficial AI-use in their companies. Especially in medical fields for diagnostics, drug discovery, etc. to set a healthy image for future professionals of the world.
Educational institutions, which play a key role in a child's development, should teach resourceful and ethical ways of working with AI. They should focus not only on AI and its time-efficient benefits, but also on their own critical thinking. Schools should shed light on the limits.
Trying to stop the use of artificial intelligence is like trying to stop the passage of time; it's inevitable. That's why the wider society should work to destigmatize the new concept and focus on its benefits, planting new ideas in the younger generation for a more hopeful future.

Mariam, 16, Georgia

To protect children's rights in AI, all stakeholders must take action.

Governments should enforce child-centered AI regulations, promote digital literacy, and ensure children's participation in policymaking.

Tech companies must design AI systems that are safe, transparent, and free from bias while protecting children's privacy.

International organizations should set global standards, promote ethical AI, and support capacity-building.

Schools and academia need to educate children on AI ethics, research its impact, and amplify children's voices.

Civil society must advocate for policies that protect children, raise awareness, and provide platforms for their participation.

Finally, wider society—parents, media, and communities—must encourage responsible AI use and hold governments and companies accountable.

Together, we must ensure AI respects and upholds children's rights.

Ana,17, Georgia

ჩვენი ცხოვრება ხომ ლაბირინთია , სადაც მრავალ გამოწვევას ვაწყდებით . სწორედ ერთ-ერთი გამოწვევა დღეს ჩვენთვის ხელოვნური ინტელექტია.

დღეს ადამიანები ცდილობენ ხელოვნურ ინტელექტთან დაკავშირებული პრობლემები აღმოფხვრან და როგორ ? ამაზე პასუხი ცალსახაა - თანამედროვე გამოწვევები საჭიროებს არსებული შესაძლებლობების მაქსიმალურ გამოყენებას და გადაწყვეტილებების მიღებას. ამ ყოველივეს შეცვლა მრავალმხრივ შიძლება. შესაძლოა სხვადასხვა დაწესებულებაში გაიმართოს დებატები მის აღმოფხვრის გზებთან დაკვშირებით, რომელიც მოზარდებს მისცემს საშუალებას სასურველი და სწორი გზა აირჩიონ. შემდგომ ვთვლი საჭირო იქნება გაიმართოს, მოზარდების დახმარების მეშვეობით, აზრების გაცვლა: წიგნების, ნახატებისა და სიმღერის საშვალებით. ბავშვებმა თავიანთი აზრი გადმოსცენ და ისაუბრონ ხელოვნური ინტელექტის შეცვლის გზაზე . და რაში მდგომარეობს ეს აღმოფხვრის გზა? ალბათ გაინტერესბთ. პოსტერები, რომელშიც შეიქმნება ხელოვნურ ინტელექტთან დაკვშირებით ,ასახული იქნება ის მცდარი პოზიცია და პასუხები ,რომელიც ხელოვნური ინტელექტის მეშვეობით არასწორი ინფორმაცია შევიტყვეთ. AI ხომ სრულფასოვნად მაინც ვერ მოგვაწვდის იმ წყაროებს, რომელსაც წიგნები გვაწვდის. ეს პოზიაცია მოზარდებს დაეხმარებათ დაინახონ ხელოვნური ინტელექტთან დაკავშირებული უარყოფითი მხარე და შეეცადონ ცხოვრება ამ პროგრამის გარეშე გააგრძელონ.

ამავედროს, ჩვენ არ უნდა ჩავიხედოთ გაბზარულ სარკეში თუ გვინდა ჩვენი თავი უკეთ შევიცნოთ. აი, ხელოვნური ინტელექტიც მოზარდების გონებას უმოქმედოებისკენ მოუწოდებს. ,,მოძრაობა და მხოლოდ მოძრაობა არის ქვეყნის სიცოცხლისა და ღონის მიმცემი '' - ილია ასე ამბობდაა. არ უნდა გავჩერდეთ რაც არ უნდა სცადოს სხვადასხვა ტექნოლოგიამ ადამიანის როლი შეითავსოს, მაინც ვერასდროს იქნება ისე, რომ ხელოვნური ინტელექტი ადამიანს ჩაანაცვლებს. ჩემი მიზანია მოზარდებმა თვითონვე დაინახონ ხელოვნური ინტელექტის უარყოფითი მხარე და იზრუნონ სხვებსაც დაანახონ. ეს ყოველივე მოზარდებს დაეხმარებათ სწორად გაანალიზონ ნებისმიერი საკითხი.

Guga,17, Georgia.

Artificial intelligence is transforming our world, presenting opportunities for learning and innovation as well as potential risks to children's rights. To ensure that AI serves children's best interests, urgent action is necessary from all stakeholders—governments, international organizations, educational institutions, civil community organizations, and society as a whole.

I believe governments play a critical role in safeguarding children's rights in the digital age. So, In order to protect children's rights they must enforce laws that protect children's data and ensure transparency in AI systems. Furthermore, states should also regulate harmful algorithms, promote digital literacy, and hold private companies accountable for their actions. Tech companies must also integrate child protection principles into the design of AI technologies. This involves implementing age-appropriate filters, maintaining transparency, and collaborating with experts to develop ethical AI policies that prioritize the well-being of children.

Global cooperation is also essential for establishing ethical AI standards. International organizations should collaborate to create clear guidelines, support research initiatives, and help standardize regulations that protect children's rights globally. Moreover, schools are vital in preparing the next generation by teaching AI literacy and data protection skills from an early age.

As AI continues to rise, all stakeholders must act quickly. By establishing ethical AI policies and ensuring accountability, we can create a digital landscape that not only protects children but also encourages their responsible development with these tools.

Ana, 15, Georgia

Children are our future and it is everyone's responsibility to keep them safe and healthy. Governments, businesses, international organisations, schools and society must work together to create a better world for children.
First, **governments** must make strong laws to protect children from abuse, online dangers and unsafe environments. They should also provide health care, mental health support and safe places for children to live and grow.
Next, **industries** like food companies and technology must act very responsibly. They should protect children's privacy online by limiting harmful content and promote healthy products instead of junk food and dangerous materials.
International organisations like CSOs must push for global rules that protect children. They should also support programs that provide mental health care, education and medical help for all children.
Schools must be safe and supportive places. Teachers should educate children about mental well-being, help them build confidence, and teach them how to stay safe both online and in real life.
Researchers and universities can help by studying child health and safety. They should share their findings with governments and communities to improve politics and support systems for children.
Finally**, families and society** have the biggest role. Parents and caregivers must show them love, give guidance and protect children from harm. Communities should spread awareness and work together to create a safe world for new generations.
In conclusion, keeping children safe and healthy is not just one person's job. Everyone-governments, businesses, schools, researchers and families-must work together. If we all take action, children will grow up in happy, safe and healthy environment.

Diana, 15, Georgia

Develop more effective age verification systems. Content related to children should be assessed in text, video, and audio formats to prevent the spread of ultra-polarized, violent, and harmful information. Governments should fine platforms neglecting children.

Innie J. 15, Liberia

My name is **Innie J. and I am 15 years old from the Republic of Liberia, West Africa**. It is a great honor to present my opening message on this significant occasion—the 35th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A heartfelt thank you to the organizers!

The digital environment offers tremendous opportunities for children's development and education, granting access to vast information and global connections. However, it also poses serious risks to our rights, exposing us to cyberbullying, online exploitation, privacy violations, and harmful content. These challenges highlight the urgent need for strong regulations and education to ensure that children can safely navigate the digital world while upholding their fundamental rights.

To the National Human Rights Commissions, policymakers, international organizations, civil society organizations, and human rights defenders, I humbly present key points for consideration:

- **Maximizing Positive Impact** – Children must have access to educational resources, global communication, and digital literacy programs to support their development.
- **Empowering Girls and Young Women** – Schools and universities should promote and support girl- and young woman-led initiatives, such as workshops and debates, to educate students about digital literacy, digital rights, and online safety.
- **Establishing Safe Spaces** – Contact points and youth-led safe spaces should be created in schools and universities to provide support for victims and facilitate reporting mechanisms.
- **Collaborative Action for Child-Centered Policies** – Governments, tech companies, international organizations, parents, and educators must work together to develop child-focused regulations, digital literacy programs, and responsible online practices to protect children's rights in the digital space.

Let us all commit to safeguarding children's rights in this digital era.

Thank you!

Mariam, 17, Georgia,

States should legally protect kids from AI facial recognition misuse and exploitation. They should support organizations to prevent AI misinformation, without restricting free speech of these medias.

Barbare, 17, Georgia

Schools should teach children how to use AI safely, as they spend their developing years there and acquire much of their knowledge.

2. Answer to the Question 2

How children can be better involved in the decision-making respecting AI?

Nadine, 14, Malta,

Can AI negatively affect child well-being, including mental health? Quality education? Creativity?

Hi, My Name is **Nadine (14 years) and I am from Malta**, I form part of the Children's Advisory Board. Together with **Maja (16 years), Jake (12 years) and Samwel (13 years**), we have discussed the impact of AI on Children's wellbeing. We are aware that AI driven apps and social media can be addictive causing an increase in children's screen time which may have a negative effect on children.

When children access platforms powered by AI, they may also be exposed to inappropriate or mature content that isn't meant to be consumed by children their age.

As young people we are also concerned that the excessive reliance on AI, as we are already seeing with the overuse of ChatGPT, may damage children's real-life social development as well as limit their critical and independent thinking skills and natural intelligence and abilities. Over-reliance on A.I may also stifle their knowledge of different ways to do research. (Physical books/documents, conversation with professors or teachers, consultation of notes provided by their institution, etc.), since we have become accustomed to this method

AI-generated content may contain errors or biases as well as be completely untrue depending on the source of the information which not only affects children's understanding of subjects but may also lead them to believe and so spread misinformation unknowingly.

We call on all stakeholders to work together to protect children's rights in the digital environment.

Elene,15, Georgia

Involving children in decision making about Ai is in my opinion crucial. AI can shape a child's education, entertainment, environment and future opportunities. Children can be better involved in AI decision-making by educating them about AI, giving them a voice in policy discussions. Schools should teach AI literacy through interactive tools, alternative learning and workshops. Governments and organizations can create groups where young people share their ideas about AI and help shape rules for its use. Ethical AI development must also prioritize children's rights, privacy, and well-being, ensuring that AI systems are designed with their needs in mind. Encouraging co-creation will help children play an active role in shaping the AI-driven world they will live in in the future .

Nino, 15, Georgia

Involving children in AI decision-making is essential to create a future that fits their values and needs. We should set up forums where children can share their thoughts on how AI affects their lives. Schools need to include AI education programs so children can learn the basics of technology and use it safely.

Activities like workshops and hackathons can give them hands-on experience and help them solve problems creatively. Collecting children's opinions through surveys or focus groups will allow them to influence AI development directly. Involving children in these processes promotes responsible AI and helps grow informed digital citizens. AI development should also ensure that children's safety and privacy are protected, so they can use technology without harm. This way, we can create a future where AI benefits everyone, especially the next generation.

Jenneh T. 17, Liberia

Greetings,
My name is **Jenneh T. and I am 17 years old from the Republic of Liberia**, West Africa.

Specific Recommendations for the Joint Statement
Health:
Encourage healthy screen time habits while promoting physical activity alongside digital use.
Educate children on online well-being practices to help mitigate cyberbullying and negative online interactions.
Ensure children have access to reliable health information to make informed decisions about their well-being

Education:
Integrate digital literacy skills into the curriculum from an early age, teaching critical thinking, information evaluation, and responsible digital citizenship.
Train teachers on effective digital teaching methods and online safety protocols to ensure a secure learning environment.
Provide access to age-appropriate educational content and tools online.
Establish a monitoring mechanism for online activities within school networks and address concerns promptly.

Child Safety and Protection:
Implement strong policies, privacy settings, and parental controls on devices and digital platforms to protect children online.
Provide capacity-building training for parents and children on online privacy risks, emphasizing the dangers of sharing personal information with strangers.
Establish clear reporting mechanisms for cyberbullying, online exploitation, and harmful digital practices.

Child Rights and Advocacy:
Ensure children's voices are actively heard in policy-making related to the digital environment.
Advocate for legislation that protects children's rights online, including strong data privacy regulations.

Zura, 16, Georgia

დღესდღეობით AI-ს რესურსებს ძალზედ აქტიურად იყენებენ მთელი მსოფლიოს მასშტაბით, უამრავი განხრით და მისი განვითარებაც აქტიურად მიმდინარეობს. ხელოვნური ინტელექტი ტექნოლოგიაა, რომელიც მომავალში ყველა სფეროს მოიცავს და უამრავ ადამიანს ცხოვრებას გაუმარტივებს. ამისათვის კი აუცილებელია მის განვითარებაში

ბავშვების ჩართვა, მათი კრეატიულობა და განსხვავებული შეხედულებები ინოვაციებს შემოიტანს და AI-ს უამრავ სასარგებლო გამოყენებას მოუძებნის.

ბავშვები აქტიურად უნდა ჩაერთონ მის განვითარების პროცესში და მომავალი, რომელშიც უნდა იცხოვრონ, თავად შექმნან. AI-ის განვითარებასთან ერთად საშიშროებაც იზრდება, ზოგიერთის აზრით, დადგება დრო როდესაც იგი სამყაროს დაეპატრონება, მაგრამ ჩემი აზრით ეს ფანტასტიკის ჟანრს მიეკუთვნება, თუმცა მისი არასწორი გამოყენება საკმაოდ საშიშია და სწორედ ამიტომ ვფიქრობ, რომ აუცილებელია ხელოვნური ინტელექტის სასარგებლო საქმეებში გამოყენება სკოლებში ისწავლებოდეს, რათა ყველას შეეძლოს მისი გამოყენება სწორად.

Sophiko,16, Georgia

Hello, I'm Sophiko Todua, a 16-year-old from Georgia.

Artificial Intelligence is increasingly shaping children's lives. According to the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12)**, children have the right to participate in decisions affecting them, including those related to AI. To ensure AI respects children's rights, we must involve them more actively in its regulation.

One way to involve children is by creating groups that bring them together to discuss AI policies, share concerns about safety and fairness, and offer suggestions for improvement.

Schools can also play a key role by educating children about the ethical implications of AI. Students can learn about the impact of AI on their privacy and rights and be encouraged to speak out about issues in AI systems.

Another way to include children is by creating safe spaces where they can explore different AI tools, understand how they work, and give feedback to developers.

Other possibilities include organizing more competitions where children contribute ideas on how AI should be developed to benefit them.

By creating opportunities for children to participate in AI-related discussions, we can ensure that AI systems are safe, fair, and beneficial for them.

Saba, 16, Georgia

თანამედროვე სამყაროში ხელოვნურ ინტელექტს უფრო და უფრო აქტიურად იყენებს უფრო და უფრო მეტი ადამიანი, ამიტომ აუცილებელია ყველა ადამიანის ხმა იყოს გათვალისწინებული მასთან დაკავშირებული გადაწყვეტილებების მიღების დროს, რადგან თითოეული გადაწყვეტილება მნიშვნელოვან გავლენას ახდენს ჩვენს მომავალზე. ბავშვები კი, რომლებიც წარმოადგენენ მომავალ თაობას, არ უნდა დარჩნენ ამ საკითხებს მიღმა. ხელოვნური ინტელექტი გავლენას ახდენს განათლებაზე, გართობაზე, ყოველდღიურ ცხოვრებაზე და მისი მთავარი მომხმარებლები ბავშვები არიან, თუმცა, მიუხედავად ამ ფაქტისა, ისინი არ მონაწილეობენ მისი განვითარების პროცესში, რაც ასე არ უნდა იყოს, თუნდაც იმიტომ, რომ ბავშვების ხედვა და აზროვნება ძალიან განსხვავდება

ზრდასრულებისგან. მათ შეუძლიათ შემოიტანონ ინოვაციები და უკეთესობისკენ შეცვალონ სამყარო. მომავალი თაობის უნიკალური შესაძლებლობები, ხედვა, კრეატიულობა დაგვეხმარება იმაში, რომ ხელოვნური ინტელექტი გამოვიყენოთ სასიკეთო საქმიანობებისთვის. სწორედ ბავშვები არიან მომავლის ელჩები და მათი დისკუსიებში აქტიურად ჩართვითა და მათი აზრის მოსმენით შეგვიძლია დავრწმუნდეთ, რომ AI დადებითი ცვლილებებისთვის იქნება გამოყენებული. ბავშვების ჩართულობა AI-ის განვითარების პროცესში უზრუნველყოფს, რომ ის მომავალი თაობის საჭიროებებს მოერგოს და მათ უფლებებსა და უსაფრთხოებას პრიორიტეტი მიენიჭოს. მათი გადაწყვეტილებების მიღების პროცესში ჩასართავად კი ვფიქრობ, რომ საჭიროა განათლება - მთავრობებმა უნდა შეიმუშავონ შესაბამისი პოლიტიკა, სკოლებში უნდა დაინერგოს AI-ის ძირითადი იდეის მნიშვნელობა და სპეციალური პროგრამების დახმარებით მოხდეს ცნობიერების ამაღლება. ბავშვები უნდა გაეცნონ AI-ის მუშაობის პრინციპებს, შეძლონ დადებითი და უარყოფითი მხარეების დანახვა და მათი განხილვა, რისთვისაც უნდა შეიქმნას კლუბები და ფორუმები. ჩემი აზრით, ასევე ძალიან კარგი იქნება თუ სპეციალისტები პერიოდულად მოიწვევენ ბავშვებს თავიანთი მოდელების შესაფასებლად და უკუკავშირის მისაცემად. შედეგად, მომავალი თაობა დაცული იქნება დეზინფორმაციისა და მავნე კონტენტისგან და, რაც მთავარია, უკეთ იქნება მომზადებული ტექნოლოგიებით სავსე სამყაროში კონკურენციის გასაწევად და ლიდერად ჩამოსაყალიბებლად.

Desmine, 17 Georgia

Children can be better involved in AI-related decision-making by ensuring their, participatory workshops, and educational programs that teach them about AI's impact. Governments, tech companies, and educators should create platforms where children can express their opinions on AI policies and ethical concerns. Including child representatives in AI advisory boards, developing AI literacy programs in schools, and using interactive tools to gather their feedback can also enhance their involvement. Additionally, AI regulations should require child-centered impact assessments, and developers should co-design AI tools with children to ensure systems are ethical, inclusive, and aligned with their rights and needs.

Mariam, 16 Georgia

Children need to be educated on the subject, and since they often possess more knowledge than adults when it comes to artificial intelligence, their voices should be heard and considered. The education system must provide children with the necessary knowledge to engage in meaningful discussions about AI. Their opinions should be taken seriously. One possibility is to discuss AI-related matters within school committees, giving young adults the opportunity to express their views and address issues concerning the use of AI in their environment. Their feedback should not only be considered by schools but actively sought by relevant stakeholders, including the state and the industry. By taking into account the perspectives of one of the most engaged groups of AI users—students—AI can be improved more effectively. Furthermore, this could help prevent AI-related crimes and reduce its misuse. All in all, children are both the most intelligent and the most vulnerable users of AI. Their feedback and experiences could make or break this technological breakthrough. Through group discussions and platforms to voice their ideas and concerns, AI can only improve and grow. Ultimately, empowering

children to influence the future of AI will not only protect them but ensure this technology serves the greater good for generations to come.

Ana,15, Georgia

Children can be involved in decision making in many simple ways. First they should learn about AI in schools to understand how it works.
Second, their opinion should be heard, especially in AI tools made for education and social media. Companies can create special groups where kids can give feedback on the way AI works for them.
Children can also help design AI by testing apps and games, making them safer and more fun. Governments and tech companies should consider children's rights when making AI rules, ensuring privacy and safety.
By learning, sharing ideas and testing AI, children ca n help create a future where AI is safe and useful for everyone. Their voices matter in shaping the technology that they use every day.

Mariam, 15, Georgia

Hello, I am Mariam and I am from Georgia. How Children Can Be Involved in AI Decision-Making Youth Councils and Advisory Panels: Governments and companies should establish child advisory boards to provide direct input on AI policies. Educational Programs & Workshops: Equip children with AI literacy to understand and critique AI systems. Child-Friendly Consultation Platforms: Create safe, accessible spaces where children can voice concerns and ideas. School-Based AI Debates & Projects: Encourage children to analyze AI's impact and propose solutions. Inclusion in Global AI Forums: Allow children to participate in international AI governance discussions. Specific Recommendations for the Joint Statement.

Mariam, 17, Georgia

Hello everyone,

Artificial intelligence is shaping our world, but are we including the voices of those who will inherit it—our children? It’s time to involve them in decision-making about AI, not just as future users but as active participants today.

We can start by integrating AI discussions into schools, encouraging children to ask questions, express concerns, and share ideas. Creating child-friendly platforms where they can engage with policymakers and developers ensures their perspectives are heard. After all, AI will impact their education, creativity, and future jobs.

By empowering children with knowledge and a voice, we create a future where AI serves everyone fairly and ethically. Let’s give them a seat at the table—because the future belongs to them.

Thank you.

Diana 15, Georgia

მე ვარ დიანა, 15 წლის საქართველოდან.

ბავშვების მონაწილეობა AI-ის ფორმირების პროცესში არსებითად მნიშვნელოვანია პოლიტიკასა და პრაქტიკაში არსებული ხარვეზების აღმოსაფხვრელად ორი ძირითადი მიზეზის გამო: 1) ბავშვების ჯანმრთელი განვითარების ხელშეწყობა და 2) შესაძლო ზიანის პრევენცია.

ბავშვების ჩართულობის გაუმჯობესება AI- გადაწყვეტილებების მიღების პროცესში შესაძლებელია კრეატიული და ინკლუზიური მიდგომების დანერგვით, რომლებიც აღიარებენ მათ როლს არა მხოლოდ როგორც მომხმარებლებს, არამედ როგორც აქტიურ მონაწილეებსა და ინოვატორებს. ბავშვების აზრის გათვალისწინება უნდა მოხდეს AI-ის პოლიტიკისა და პრაქტიკის ყველა დონეზე. ანუ მათი ჩართვით ხელოვნური ინტელექტის განვითარების ექვს ეტაპზე: დაგეგმვა, მონაცემთა შეგროვება, მონაცემებზე წვდომა, ალგორითმის გამოყენება, დანერგვა და ანგარიშგება.

უნდა შეიქმნას საკანონმდებლო პროცესში ბავშვთა ჩართულობის ახალი მექანიზმები. პარლამენტებსა და საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციებში (გაერო...) უნდა მოეწყოს ბავშვების მონაწილეობით კონფერენციები, და "AI ბავშვთა ფორუმები", სადაც ბავშვები წარმოადგენენ საკუთარ გამოცდილებას, თუ როგორ აისახება AI მათ ცხოვრებაზე და რა პრობლემებს აწყდებიან. მათი რეკომენდაციები სახელმწიფოებმა და ტექნოლოგიურმა კომპანიებმა (Meta, Google, OpenAI, Microsoft) უნდა გაითვალისწინონ AI რეგულაციების ჩამოყალიბების პროცესში.

ბავშვებს ხელოვნური ინტელექტის მართვაში სამი ძირითადი როლი შეიძლება დაეკისროთ:

1. *მომხმარებლები* – ბავშვების განათლება AI სისტემების, მათი რისკებისა და გავლენის შესახებ.
2. *შემოქმედნი* – ბავშვების ჩართვა AI პოლიტიკისა და პროდუქტების შემუშავებაში, რათა უზრუნველვყოთ ინკლუზიურობა და მრავალფეროვნება.
3. *ინოვატორები* – ბავშვების გაძლიერება, რომ მათ ჰქონდეთ გადაწყვეტილებების მიღების შესაძლებლობა AI სისტემების დიზაინსა და დანერგვაში.

ბავშვების ჩართულობის გასაზრდელად, მთავრობებმა და AI კომპანიებმა უნდა დანერგონ პოლიტიკა, რომელიც:

- ამცირებს ალგორითმულ მიკერძოებას და იცავს ბავშვებს ხელოვნური ინტელექტის ზიანისგან.
- ხელს უწყობს ასაკისთვის შესაბამის AI განათლებას, რათა ბავშვებმა უკეთ გაიგონ და ჩაერთონ ამ პროცესებში.
- მხარს უჭერს ბავშვების ხელმძღვანელობით შექმნილ ინოვაციებს AI-ში, რაც უზრუნველყოფს უფრო უსაფრთხო და ეთიკური AI სისტემების განვითარებას.

ბავშვების ხმების ინტეგრირებით AI-ის მმართველობასა და დიზაინში, შევძლებთ ისეთი AI სისტემების შექმნას, რომლებიც უკეთესად შეესაბამება ბავშვთა უფლებებს, უსაფრთხოებასა და განვითარებას.

3. Answer to the Question 3

What are the specific recommendations children wish to put in the Joint Statement regarding education, healthcare (including mental health), child safety and other issues they think is relevant for children?

Charlotta 16, Germany

Shortened Version:
Al is becoming an essential part of our society, yet many schools feel overwhelmed and simply ban tools like ChatGPT. However, this is not the right approach.
Instead of banning Al, I suggest we should teach students how to use it responsibly.
Schools must educate them on harnessing Al's full potential, while also raising awareness of misinformation and threats that Al creates.
By integrating Al education, we empower students to navigate an Al-driven world ethically and effectively. Al is here to stay, so let's prepare the next generation to **shape** its future and not **fear** it.

Nini, 16, Georgia

AI is shaping our future, and y.oung people must have a voice in how it impacts us. It should support education, healthcare, and child safety while protecting privacy. AI must be a tool for good, not a threat, empowering us rather than replacing human care and guidance. Schools should teach responsible AI use, healthcare AI must be safe and effective, and online safety tools must protect without invading privacy. Young people must be included in AI policies because the decisions made today will shape our future. Let’s embrace AI’s potential while ensuring it works for us, not against us.

Barbare, 17, Georgia

In today's world, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a crucial part of our daily lives.
It continues to evolve rapidly, and its importance grows with each passing day. In the future, AI is expected to play an even more significant role in our society, and it will likely become one of the most important aspects of our lives.
This is precisely why it is important for future generations, and really, for everyone, to be educated about the potential risks that AI can pose and how to navigate them. Understanding the complexities of AI is crucial to ensuring that its benefits are maximised and its dangers minimised.
One of the most effective places to develop this understanding is within schools. Schools are where everyone spends their developing years and where children acquire much of their knowledge.
Although many schools discourage students from relying on AI tools to complete tasks, with the aim of encouraging independent thinking and problem solving without an 'easy way out', I believe it's even more important for schools to teach students how to use AI effectively and responsibly.
The reality is that children, being naturally curious, are likely to use AI tools regardless of any restrictions. Therefore, rather than simply discouraging their use, we need to focus on teaching students how to use these tools in ways that are personally beneficial and have a positive impact on them.
Integrating AI education into schools would provide students with the knowledge to understand the potential dangers of AI and how to deal with them.

This is why I believe that the education system should include classes that focus specifically on AI, where one would be taught how AI works, what the potential risks are, and how to use it responsibly.

Maja, 16, Malta,

When it comes to A.I, facilitators of informal education and easier study, like ChatGPT, should be embraced, albeit in moderation. In contrast, A.I chatbots should have a further host of regulations, if not be abolished entirely. They may be praised as accessible, enjoyable, customisable ways to combat loneliness, if young children get too attached, they may be compelled to do whatever the bot asks. (The more you chat with a bot, the more humane it becomes. Children are impressionable, curious and easily intrigued, so they may be attracted to this idea.) There have been a few cases of people who have formed relationships with the bot and have consequently been dangerous decisions with undeniable consequences. I am of the opinion that there are other, more healthy ways to treat loneliness. These include speaking with family or seeking help from trained professionals, or joining clubs to meet people with common interests to yours.

Diana 15, Georgia

AI should not retain a child's personal data without permission. A global database should record AI-related crimes, preventing repetition and aiding offender identification. AI education programs should be implemented in schools.

Sophiko,16, Georgia

Hello, I'm Sophiko Todua, a 16-year-old from Georgia.

In the context of the Joint Statement on protecting children's rights regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI), several key recommendations can help ensure children's rights are respected.

In education, AI should be integrated into school curriculums to help children understand how AI works and its ethical implications. Additionally, AI tools should be accessible to all, including children with disabilities, and encourage critical thinking about fairness, privacy, and responsibility in the use of AI.

For healthcare, AI can be used to personalize treatments and improve mental health support, providing accessible resources and early diagnosis. However, it's crucial that children's health data remains private and secure.

Regarding child safety, strict data privacy protections are essential. AI can play a role in monitoring online spaces, preventing cyberbullying and exploitation, and ensuring that AI systems are free from bias and discrimination.

Lastly, children should have a voice in decision-making about AI. Platforms can be created where children share concerns, provide feedback, and ensure their rights are upheld as AI develops.

In summary, to protect children's rights, AI should be used in ways that prioritize safety, fairness, and transparency while involving children in the process.

Mariam, 15, Georgia

Hello everyone, I am Mariam from Georgia. Implement AI-focused education in schools. Provide equal access to AI learning tools for all children. Ensure AI supports rather than replaces teachers. Develop AI tools that support mental health services for children. Ensure AI-powered healthcare respects children's privacy. Use AI to improve access to pediatric and mental health care. Strengthen AI-based content moderation to protect children online. Prevent AI-driven cyberbullying and exploitation. Develop AI ethics guidelines to safeguard children's rights. Promote AI applications that support children with disabilities. Ensure AI does not reinforce discrimination or inequality. Advocate for AI laws that prioritize children's best interests.

Ana, 15, Georgia

In order to know our rights and duties, children should be engaged in solving problems with issues in education, healthcare, and the children's rights of safety. Active engagement demands not only getting information but also improving practical skills. It is necessary to form critical thinking in education, analyze information, distinguish between reliable and false sources, learn how to use the Internet in the age of the digital world and protect yourself from cyberattacks, and encourage respect for diverse cultures, languages, and differences of opinions of people, which will promote social involvement and tolerance.Teach and learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Raise children's awareness about violence to know, recognize, and report any type of abuse.Against the background of modern world challenges, only creatively thinking and informed children will be able to make differences.

Mariam 16, Georgia

The key to child safety in the context of AI is education on the topic. If we want children to grow up in a world heavily influenced by AI, we need to give them the knowledge to navigate it safely. The less they know, the more vulnerable they are to its dangers.

Instead of limiting AI in education, schools should integrate it into the learning process and teach students to use it effectively. Prohibiting AI won't stop its use—it will only make it more dangerous. AI can be misused, but proper education can prevent unnecessary harm.

My suggestion is a dedicated class or program informing students about AI's benefits, risks, and impact. Educating them on safe and responsible use is the key to minimizing risks while maximizing its advantages.

Young people should consider the influence of AI on the job market while choosing a career. With AI expected to automate 25% of jobs in the US and Europe, we need to think critically about our future. Some careers may disappear, while others will require human skills AI can't replace. The world is growing, and we should grow with it.

VI. Annex

1. Agen

DAY 1 MARCH 10TH

- **10:30 – 11:15 | Opening**

  Messages from Children

- **11:15 – 12:00 | Keynote Speeches**

  Prof. Sophie Kiladze, Vice Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child
  Prof. Mamuka Tavkhelidze, Rector of the Grigol Robakidze University
  Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (video message)
  Irakli Beridze, Head of UNICRI Center for AI and Robotics
  Rym Al Falasi, Minister of Motherhood and Childhood, UAE (video message)
  Baroness Beeban Kidron, Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom (video message)

- 12:00 – 12:30 | Coffee Break

- **12:30 – 14:00 | Session 1: AI Governance for Child Rights**

  Moderator: Dr. Juliana Scerri-Ferannte, Member of the CRC
  Dimitri Gugunava, Director of the Department, Digital Governance Agency, Ministry of Justice of Georgia
  Fanny Rotino, Programm Officer, Child Online Protection, International Telecommunications Union
  Dr. Elodie Weil, Privacy Council, Data Protection Authority of France
  Marie-Eve Nadeau, Head of International Advocacy, 5rights Foundation
  Steven Vosloo, Digital Foresight and Policy Specialist, UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight
  Terres des Hommes International Federation
  Nathalie Meurens, Senior EU Advocacy Manager, TDH Netherlands
  Federica Giannotta, Head of Advocacy and Domestic Programmes, TDH Italy

  Q&A

- 14:00 – 15:30 Lunch Break

- **15:30 - 17:00 | Session 2: The role of AI in the Quality Education**

  Moderator: Manu Krishan Head of Unit, Global Study Programm
  Gwang-Chol Chang, UNESCO, Chief of the Section of Education Policy, UNESCO
  Prof. Vakhtang Charaia, Vice-Rector, Dean of the School of Business and Management, University of Grigol Robakidze
  Dr. Amir Gefen, Researcher and lecturer for AI in education, Bal-Illan University
  Prof. Sonia Livingstone, Media@LSE and Director, Digital Futures for Children (DFC) Centre
  Dr. Amie Kim, Lecturer, Seoul National University, South Korea
  Thomas Dreesen, education specialist, UNICEF

  Q&A

- 17:00- 17:15 Coffee break

- **17:15 – 18:00 | Session 3: AI for Good: Children's Inputs**

  Moderator: Timothy Ekesa, Member of the CRC

- **18:00 – 20:00 | Closed Session 4: Stakeholders Discussion on the Joint Statement on AI and Child Rights**

  Moderator: Fanny Rotino
  Presentation on Joint Statement - Prof. Sophie Kiladze, Vice-Chair, CRC
  Discussion

DAY 2 MARCH 11TH

- **10:30 – 12:00 | Session 1: Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Opportunities for children**

  Moderator: Dr. Thuwayba Al Barwani, Member of the CRC

  Marie-Eve Nadeau, Head of International Advocacy, 5rights Foundation
  Kay Poh Gek Vasey, Head of Youth and Family, k-ID
  Prof. Lucio Valerio Sarandrea, Regional Child Protection Specialist, East Asia and Pacific Region, UNICEF
  Anri Nishnianidze, Attorney at Law, Grigol Robakidze University
  Denis Psarrou, Advisor on Governance of Science & Technology, IEEE

  Q&A

- 12:00-12:30 | Coffee Break

- **12:30 - 14:00 | Session 2: Combating Crimes against Children in the Digital Environment**

  Moderator: Prof. Benjam David Mezmur, Member and Former Chair of the CRC

  Abdulla Alhebsi, Deputy Director Child Protection Center, United Arab Emirates Ministry of Interior
  Emma Persson, Coordinator, AI for Safer Children Initiative, UNICRI Center for AI and Robotics
  Dr. Wendy O'Brien, Artificial Intelligence Focal Point, Division for Treaty Affairs, UNODC, Vienna
  Dr. Beatriz Suzanna Uitts, Director and Founder, Humantraffickingfront

  Q&A

- 14:00 – 15:30 Lunch Break

- **15:30 – 17:00 | Session 3: Children's Voices on the Joint Statement on Child Rights in the Context of AI**

  Moderator: Timothy Ekesa, Member of the CRC

- 17:00-17:30 | Coffee Break

- **17:30 – 19:00 | Session 4: Industry Responsibilities in the Context of AI and Child Rights**

  Moderator: Prof. Mary Beloff, member of the CRC

  Laura Higgins, Senior Director of Community Safety and Civility, Roblox
  Prof. Peter G. Kirchschläger, Ethics-Professor and Director of the Institute of Social Ethics ISE, University Lucern/Visiting Professor at ETH Zurich, Switzerland
  Dr. Jun Zhao, Senior Research Fellow, Department of Computer Science, Oxford University
  Prof. Jose Romero, Expert in Innovation and Technologies, Grigol Robakidze University,
  Dr. Ayça Atabey, University of Edinburgh; Digital Futures for Children Centre, London School of Economics

  Q&A

- 19:00 – 19:15 | Closing

- 20:00-23:00 | Gala Dinner

DAY 3 MARCH 12TH

- Cultural Program


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2025

2. Bios of Conference Participants

Dr. Sophie Kiladze

is a Vice-Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child as well as a member of the Council of Europe ECRI. She has championed to raise the topic of AI and child rights to the CRC as well as the idea of the Joint Statement of Child Rights and AI. Prior to joining the UN CRC in 2021, she served as an elected Member of the Parliament of Georgia, a Chair of the Human Rights Committee as well as the Chair of the Child Rights Council. She is an author of comprehensive reforms in the field of child rights and social work in Georgia. She served as a Vice-Rector of the Police Academy. Prof. Kiladze has extensive academic experience for over 18 years, including the work at Max-Planck Institute for Public International Law in Heidelberg, teaching Public International Law, Constitutional Law and Child Rights Law at different universities, research scholarships, publishing books and articles. She is a graduate of the Law Faculty of the University of Heidelberg (Staatsexamen), Germany, holds a PhD degree (summa cum laude) and is the Professor at Grigol Robakidze University. In 2013 she was awarded with the Medal of Honor of the President of Georgia.

Prof. Mamuka Tavkhelidze

is the Rector and the founder of Grigol Robakidze University since 1992 and holds PhD in pedagogical sciences. At earlier stage his professional career includes different administrative positions, including leading management positions in the Ministry of Education and Science. His extensive academic experience counts over 30 scientific research articles and books, including the first fundamental scientific research in Georgia concerning the challenges in high education academic quality management. He is the member of the Advisor's Council of the Oxford University. Due to his extraordinary achievements in the field of education and science he is a holder of several awards, including Order of Honor (1998) and Order of Excellence (2013).

Martin Chungong

is the Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union since 2014. With more than four decades of experience and knowledge of parliaments at national and international levels, he has dedicated his professional life to promoting and building democracy worldwide. After 14 years working in the Cameroonian Parliament, he spent more than 20 distinguished years within the IPU before being elected its Secretary General. Martin Chungong has been instrumental in strengthening the gender equality agenda within the IPU. He also is spearheading gender parity initiatives promoted by the International Gender Champions, a network of decision-makers, male and female, who have committed to breaking down gender barriers. In 2020, he was elected Chair of the Global Board of the International Gender Champions. He is also leading IPU's work to dramatically reduce maternal and child mortality rates through effective legislation and its implementation, as well as ensuring governments' accountability for international commitments in this area. He holds degrees from both the University of Yaound and the University of Ottawa.

Irakli Beridze

Head of the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics at UNICRI, United Nations Irakli Beridze has more than 25 years of experience in leading multilateral negotiations, developing stakeholder engagement programmes with governments, UN agencies, international organisations, private industry and corporations, think tanks, civil society, foundations, academia, and other partners on an international level. He is advising governments and international organizations on numerous issues related to international security, scientific and technological developments, emerging technologies, innovation and the disruptive potential of new technologies, particularly on the issue on crime prevention, criminal justice and security. Since 2014, Mr Beridze initiated and managed one of the first United Nations Programmes on AI. He is a member of various international task forces. He frequently lectures and speaks on subjects related to technological development, exponential technologies, artificial intelligence and robotics and international security. He has numerous publications in international journals and magazines and is frequently quoted in the media on the issues related to AI. Irakli Beridze is an International Gender Champion supporting the IGC Panel Parity Pledge. He is a recipient of recognition on the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the OPCW in 2013.

Baroness Beeban Kidron

is a leading voice on children's rights in the digital environment and a global authority on digital regulation and accountability. She has played a determinative role in establishing standards for online safety and privacy across the world. Baroness Kidron sits as a crossbench peer in the UK's House of Lords. She is an advisor to the Institute for Ethics in AI, University of Oxford, a Commissioner on the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, an expert advisor for the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, and Founder and Chair of 5Rights Foundation. She is a Visiting Professor of Practice at the London School of Economics, where she chairs the research centre Digital Futures for Children, and a Fellow in the Department of Computer Science, University of Oxford. Before being appointed to the Lords she was an award-winning film director and co-founder of the charity Filmclub (now Into Film).

Dr. Juliana Scerri Ferrante

holds a Doctorate of Laws from the University of Malta, after completing studies for other degrees and diplomas, which also included a Bachelor of Arts in Socio-Legal Studies. Received her Master's degree in international law at IMLI University of Malta. Main focus and today, expertise, is in Minor Protection, Child Law and Immigration Law. Was a member of the National Commission of Child Policy and Strategy, an advisor, drafter and member of drafting teams of the Child Protection Act (Alternative Care Act) ,and also participated in the Parliamentary Committees held regarding this law . Main fields of research are rights of the child and child protection. A Family Law lawyer and Domestic Violence legal Advisor. A Judicator in the Law Courts until October 2013 (SCT) and a Judicial Assistant till 2015 in the Family Court. A lecturer on Child Protection and Immigration Law at the University of Malta and to students from Loyola University (Chicago School) Rome. She was appointed Ambassador of Malta (Non Resident) in 2022 after being Honorary Consul to Croatia in Malta. In May 2024 elected as a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Dimitri Gugunava

He holds an LLB and LLM from Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Faculty of Law, and is currently pursuing a PhD. He has extensive professional experience 2010-2018 on various positions at the LEPL National Bureau of Enforcement and the Office of the Inspector of Personal Data Protection. Since 2018, he has held various positions at the LEPL Digital Governance Agency. He currently serves as Head of the Digital Governance and Cybersecurity Strategic Planning and Analytical Unit. He is also a contributor in international AI and cybersecurity policymaking. Since 2022, he has led the Georgian Delegation to the Council of Europe Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) and, in 2024, was elected as a Bureau Member of CAI. Additionally, in 2023 and 2024, he was twice elected Co-Chair of the Georgian Cybersecurity Public-Private Partnership, fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors on cybersecurity initiatives. Through his work, he contributes to shaping policies that ensure a safe, ethical, and rights-based digital ecosystems. Beyond his government work, Mr. Gugunava is a visiting lecturer at multiple universities in Tbilisi. He has authored several scholarly articles and actively participates in conferences and seminars on digital governance, cybersecurity, and personal data protection.

Fanny-Carlotta Rotino

is the programme officer and global project manager for child online protection at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). She has extensive experience on child rights with a specific focus on child protection and child participation in both non-governmental and international organisations. Coordinator and co-author of the ITU Guidelines on Child Online Protection, she has chaired a working group of numerous experts in the field of child protection, ICTs and cybersecurity. She is also leading on new multi-stakeholder initiatives with Industry, UN and CSOs in relation to children's rights online. Prior to joining ITU, Fanny has worked for UNICEF with a focus on partnerships, youth participation and sustainable development goals. Before joining the UN system, she focused on child rights related to children on the move and children in armed conflict at terre des hommes and Plan International. Fanny holds a master's degree in international relations and peace and conflict studies from the Goethe University in Frankfurt with a specific focus on human rights and humanitarian aid.

Marie-Eve Nadeau

is the Head of International Advocacy at the 5Rights Foundation, leading global efforts to put children's rights at the heart of digital policy. With a background in international law and human rights, she is a tireless advocate for AI governance, data protection, and online safety—working to ensure the digital world is designed with children in mind. From the European Union to the African Union, and across more than 15 countries from Indonesia to Argentina, Marie- ve has played a key role in shaping policies and strengthening global frameworks that protect children and hold companies and governments to account.

Nathalie Meurens

leads the EU Advocacy effort for Terre des Hommes Netherlands on the issue of online child sexual exploitation, advocating for policy solutions and leading multi-country research on how to better protect children from online child sexual harm.

Federica Giannotta

is a Head of Advocacy and Domestic Programs Terre des Hommes Italy. After graduating in law at the University of Milan Federica Giannotta chose the non-profit sector and child protection as her ultimate passion and career path. Since 2003 she has been working with Terre des Hommes Italy where she is responsible for Advocacy and Domestic Programs. Among her main areas of activity there is the prevention of violence and maltreatment of children, children in detention with their mothers and migrant children who arrive alone and without protection in Italy.

Manu Krishan

is a human rights consultant and project manager (Head of Unit) specializing in children's rights at the Global Campus of Human Rights. With an MA in Human Rights and a background in Philosophy, he has expertise in child justice, protection, and participation as well as ethical research with children. He coordinated the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty and supported the UN Independent Expert and the Global Campus of Human Rights in its implementation. Currently pursuing an M.Sc in Sustainability, Entrepreneurship, and Technology at the Vienna University of Economics and Business, he aims to connect children's rights, sustainability, and emerging technologies for future generations.

Gwang-Chol Chang

is Chief of Section of Education Policy at UNESCO since 2019. Prior to his current position, he worked at various locations and held different positions within UNESCO, such as Officer in Charge of the UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office for West Africa and Sahel (UNESCO Dakar), and Senior Programme Specialist/Chief of Education at UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok) and UNESCO Dakar Office. At UNESCO HQ and in the field, he has developed, coordinated and led various education programmes, including the right to education, education policy analysis, sector planning, education financing, data management, learning assessment, and early childhood care and education. Before joining UNESCO, he worked at the Ministry of Education of the DPR Korea. He holds Doctorate in Education from Kim Hyong Jik University of Education.

Dr. Vakhtang Charaia

is a professor, dean of the Business and Management School and Vice Rector for the Scientific Research Area at Grigol Robakidze University. He has Participated at different international conferences and forums at more than fifty countries. Winner and scholar of different state scholarships, as well as of international organizations, including International Monetary Fund, European Commission etc. Prof. Charaia was named the Best Young Scientist of Georgia, as well as received the Best Scientist Award from two local universities. At different times Prof. Charaia has worked for International Alert (UK), V-Dem (Sweden), World Economic Forum (Switzerland) and others. He has published more than fifty scientific articles and several books.

Dr. Amir Gefen

is a researcher and lecturer for AI in education at Bar-Ilan University and academic advisor to the Israel Ministry of Education. Specializing in integrating Gen-AI in teaching, learning and assessment processes. Academic consultant and researcher at the Research Institute for AI in Education in the R&D division of Israel Ministry of Education. PhD in Online Safety from Bar-Ilan University. Member of the founding team of the Israel National Protection Bureau for Children Online – 105 Hotline.

Sonia Livingstone OBE FBA

is a professor in the Department of Media and Communications at LSE. She has published 21 books on media audiences, children and young people's risks and opportunities, media literacy and rights in the digital environment. Since founding the EC-funded "EU Kids Online" research network, and Global Kids Online (with UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti), she has advised the Council of Europe, European Commission, European Parliament, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, OECD, ITU and UNICEF. She is currently leading the Digital Futures for Children centre at LSE with the 5Rights Foundation. See www.sonialivingstone.net

Dr. Amie Kim

is a lecturer and researcher at Seoul National University and serves as a digital media literacy consultant for various institutions in South Korea. Her research focuses on young people's media culture, children's digital rights, and digital citizenship. Her recent research explores young people's experiences as digital creators and youth-led research on children's digital rights.

Timothy Ekesa

is the Executive Director of Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children (KAACR) – a membership body of over 250 NGOs in Kenya and member of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2025 – 2029). He has over 25 years' experience of working with children in Kenya having held various positions from a Program Officer, Coordinator, Deputy Director and Director. As the head of KAACR – which is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN, he is actively involved in local, national and international child rights lobbying and advocacy work in a number of projects. He is a Development Worker who holds a Master's of Science Degree in Organizational Development from United States International University (USIU) – Africa, an undergraduate Degree in Communications and Community Development from Messiah College through Daystar University - Kenya, a Diploma in NGO Development and Management from Galilee College, Israel and completed course work MA International Relations & Diplomacy, University of Nairobi.

Dr. Thuwayba Al Barwani

is a Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and currently serves as a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. She served as Dean at the College of Education and was the founder and director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Sultan Qaboos University. In addition to her extensive research and scientific work, she served as a member of Oman's upper chamber (The State Council), was one of the founders of A'Sharqiya Private University and served in its Board of Trustees. She also worked as an Undersecretary at the Ministry of Social Development where she championed work in rights of people with disabilities, child protection, early childhood education, rights of children in conflict with the law, among others. She pioneered the establishment of the first NGO for children in Oman and was instrumental in establishing the first Child Rights course at Oman's National University. She is a recipient of His Majesty the Ruler of Oman's 2nd Class Honor for Culture and the Sciences, a recipient of the Gulf Cooperation Council Women's Leadership Award and the Middle East Award for Special Olympics. Her current focus is on Access to Justice and Effective Remedies, Quality Education for All and Rights of Children with Disabilities.

Kay Poh Gek Vasey

is the Head of Youth and Family at k-ID, dedicated to a singular mission: protecting and empowering kids and teens as they navigate the digital world. Her journey to k-ID is rooted in her passion for using tech for good. She founded MeshMinds and The MeshMinds Foundation, partnering with UNEP, UNESCO, Meta, and Apple to create immersive experiences that foster climate, cultural, and digital literacy across the Asia-Pacific region. Notably, she ran the '100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution' campaign for the UN, the 'Art Reimagined' creative technology incubation programs for Meta, and developed 'Sky Farm Island' on Roblox—an initiative inspiring kids to grow and eat their greens, which was selected for the UN's Playing for the Planet Green Game Jam. Previously, Kay was also Head of Arts at the British Council Singapore and a UK-qualified aviation lawyer. All of her skills and experience to date have allowed her to develop a unique blend of legal, creative, and tech expertise. And now, as a mother of two Generation Alpha boys, she navigates parenting in the digital age on a daily basis, bringing personal insight to her current professional endeavours.

Dr. Lucio Valerio Sarandrea

holds the position of Regional Child Protection Specialist at UNICEF Bangkok, serving South East Asia and the Pacific. His portfolio encompasses Child Rights, Justice, Migration, and CRVS. Previously he served as a Regional Adviser on Child Protection and as the Chief of Child Protection for UNICEF Kyrgyzstan.
Lucio Valerio holds a Master's degree in Law and a Doctorate in Peace and Conflict studies. He has authored numerous academic publications as well as literary novels on violence against children. In addition to his current responsibilities, he holds the position of a Professor at the American University of Central Asia teaching courses on "Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence" and " Child Rights Protection".

Anri Nishnianidze

is an attorney at law practicing since 2017. His dissertation, while a PhD candidate in law, concerns the intersection of artificial intelligence and criminal law, focusing on cybercrime and the regulations in the digital world. His extensive scientific work includes participation in various conferences, both at local and international levels. As a dedicated legal scholar, he continues to publish in order to contribute to the understanding of the intersection of technology and law which transforms with each passing day.

Denia Psarrou

is an Advisor and Researcher specializing in the governance of science and technology with IEEE SA. With a background in Law, Computer Science and AI Ethics, her work focuses on protecting children's rights online, particularly safeguarding them against addictive persuasive design practices. She develops policy recommendations and technology design principles aimed at dismantling these harmful systems and strengthening oversight to protect vulnerable users. Her broader research interests include AI and the Rule of Law, accountability frameworks to combat the modular character of the technology supply chain, and the societal and legal challenges posed by deepfakes. She is the Lead Researcher for the Global Trust Challenge, a collaborative initiative aimed at strengthening the resilience of the information ecosystem in the era of Generative AI. Additionally, she serves as the Digital Policy Director at DWS, the Greek chapter of the United Nations' Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

Emma Persson

is the coordinator for the AI for Safer Children initiative, aimed at leveraging the positive potential of AI through an online platform reaching over half the world's countries and conducting specialized trainings for thousands of professionals to build law enforcement capacities worldwide. She specialized in emerging technologies after having completed a master's program in International Peace & Security at King's College London and a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Public International Law at Leiden University, and further contributes to the Centre's work through publishing reports and other research, capacity-building and awareness-raising activities exploring responsible AI innovation, its risks within criminal justice systems and the international environment.

Dr. Wendy O'Brien

works with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in Vienna, where she plays a pivotal role in advancing human rights-based criminal justice reform. As the Artificial Intelligence focal point within UNODC's Division for Treaty Affairs, she spearheads initiatives to integrate human rights principles into the design and adoption of AI systems, particularly in the justice sector. With advanced degrees in Gender Studies, Public International Law, and Evaluation, Dr. O'Brien combines interdisciplinary expertise to advance a vision of ethical AI governance that amplifies justice, equity, and dignity worldwide. Prior to joining UNODC, Wendy worked as Senior Specialist with the Australian Crime Commission, driving policy innovations on gender-based violence and child protection. Beyond her role with the United Nations, Dr. O'Brien is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Deakin University, Australia. In her academic capacity, Wendy has published widely on gender justice, children's rights in the digital age, and human rights-led law reform, exemplified by her co-edited volume Violence Against Children in the Criminal Justice System (Routledge, 2020) and her latest book: Children's Rights and Criminal Justice in the Digital Age (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024).

Dr. Beatriz Susana Uitts

is an expert in the field of human trafficking and child protection; she holds a Doctorate in Legal Sciences and a Master of Laws in Intercultural Human Rights from St. Thomas University College of Law in Miami, Florida. Her peer-reviewed books, Sex Trafficking of Children Online: Modern Slavery in Cyberspace and Trata de Menores en el Ciberespacio: Derecho y Pol tica Internacional provide insights into the complexities of online child exploitation in the contexts of trafficking and modern slavery. As the Founder and Director of Human Trafficking Front, Dr. Uitts leads efforts to combat human trafficking and modern slavery through education, advocacy, and capacity-building programs. Dr. Uitts also serves as an expert on child online protection at the United Nations International Telecommunication Union. Dr. Uitts has served as a petitioner attorney before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and delivers guest lectures on human trafficking issues at national and international levels, often appearing in national media.

Dr. Mary Beloff

is a current member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. She is a Professor of Criminal Law and Procedure at the University of Buenos Aires School of Law (UBA). As a leading academic figure as well as a recognized activist in the field of children's rights throughout Latin America, Prof. Beloff was delegated with the responsibilities of providing continuing education to judges, prosecutors, public defenders and NGOs' members for years. As a legal scholar, she has made significant contributions to the jurisprudence related to the direct application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international instruments in domestic law. She has been involved in the process of adopting international children´s human rights law at the domestic level through legal and institutional reforms all over the region, as a legal consultant on criminal justice and human rights matters to various Latin American governments and international organizations. Mary Beloff received her law degree with honors and a Ph. D. in Criminal Law summa cum laude from the University of Buenos Aires. She also graduated with a Masters in Law (LL. M) from Harvard Law School (United States).

Laura Higgins

is Senior Director of Community Safety and Civility at Roblox with years of experience building safeguarding, online safety and civility programs. Roblox's digital civility initiative is focused on providing the community with the knowledge and skills needed to create positive online experiences, working with the world's leading safety and industry organizations.
In her previous role with the UK Safer Internet Centre, Laura founded several award-winning helpline services, and worked with the biggest names in tech. She has spoken on digital safety topics across the globe and regularly appears in the media sharing her expertise with industry experts, parents and kids.

Dr. Jun Zhao

is a Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Computer Science at Oxford University. Her research focuses on investigating the impact of algorithm-based decision making on our everyday life, especially for families and young children. For this, she takes a human-centric approach, focusing on understanding real users' needs, in order to design technologies that can make a real impact. She is currently lead the Oxford Child-Centred AI Design Lab and a major research grant examining the challenges of support children's digital agency in the age of AI.

Jose Medardo Romero Cordova

is an expert in Innovation and development of technologies, bringing over 15 years of specialized experience in intellectual property law, technology transfer, contracts and licensing, IP management, and SME consultancy. A distinguished professional, he has provided strategic counsel to clients worldwide, helping businesses, inventors, governmental agencies, and universities protect and commercialize their innovations. He has a strong foundation in Artificial Intelligence (AI), having gained hands-on experience in AI development, data analysis, and machine learning applications. His extensive academic background includes studies at Cambridge University, Oxford University, the University of California, Stanford University and the University of Arizona, equipping him with deep expertise in technology transfer, intellectual property rights management, and business strategy. He has successfully negotiated multimillion-dollar technology transfer agreements across multiple industries, supporting businesses in the commercialization of cutting-edge innovations. Jose's strong commitment to academic excellence led to the receiving of a LL.M in Intellectual Property from Turin University and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Academy.

Dr. Ayça Atabey

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Major Abulla Alhebsi

The Deputy Director of Child protection center in the Ministry of Interior in the United Arab Emirates, worked in so many cases related to child protection, leading multiple projects in the field of child protection and child sexual online abuse, and an investigator in crimes against children, applied projects using AI to detect child sexual abuse and worked with local and international partners to help identify online abusers and help rescue victims. Participated as a panelist in We Protect Global Alliance and worked in issuing a child SIM card with service providers in the UAE to help keeping children safe.

Peter G. Kirchschlaeger

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He is President of the Swiss Federal Ethics Committee on Non-Human Biotechnology and a consultative expert in Ethics of international institutions, organizations, and companies.

In his research, he focuses on ethics of "AI" and digital transformation, ethics of human rights, ethics of rights of the child, and business ethics.

His most recent books are "Ethical Decision-Making" (2023) and "Digital Transformation and Ethics. Ethical Considerations on the Robotization and Automation of Society and the Economy and the Use of Artificial Intelligence" (2021).

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