

Text Suggestions to the Zero Draft of the Global Digital Compact

❖ **Original text of the GDC Zero Draft -**

<https://dig.watch/resource/global-digital-compact-zero-draft>

❖ **Note to the reader:**

- Recommended text additions in purple color
 - *(Supporting text and reference links in italics and brackets and in red color)*
 - Text to be deleted in ~~strike-through~~
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1. Digital technologies are dramatically transforming our world. They offer immense potential benefits for the wellbeing and advancement of people, societies, and for our planet. They hold out the promise of **playing a significant role in** achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. We are determined to realise these opportunities. We recognize our shared responsibility to harness the benefits of technology for all. Equally, the misuse and missed use of digital technologies harms all of us and we are committed to anticipate and mitigate risks.

3. Our goal is an inclusive, open, safe, **sustainable** and secure digital future for all. We can only achieve this through **development oriented** international cooperation **grounded in public interest** and governance that closes digital divides and advances an equitable and inclusive digital world. This Global Digital Compact sets out the objectives, commitments, and actions we undertake to achieve this goal.

4. We have strong foundations on which to build. Our digital cooperation rests on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the 2030 Agenda. We remain committed to the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society and its outcome documents. The United Nations provides an indispensable platform for the global digital cooperation we need.

5. Our cooperation must be agile and adaptable to the rapidly changing digital landscape. It is only by working in collaboration and partnership with all stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations and the technical and academic communities, **in their respective roles and responsibilities**, that we can achieve our goal.

Objectives

6. To achieve our goal, we will pursue the following objectives:

(1) Close the digital divides and accelerate progress across the Sustainable Development Goals;

(2) Expand opportunities for inclusion in the digital economy;

- (3) Foster an inclusive, open, safe, **sustainable** and secure digital space, **including alternative technology that is diversified in its ownership and control**;
- (4) Advance equitable international data governance;
- (5) Govern emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, for humanity **and in the public interest**.

Principles

7. Our digital cooperation will be guided by a set of cross-cutting and interdependent principles:

(a) Inclusive: The equitable participation of all states and people is the cornerstone of this Compact. Our cooperation will close the digital divides within and between states and advance a digital environment that promotes and enables diversity, **global solidarity and a inclusive knowledge society**;

(See, [WSIS Geneva Declaration of Principles, C67](#))

(b) Development-focused: This Compact is rooted in the 2030 Agenda. Our cooperation will harness technologies to fast-track progress **towards sustainable, people-centred development**, and leave no one behind. This includes targeted efforts to address the needs of the least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island developing states;

(c) Human rights-based: This Compact is anchored in international law and international human rights law. All human rights, ~~including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights~~, and fundamental freedoms, must be protected **as digitalisation transforms our economic, social, cultural and political systems**. Our cooperation will harness digital technologies to promote and protect these rights, including the protection of children and their rights, **uphold the principle that all human rights offline extend to online spaces, and recognise digital human rights in innovation systems**. We reaffirm the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) for accountable participation of corporations in the implementation of the Compact;

(See, [UN SG on Digital Human Rights, Article 19, UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#))

(d) Gender equal: The full, equal, and meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls in the digital space is essential to close gender digital divides and advance sustainable development. Our cooperation will empower women and girls, mainstream gender perspectives and prioritize the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence online **and all forms of gender-based discrimination in digital society**;

(e) Environmentally sustainable: Digital technologies unlock new capabilities for measuring, monitoring and solving environmental, climate and sustainability challenges. They also consume substantial energy and material and produce significant carbon footprint as well as e-waste. **Our cooperation will respect planetary boundaries and the rights of nature in the design, production, deployment and governance and regulation of digital technologies**. ~~Our cooperation will leverage digital technologies for sustainability and minimize their environmental impact~~;

(f) Accessible and interoperable: Digital accessibility as well as equitable and affordable access to data and digital technologies **and associated benefits** are critical catalysts for

development. Our cooperation will advance communication and exchange between digital systems, **emphasising** and interoperable approaches **in** to their governance at national, regional and international levels;

(g) Responsible, **transparent** and accountable: Our cooperation will advance the accountable, transparent and human-centric design, development and deployment of digital and emerging technologies and promote their use in the public interest. This includes safe, secure, and trustworthy AI systems that promote and protect human rights, support sustainable development, and are reliable, explainable and inclusive;

(h) Innovation-friendly: Our cooperation will foster **regenerative** innovation **with public oversight mechanisms and the use of human rights impact assessments**, and the potential for **all countries, societies and enterprises** ~~and businesses, regardless of size,~~ to reap the benefits of digitalization and **build flourishing knowledge economies** ~~thrive in the digital economy~~;

(i) Multi-stakeholder: Governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical community, academia and international and regional organizations have roles and responsibilities in advancing an inclusive, **equitable**, open, safe and secure digital future. Our cooperation will involve all stakeholders, according to their respective mandates, functions and competencies, **enabling governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet**;

(See, [Tunis Agenda, para 69](#))

(j) Forward-looking: The digital world is evolving at pace. Our cooperation must be capable of identifying, assessing, tracking and adapting to, **and influencing the shape of**, emerging technologies so that we can seize opportunities and respond to challenges.

Commitments and actions

8. We commit to ~~pursue~~ **the pursuit of** meaningful and measurable actions, to achieve our objectives.

Objective 1. Closing the digital divides and accelerating progress across the Sustainable Development Goals

Cluster 1. Connectivity

9. We acknowledge the pivotal role of **universal**, reliable and meaningful connectivity and affordable access in unlocking the full potential of digital and emerging technologies for all. We commit to connect all people to the Internet, **closing digital divides within and between countries at the earliest** (*See, [G77 Statement on GDC](#)*). We recognize that this will require significant and aligned investments from governments and relevant stakeholders, **including international financial institutions** and ~~in particular~~ the private sector, **especially for community-driven initiatives**.

(While private actors can provide support for an inclusive digital transformation, over-reliance on them for responding to public needs, particularly when coupled with limited public oversight and regulation, is not desirable.)

10. We commit by 2030 to:

(a) Agree common targets, indicators, and metrics for universal and meaningful connectivity, and integrate these into regional and national development strategies (*SDG 9*);

(b) Develop innovative financing mechanisms and incentives, in collaboration with the World Bank Group, other multilateral development banks and the private sector, to connect the remaining 2.6 billion people to the Internet and to improve the affordability of connectivity. Our goal is entry-level broadband subscription costs at less than 2 percent of average income of the bottom 40 percent of national populations (SDGs 1 & 9);

(c) Invest in and deploy resilient and trustworthy digital public infrastructure that provides network coverage and foundational digital services to all areas, including rural, remote and 'hard-to-reach' areas, including through community-driven initiatives. Our goal is universal access to a minimum speed of 10Mb/s (SDGs 9 & 11);

(While universalizing access to Internet connectivity remains a priority, it is not sufficient. With limited infrastructural capabilities to digitalize and process their data into digital intelligence, developing countries are unable to capture development value from data and reap the benefits of the structural transformation led by digitalization. Hence, creating foundational digital infrastructure is crucial for developing countries.)

(d) Map and connect all schools to the Internet, building on the Giga initiative of ITU and UNICEF, to provide children with reliable and affordable Internet (SDGs 3 & 4);

(e) Agree principles for digital environmental sustainability and incorporate them into procurement policies for ICT equipment and services (SDG 13);

(f) Incorporate sustainability into the design, production, use and disposal of ICT equipment and mobile devices and develop and use more energy-efficient devices, applications and networks. Our goal is carbon neutral ICT equipment and mobile devices (SDG 13);

(g) Identify and include those in vulnerable and marginalized situations in the development and implementation of national and local digital connectivity strategies, including those provided by community and non-profit operators, especially in areas overlooked by traditional telecommunication infrastructure (SDGs 10 & 11);

(See, [Article 19 recommendations for the GDC](#))

(h) Address structural and systematic barriers to meaningful and affordable digital connectivity for all women and girls (SDG 5).

Cluster 2. Digital literacy, skills and capacities

11. To fully harness the benefits of digital connectivity we must ensure that people can meaningfully use the Internet and safely navigate the digital space. We recognize the importance of skilling and access to digital learning, taking into account the specific social, cultural and linguistic needs of each society and people of all ages and backgrounds.

12. We commit by 2030 to:

(new a) Evolve national roadmaps to build capabilities to democratise innovation for productive employment and decent work for all. (SDG 8)

(a) Establish national digital skills strategies, adapt education curricula at all levels and provide for adult training programmes for the digital age. Our goal is 80 percent of women and men with basic digital skills and at least 60 percent with intermediate or advanced digital skills (SDGs 4 & 5);

- (b) Increase the availability of **public** digital technology platforms, software and educational curricula in diverse languages and formats – **including minority languages** – that are accessible to all, including people with disabilities (SDG 10);
- (c) Target and tailor capacity-building for women and girls, children and youth, as well as older, disabled and persons belonging to marginalized groups, and take the views of each into account in the design and implementation of programmes (SDGs 5 & 10);
- (d) Develop and undertake national digital inclusion surveys that are disaggregated, including on the basis of gender, to identify learning gaps and inform priorities in specific contexts (SDGs 5 & 10);
- (e) Prioritize and set targets for the skilling of public officials and institutions to enact, develop and implement strategies and policies for trusted and secure digital public services, including the development of cybersecurity capacity and skills (SDG 16);
- (f) Develop vocational training for workers in occupations subject to significant automation or augmentation to minimize the adverse effects of digitalization (SDG 8);
- (g) Develop common digital competency frameworks and training standards to facilitate pooling of training resources and the mobilization of public and private funds in support of capacity-building (SDGs 4 & 17).

Cluster 3. Digital public goods and infrastructure

13. Safe, inclusive and interoperable digital public infrastructure has the potential to deliver services at scale and increase social and economic opportunities for all. Open-source software, platforms, data, standards and content that can be freely used and adapted can empower societies and individuals to direct digital technologies to their development needs, **when backed by appropriate governance frameworks to promote equity and accountability**. These digital public goods are key drivers of inclusive digital transformation.

(The construction of digital infrastructure is increasingly politically charged and determined by geo-political factors. Without appropriate governance frameworks, such projects tend to entrench deep power asymmetries and dependencies. Eg: Meta's Free Basics.)

14. We recognize that there are multiple models of digital public infrastructure, and that each society will develop and use shared digital systems according to its specific needs and digital transformation goals. Transparent and lawful digital systems and **digital human rights** safeguards promote public trust and use of digital services.

15. We commit by 2030 to:

- (a) Develop, disseminate and maintain, through **appropriately governed** multistakeholder cooperation, safe and secure digital public goods - open-source software, platforms and **technology** standards that benefit society as a whole (SDGs 8, 9 & 10);
- (b) Promote the adoption of open standards and interoperability to facilitate the use of digital public goods across different platforms and systems (All SDGs);
- (c) Recognise the digital public goods standard as an enabler of public and private investment and digital cooperation (SDG 17);
- (d) Develop and agree on a set of safeguards for safe, inclusive, secure, **rights-preserving** and responsible digital public infrastructure that can be adopted by and tailored to the specific needs of each society (SDG 16);

- (e) Exchange and make publicly available best practices and use cases of digital public infrastructure to inform governments, the private sector and other stakeholders, building on existing UN and other repositories (SDGs 16 & 17);
- (f) Increase and strategically reallocate investment and funding toward the development of digital public infrastructure, especially in developing countries (SDG 17);
- (g) Encourage the formation of partnerships that bring together governments, the private sector, civil society, technical and academic communities. and international and regional organizations to design, launch and support initiatives that leverage technology to **enhance capacity and further regenerative innovation** ~~that advance solutions~~ for the SDGs (SDG 17).

Objective 2. Expanding inclusion in the digital economy

Cluster 1. Access to digital technologies

16. We recognize that equitable and affordable access to digital technologies can unlock the potential of the digital economy for every society. We recognize digital access to encompass opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, research, and capacity as well as technology transfers.

17. Widening the opportunities for inclusion requires an enabling policy, legal and regulatory environment that supports **public and private** innovation, nurtures digital talent and skills, and promotes digital entrepreneurship **and R&D innovation hubs for robust domestic digital ecosystems**. Such environments, at international and national levels, support investment and the voluntary transfer of digital technologies on mutually agreed **and fair** terms to developing countries. (*See, [African contribution to GDC](#)*)

(Measures to expand inclusion should respect the policy autonomy and development sovereignty of countries, particularly developing countries. Currently, this does not appear as a consideration in the GDC draft. There is no acknowledgement of the need to tackle the market power of big technology companies that impede the growth of smaller market players in developing countries or the establishment of mutually beneficial digital value chains ([South Centre, 2023](#)))

18. Robust cyber-security standards and capacity are also essential to facilitate commercial transactions and enable safe, secure and trustworthy online environments.

19. We commit by 2030 to:

- (a) Support international, regional and national efforts to develop enabling environments for digital transformation, including legal and regulatory frameworks (SDGs 10 & 16);
- (b) Call on regional and multilateral organizations as well as governments to support national digital readiness assessments and, where requested and as appropriate, provide technical assistance to national authorities (All SDGs);
- (c) Promote knowledge-sharing and technology transfer initiatives (SDG 17);
- (d) Encourage South-South and triangular digital cooperation to accelerate knowledge development and expand access to research capacity (SDG 17);
- (e) Pool knowledge and best practices on digital enterprise to support innovation programmes and local technological solutions in developing countries (SDG 9);

(f) Foster innovation and entrepreneurship, including among women and youth entrepreneurs with the goal of increasing the number of digital start-ups and small and medium enterprises in developing countries (SDGs 8 & 9);

(g) Mainstream cybersecurity infrastructure and skilling in national digital transformation strategies (SDG 9).

Objective 3. Fostering an inclusive, open, safe and secure digital space

Cluster 1. Human rights

20. We recognize all human rights to be enablers of sustainable development and closing digital divides. We commit to promote, respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of everyone in the digital space, **and inclusion of an intersectional gender lens that acknowledges the differential impacts that digital technologies have on women, girls and people of diverse genders and sexualities**. We will apply international human rights law in the design, development, deployment, use and regulation of digital and emerging technologies so that users are protected from harm, bias and all forms of discrimination and can fully benefit from digitalization. We recognize **the need for appropriate public policy processes to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders fulfill their roles and responsibilities** in this endeavour, especially the private sector, including as outlined in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

21. We commit to:

(a) **Enact effective baseline legislation to protect and promote digital human rights and ensure that national legislation relevant to digital technologies is compliant with international law (All SDGs)**;

(It is vital to recognize that digitalization presents us with the need to update the traditional human rights language to adequately protect political, social and economic freedoms in the current context. These have been recognised, inter alia, in the work of many UN agencies, and include:

- *the right to privacy and decisional autonomy,*
- *the right to data access,*
- *the right to explanation,*
- *the right to opt out, the right to be represented (or not) in digital system*
- *protection against all forms of data discrimination including unfair denial of citizen entitlements,*
- *the right to contest automated decisions and workers' data rights in algorithmic workplaces)*

(b) Establish appropriate safeguards to prevent and address any adverse human rights impacts arising from the use of digital and emerging technologies, **including specific benchmarks and standards for digital human rights at the international level (All SDGs)**; *(See, [UN SG on Digital Human Rights](#))*

(c) Strengthen legal and policy frameworks to **protect and promote the rights of women, youth and children and their rights online**, including **their right to freedom** from all forms of online violence in accordance with international standards and human rights law (All

SDGs). (See, [CEDAW and Child Rights Convention](#))

(d) Tackle unaccountable business practices in the digital economy in order to ensure a just digital transition (All SDGs) (See, [EU statement on the GDC and European Digital Rights and Principles](#))

22. We request the Secretary-General to submit a proposal, for the consideration by the General Assembly at the 79th session, for the establishment of a UN Digital Human Rights Advisory Service to provide, upon the request, practical guidance on human rights and technology issues to governments, the private sector and relevant stakeholders, with specific attention to extraterritorial obligations of state parties for protecting and promoting human rights in digital value chains. (All SDGs).

(According to the [Maastricht Principles on Extra-Territorial Obligations of States](#), parties may hold States accountable for violating human rights of people outside of their own territories. Additionally, States are duty-bound to support one another and cooperate in the realization of all peoples' economic, social and cultural rights.)

23. We call on and undertake to institute public policy measures for:

(a) Digital technology companies and developers to incorporate human rights law and principles in the development, deployment and use of digital and emerging technologies, including through the application of human rights due diligence and impact assessments, including specific to women's and children's rights, across the technology life cycle (All SDGs);

(b) Digital technology companies, developers and social media platforms to commit to promote, protect and respect human rights online, be accountable for violations and abuses, and provide access to effective remedy in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other relevant frameworks (SDGs 5, 10 & 16);

Cluster 2. Internet governance

24. We recognize that the Internet is a critical global public resource for inclusive and equitable development digital transformation. In order to be accessible and interoperable to all, it must be ~~stable and unfragmented~~ governed as a global public good in an inclusive, transparent, democratic and accountable manner. (See [APC](#))

(Fragmentation in legal regimes is a trojan horse invoked by digital capitalism for frictionless business. What is needed is to be able to make the global internet an international communication commons that is governed by international rule of law rooted in human rights for all peoples and nations.)

25. We recognize and commit to a democratic multistakeholder governance mechanism for global internet governance encompassing technical and public policy issues that can effectively ~~uphold the role of the Internet Governance Forum and multi-stakeholder cooperation in maintain~~ the Internet as a global public good. ~~a universal, free and secure Internet at the governance, content and technical layers.~~ (See, [WSIS Geneva Declaration of Principles, para 49](#))

(The management of the Internet encompasses both technical and public policy issues. WSIS gave the mandate for enhanced cooperation to address both. The Internet Governance Forum is just one part of this mechanism.)

26. We commit to:

- (a) Promote a universal, free and secure Internet and take concrete steps to create and maintain a safe, secure and enabling online environment for all (SDG 9);
- (b) Support the Internet Governance Forum as a durable bottom-up multistakeholder platform for discussion on public policy issues related to the Internet (SDGs 9 & 10);
- (c) Continue efforts to **ensure parity of participation** ~~increase diverse participation~~ in the Internet Governance Forum, especially ~~by governments and the private sector~~ **to strengthen voices from developing countries and marginalised groups** (SDG 10);
- (d) Refrain from Internet shutdowns and ensure that any restrictions are in full compliance with international law, including with the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality and non-discrimination (SDG 16).
- (e) Support action lines for emerging internet-related public policy issues, including their intersections with data and AI governance at the WSIS+20 review.**

Cluster 3. Digital trust and safety

27. We must urgently eliminate and prevent technology-facilitated gender-based and sexual violence, hate speech, discrimination, information manipulation and disinformation, cybercrime, cyberbullying and online child sexual exploitation and abuse. We acknowledge our collective responsibility to establish and maintain robust risk mitigation and redress measures that also protect privacy and freedom of expression.

28. We commit by 2030 to:

- (a) Create a safe and trustworthy online space for all users by defining and adopting common standards, guidelines and industry actions that promote safe civic spaces and address harmful content on digital platforms, drawing on work underway by UN entities, regional organizations and multistakeholder initiatives (SDGs 3, 5, 9, 10, 16 & 17);
- (b) Prioritize, as governments, the development and implementation of national online child safety policies and standards, **and create online safety-related training materials and safeguards for children and youth who engage in these spaces** in accordance with international human rights law, **including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.** (SDGs 3, 5 & 10);

(States hold responsibility for producing appropriate material and ensuring that children's rights online are protected.)

- (c) Institutionalize regular collaboration between national online safety institutions to exchange best practices and develop shared understandings of actions to protect privacy, freedom of expression and access to information while safeguarding against harm (SDG 17);
- (d) Ensure laws and regulations on the use of technology, in areas such as surveillance and encryption, are consistent with international standards and norms on privacy, freedom of expression, due process and access to information and effective recourse (SDGs 10 & 16);
- (e) Develop, through multistakeholder consultations, effective methodologies to measure track and counter online violence against women and girls (SDG 5);
- (f) Monitor and review digital platform policies and practices on countering child

sexual exploitation and abuse online (SDG 3).

29. We further urgently:

(a) Call on digital technology companies and developers to engage with users of all ages and backgrounds to incorporate the perspectives and needs of diverse groups, including children and youth, in the design and delivery of digital technologies (SDGs 5 & 10);

(b) Call on digital technology companies and developers, to co-develop industry accountability frameworks, in consultation with other stakeholders that, inter alia, define responsibilities and commit to standards, **redress mechanisms** as well as auditable public reports (SDGs 9 & 17);

~~(c) Call on social media platforms to provide online safety related training materials and safeguards to children and youth who engage in these spaces (SDG 3);~~

(Corporations that have created a dysfunctional public sphere and exacerbated the risks and harms that children face online cannot be the purveyors of child safety. This is the responsibility of states. Hence, added to 28b)

(d) Establish reporting mechanisms for users and third parties representing their interests to report potential policy violations, including special reporting mechanisms for children (SDG 3).

Cluster 4 5. Information integrity

30. Access to relevant, reliable and accurate information and knowledge is essential for an inclusive, open, safe and secure digital space. We will work together to promote information integrity, tolerance and respect online, as well as to protect the integrity of democratic processes. We recognize that digital and emerging technologies can facilitate the manipulation and interference of information in ways that are harmful to societies and people and create risks for international peace and security. We will counter disinformation and mitigate the risks of information manipulation in a manner consistent with human rights and freedom of expression.

31. We commit by 2030 to:

(new a) Evolve appropriate national policies and laws on communication and epistemic rights for diversity in digital media environments, including interoperability of digital platforms and services.

(Apart from ensuring access to relevant, reliable and accurate information and knowledge, it is also significant to ensure a diverse and plural digital media ecosystem through appropriate rights framework and national laws and policies.)

(a) Design and roll out digital training curricula to ensure that all users have the skills and knowledge to safely and critically interact with content and with information providers (SDG 4);

(b) Promote diverse and resilient information ecosystems, including by strengthening public service media **and community media, through a range of fiscal instruments.** (SDGs 9 & 16)

(Investment for pluralistic local media is key to deepen democracy in the social media age. Fiscal resources for this may be generated by taxing platforms directly or requiring local advertisers to pay taxes on their ad spending.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/thoughts/ways-generate-tax-revenue-social-media-641422#lg=1&slide=0>

(c) Promote access to information in conflict and crisis situations, to protect and empower communities in situations of vulnerability and marginalization (SDG 10).

32. We further urgently:

(a) Call on social media platforms to enhance the transparency and accountability of their systems, including terms of service and content moderation policies in local languages, to empower users to make informed choices (SDGs 9 & 10);

(b) Call on social media platforms to provide researcher access to data to build an evidence base on how to address mis and disinformation that can inform government and industry policies, standards and best practices (SDGs 9, 16 & 17);

(c) Call on digital technology companies and communities to continue to develop and publicly communicate actions to mitigate risks arising from AI-generated deception, including by identifying AI-generated material, authenticity certification for content and origins, watermarking and other techniques (SDGs 10, 16 & 17).

Objective 4. Advancing equitable international data governance

Cluster 1. Data privacy and security

33. We recognize that equitable and interoperable data governance is essential to advance development objectives, protect human rights and foster innovation. The increasing collection, sharing and processing of data, including by AI systems, may amplify risks and challenge established data protection and privacy norms. We recognize the urgent need for strengthened international data governance to unlock the full potential of digital and emerging technologies.

34. We commit to develop international and national data governance frameworks that maximize the benefits of data use and enable equitable sharing of data value with source communities, while protecting privacy and securing data in ways that are lawful, transparent and accountable.

(The language of maximising benefits can be tricky in the current extractivist economy. What is needed is 'equitable benefit sharing'.)

35. We commit by 2030 to:

(a) Draw on existing international and regional guidelines on the protection of digital privacy in the development of data governance frameworks, including UN, OECD and other frameworks (All SDGs);

(b) Empower individuals and groups to participate in the processing, control and use of their personal data, including through legally mandated protections for data privacy, drawing on regional frameworks such as the AU Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (SDGs 10 & 16);

(c) Ensure that data collection, storage and processing practices are transparent, secure and in full respect of international law (All SDGs);

(d) Develop skilled workforces capable of collecting, processing, analyzing and storing data safely and securely (SDGs 8 & 9).

Cluster 2. Data exchanges and standards

36. We acknowledge that data access and benefits are currently unequally distributed.

Data divides, including gender data gaps, can lead to the misuse of data.

37. We recognize that representative and interoperable data exchanges and standards can increase the accessibility of data and, thereby close data divides. We will enable open data and data commons **with appropriate stewardship mechanisms** that support states, communities, groups and individuals, respectively, to utilize and leverage data for their development and wellbeing, **eliminating data harms and enabling equitable distribution of data value**.

(Recognition of data commons is significant, however, there is no provision to safeguard against its exploitation and private capture. Further, the text provides opportunity to adopt data stewardship by embracing the idea of ‘data as a form of collective value and redistributing benefits toward their members’. Also see, [Jamie Duncan](#))

38. We commit by 2030 to:

(a) Develop and agree data and metadata standards that prevent and address bias, discrimination or human rights violations and abuses throughout the data life cycle, including through regular data auditing (*SDGs 3, 5, 10 & 16*);

(b) Develop common definitions, ~~and~~ standards **and licensing mechanisms** on the use and reuse of data for public good – **with particular attention to open government data programs** ~~and third party data sharing in global, regional and national data exchanges~~ (*All SDGs*).

38. We further invite the UN Statistical Commission and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to convene an intergovernmental multistakeholder process to develop and agree the above definitions and standards. (*All SDGs*)

Cluster 3. Data for development

39. We recognize that data is critical for tracking, targeting and accelerating progress across the SDGs as well as responding effectively to crises. We commit to strengthen international cooperation to close the current serious gaps on data for development and to increase the public availability of SDG data. We will champion the responsible use and sharing of data within and between countries to advance progress across the SDGs.

40. We commit by 2030 to:

(a) Increase financing for data and statistics and enhance efforts to build capacity in data skills and responsible data use, particularly in developing countries. Our goal is a 50 percent increase in financing for sustainable development data (*SDG 17*);

(b) Strengthen efforts to collect, analyze and disseminate relevant, reliable and disaggregated data for better monitoring and policy making to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Our goal is a 50 percent increase in the data available to monitor the SDGs, disaggregated by sex and other relevant characteristics (*SDGs 5 & 10*);

(c) Develop open and accessible data systems to support effective disaster early-warning and crisis response (*SDG 11*);

(d) Create international data collection systems and data commons **backed by appropriate governance mechanisms for equitable sharing of the benefits of data innovation that can** advance environmental sustainability and other sustainable development goals. Our goal is the establishment of quality standard datasets such as a global environmental data set on the implementation of the Paris Agreement (*SDGs*

12 & 13).

(There is a need to recognize adequate and equitable benefit sharing mechanisms similar to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing in the context of biodiversity to guarantee sovereignty of communities from whom data is aggregated, and to ensure data providers are compensated for the economic value of their data.)

Cluster 4. Cross-border data flows

41. Cross-border data flows are a critical driver of the digital economy. We recognize the potential social and economic benefits of responsible cross-border data flows, in particular for small and medium enterprises. We will identify innovative, interoperable and inclusive mechanisms to maximize data flows within and between countries while respecting relevant data protection and privacy norms **and digital sovereignty of nations and peoples**. (See, Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, para 49a & Tunis Agenda, para 35a)

(Mechanisms for cross-border data flow must respect the digital sovereignty of nations and people. The autonomy of all nation-states to evolve domestic data governance regimes for their infrastructure development must be recognized.)

42. We commit by 2030 to:

(a) Implement the concept of Data Free Flow **for Equitable Development** ~~with Trust~~ to promote trustworthy, **fair and inclusive digital economies** and create **equitable** business opportunities (SDGs 9 & 11); (See, G77 statement on GDC)

(Data free flows with equity are needed to ensure there is no unidirectional flow of data and value and that value is shared.)

(b) Advance multistakeholder consultations to identify and document solutions to DFFT challenges with a view to developing publicly available knowledge and best practices (SDG 17);

(c) Promote and support the implementation of regional and global data policy frameworks that contribute to the emergence of harmonized data economies **and regenerative local innovation** through the use and sharing of cross-border data and the determination of liabilities (SDGs 8,9 & 10).

Objective 5. Governing emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, for humanity

43. We recognize that the pace and power of emerging technologies are creating new opportunities but also new risks for humanity, some of which are yet unknown. We recognize international, regional, national and industry efforts underway to advance the design, development, deployment and use of safe, secure, and trustworthy Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems according to their priorities and needs. We commit to adhere to the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence.

44. International cooperation on AI governance is urgently required to inclusively assess and address the potential impact of AI systems on all societies and individuals, and to promote coordination and interoperability across emerging AI governance frameworks. We commit to advance equitable and inclusive approaches to harnessing AI benefits

and mitigating risks.

45. We recognize the immense potential of AI systems for sustainable development across all the SDGs. This potential will not be realized automatically. We will govern AI in the public interest and ensure that AI applications foster diverse cultures and languages and support locally-generated intelligence data for the benefit of peoples' and nations' countries and communities' right to science and innovation and the right to development.

(AI applications need to foster local capabilities to generate and manage intelligence from data. Also right to benefits of scientific progress and its applications is a part of ICESCR (Article 15))

46. Inclusive cooperation on AI governance to develop common understandings and best practices would complement and support national and industry efforts to deliver safe, secure and trustworthy AI systems in full respect, promotion and protection of human rights and international law. Effective international governance of AI should promote scientific consensus, support interoperability and the harmonization of norms, safety standards and risk management as well as capacity-building and benefit-sharing to direct emerging technologies, including AI, towards the pursuit of sustainable development.

47. We consider that international governance of emerging technologies, including AI, requires an agile, multi-disciplinary and networked multistakeholder approach. We recognize that international governance can promote transparency, collaboration and help avoid overlap and fragmentation of AI efforts. We recognize the central role of the UN in supporting international AI governance.

48. We have a unique opportunity, through this Compact, to establish the foundations for international governance of AI.

49. To that end we commit to:

(a) Establish, under the auspices of the UN, collaborating actively with existing AI initiatives within the UN system, an International Scientific Panel on AI to conduct independent multi-disciplinary scientific risk and evidence-based opportunity assessments. The Panel will:

(i) issue six-monthly reports, drawing on national and regional horizon-scanning initiatives and, as necessary, provide early warning;

(ii) support the development of common assessment methodologies, AI definitions and taxonomies;

(iii) support inclusive academic partnerships for research and knowledge management on AI.

(b) Initiate an annual global dialogue on AI governance with expert representatives of civil society, academia, the technical community, private sector, and of government AI safety institutes or other equivalent offices. This dialogue will:

(i) build shared understandings and interoperability of governance, risk management and safety frameworks for AI;

(ii) promote standards on non-military AI safety, trust and compatibility with international human rights law developed through national AI Safety Summits and related international processes and;

(iii) share best practices and foster collaborative partnerships, including through existing

mechanisms such as the IGF's Policy Network on AI.

(c) Call on international and national standard-setting organizations to collaborate to promote the harmonization of AI standards that uphold safety, reliability, environmental sustainability, gender equality and human rights (*SDGs 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16 & 17*);

(d) Commit to increased AI capacity-building, leveraging existing efforts such as ITU's AI for Good conference, UNESCO's Readiness Assessment Methodology, WHO's digital health initiatives and other relevant efforts to facilitate access to AI applications for the SDGs. International partnerships on capacity-building and benefits-sharing of AI will:

(i) support the development of education and training programmes and AI governance guidance for the public sector;

(ii) facilitate AI model training and development and incentives for cross-border data exchange, including the development of agreements on cross-border training, testing, liability and settlements to enable small and medium enterprise participation in the digital economy;

(iii) foster South-South and triangular cooperation around AI compute, data, talent and benchmarks to develop representative quality data sets, local solutions, use cases and entrepreneurial ecosystems for *regenerative* innovation (*SDGs 4, 9, 10, & 17*);

(e) Encourage public and private investment on AI for sustainable development through pooled funding arrangements (*SDG 17*).

50. We therefore:

(a) Request the President of the General Assembly to appoint at the 79th session of the General Assembly co-facilitators to:

(i) draft, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, terms of reference and modalities for the establishment and functioning of the International Scientific Panel on AI for the adoption by the General Assembly;

(ii) identify, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, modalities for the annual global dialogue on AI governance for the adoption by the General Assembly;

(b) Request the Secretary-General to establish under his authority a Global Fund for AI and Emerging Technologies for Sustainable Development to:

(i) catalyze the development of representative and quality standard data sets to inform the public use of AI at scale;

(ii) support the development of compute capacity that can apply existing AI models to localized data sets *and the creation of home-grown public AI models* ~~in the public and private sector~~;

(iii) build and deliver skills-based training in collaboration with technology companies and technical and academic communities;

(iv) promote and align AI-based solutions for the SDGs.

(v) deepen research and innovation in developing countries for contextually appropriate AI ecosystems

51. This Fund should be put into operation with a target amount of 100 million US dollars

at launch in 2025, financed by voluntary contributions from public, private and philanthropic sources. To this end, the Secretary-General should initiate consultations among potential donors and report on progress of the Fund in his annual reporting on implementation progress of the Global Digital Compact.

Follow up and review

52. We will implement the Global Digital Compact, within our own countries and at regional and global levels, taking into account different national realities, capacities, and levels of development, and respecting national policies and priorities.

53. Government-led efforts can only succeed with the active engagement of **civil society**, and the private sector, technical and academic communities ~~and civil society~~, whose innovations and contributions to digitalization are fundamental and irreplaceable. We must strengthen and direct our collaboration, and accelerate implementation of existing cooperative efforts, to achieve the objectives set out in this Compact.

(People come first in public policy development)

54. We invite international and regional organizations, digital technology companies, technical community and civil society groups to endorse the Global Digital Compact and take active part in its implementation **and in monitoring and follow up**. We request the Secretary-General to put in place modalities for the voluntary endorsement of this Compact and to make this information public and accessible by December 2024.

55. We recognize the importance of financing to unlock the full potential of this Compact. Successful implementation will require public, private and multilateral resources, including the **development of innovative financing mechanisms to enable action at local level**, pooling of investments in joint facilities for impact at scale, such as the UN Digital Cooperation Fund, the Digital Window of the Joint SDG Fund, facilities in multilateral development banks, as well as issue-specific **and** mechanisms. We call on governments to make support to digital transformation integral to development assistance, including through benchmarking and increased allocations to digital and data initiatives. We invite private sector and philanthropic actors to consider financial pledges in support of this Compact.

56. We will build on the processes emanating from the WSIS to support implementation of Compact commitments and actions. We recognize the contribution of all UN agencies, funds and programmes in advancing digital cooperation, including ITU, UNCTAD, UNDP and UNESCO and request them to support Compact implementation, particularly in relation to actions to close the digital divides and to accelerate progress across the SDGs.

57. We reaffirm the role of the Internet Governance Forum as a key **platform for** multistakeholder **policy dialogue on** ~~platform for~~ Internet governance **and for facilitating discourse between bodies dealing with different cross-cutting international public policies regarding the Internet and discuss issues that do not fall within the scope of any existing body as per the WSIS(Tunis Agenda, and for** the promotion of an inclusive, open, safe and secure digital space. We encourage governments, the private sector, **civil society, the technical and academic community** and all stakeholders to engage actively in its work with a view to advancing Compact commitments on **the governance of the Internet and digital technologies in general, including AI governance**. We invite the Internet Governance ~~ment~~ Forum to build on its youth networks to amplify the voices and views of young people in

policy deliberations on the Internet.

58. We recognize the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) in reviewing WSIS progress and invite it to consider how it can expand this role by working in collaboration with other UN agencies and offices, as appropriate, and coordinate ~~contribute further to~~ the implementation of the Compact. We also invite the CSTD to contribute further to the implementation of the Compact, especially in advancing actions to expand opportunities for inclusion in the digital economy and equitable international data governance.

59. We recognize the role of OHCHR in supporting all stakeholders to implement the Compact, particularly in relation to the human rights-related aspects of digital cooperation and actions to foster an inclusive, equitable, open, safe and secure digital space.

60. We look forward to the WSIS+20 Review in 2025 to identify how WSIS processes can support practical implementation, including by adapting WSIS action lines to reflect Compact commitments and actions. We invite the WSIS+20 Review to consider how WSIS processes going forward can be leveraged to support and integrate follow up of the Compact and implementation in a manner that utilises and strengthens existing mechanisms, at the international level as well as towards streamlining actions at the national level. We also invite the WSIS+20 Review to consider how youth perspectives can be incorporated in this effort.

61. We recognize the role of the Secretary-General in leading UN system-wide collaboration on digital technologies. We also recognize the importance of enhancing UN system-wide coordination on digital and emerging technologies. To this end, we recommend that the General Assembly decides to establish a dedicated office for coordinating digital and emerging technology in the Secretariat, based on a detailed proposal on the operational functions, structure, resources and staffing, including provisions for a liaison presence in Geneva, and, in that regard, we request the Secretary-General to submit this proposal to the General Assembly during its 79th session.

(see comments below 63)

62. To track and monitor progress we request the Secretary-General to provide, within 12 months, a Compact implementation map that reflects the contributions of existing mechanisms and all relevant stakeholders in support of commitments and actions and identifies potential time-bound targets for their achievement.

(see comments below 63)

63. We further request the Secretary-General to establish an accessible and interactive Global Digital Compact portal within 12 months. We invite Member States and participating stakeholders to report voluntarily through this portal, on an annual basis, on the progress of their Compact implementation activities. We request the Secretary-General to draw on these inputs to prepare an annual report on progress, key trends and developments, starting in 2025. This could include reporting, inter alia, on financial commitments and pledges in support of Compact implementation.

(In respect of 61, 62 and 63 it is important that new mechanisms are not introduced unnecessarily. Agencies holding the WSIS Action lines, IGF, and the Office of the SG can bring a collaborative proposal to the General Assembly that enables coherence across the mandate and work of the ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD, as well as the OHCHR and

UN DESA and the IGF, in close collaboration with other UN Agencies as appropriate. The proposals can establish a compact follow-up and implementation mechanism in Geneva that harmonises WSIS follow up and implementation, with Compact follow up and implementation. The CSTD can act as the focal point for reporting to the GA (as it does through the ECOSOC) on WSIS, and the UN DESA, ITU and UNESCO can develop a joint proposal for multistakeholder engagement in the process, leveraging the IGF, National and Regional IGFs, and the WSIS Forum. Having a Tech Envoy office play the role of coordination across the UN system will be a useful measure. The above-mentioned WSIS follow-up mechanisms can act as the Geneva liaison, and the office in the SG Secretariat in New York can act as the Compact follow-up and implementation liaison with the GA in New York.)

64. The pace of technology requires regular review of our digital cooperation. We recognize the role of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and ECOSOC in monitoring and reviewing progress of the Compact's objectives, particularly as they relate to closing digital and data divides. We recognize the role of the UN Human Rights Council in tracking progress to foster an inclusive, open, safe and secure digital space for all.

65. The cross-cutting nature of digital technologies and the multiplicity of actors involved in digital cooperation requires aligned follow up. We therefore commit to review the Global Digital Compact to assess progress against objectives and to identify emerging opportunities and challenges for global digital cooperation. We decide to convene a high-level meeting, under the auspices of the General Assembly and entitled "High-Level Review of the Global Digital Compact", to take place every two years starting in the 80th session with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. We request the President of the General Assembly to:

(This may detract from the focus on the WSIS. It could be merged with the WSIS review process)

(a) appoint co-facilitators at the 79th session to conclude open, transparent and inclusive intergovernmental consultations to determine the modalities for the high-level meetings entitled "High-Level Review of the Global Digital Compact";

(b) appoint co-facilitators at the 80th session to conclude open, transparent and inclusive intergovernmental consultations to agree in advance a Progress Declaration for adoption at the High-Level Review.