

Joint Statement issued by the Global Digital Justice Forum and the Global South Alliance in the lead-up to the Global Dialogue on AI Governance

July 2026

The current trajectory of Artificial Intelligence (AI) innovation has consolidated the neocolonial structures of development. Today, a handful of US and Chinese transnational corporations dominate global AI systems. Driven by massive capital, semiconductor manufacturing dominance, and hyperscale cloud infrastructure, these companies control over 90% of global AI data center capacity. Their market capitalization exceeds the combined national income of many countries in the Global South. The wealth and power amassed by these corporations come at a staggering cost, borne disproportionately by the South. From the devalued, dehumanizing labor that is essential for training AI models to the critical minerals, land, energy, and water, communities in the South continue to provide the scaffolding for the AI economy and society, without the voice and power to shape and benefit from this paradigm. These systemic injustices also perpetuate deep dependencies on current and future infrastructures – over which communities lack control and sovereign agency.

The [Global Digital Justice Forum](#) (GDJF)¹ and the [Global South Alliance](#) (GSA)² believe that the emerging AI order lacks legitimacy; it grants unbridled impunity to powerful corporations, while reducing humanity and nature to objects of limitless extraction. The many summits and conversations about AI governance have failed to tackle these core issues.

Against this backdrop, we exhort the UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance to deliver on a South-led AI paradigm, anchored in a vision of rights-based development, respectful of planetary boundaries, and committed to intergenerational justice and human rights.

We urge that the Global Dialogue on AI Governance commit to the following:

1. End AI extractivism

A 'move-fast-break-things' approach to digital innovation aids profit, not people. In particular, the systemic and collective risks and harms associated with the violation of human rights, the erosion of democratic processes, the abuse of the environment, and the discrimination and invisibility of marginalized citizens in AI-driven decision-making in public services remain consistently ignored and underplayed in international consensus declarations. AI innovation must embrace the precautionary principle. It must be ethically and transparently developed, democratically accountable, and grounded in a globally agreed minimum floor for meaningful and dignified work, pluralistic knowledge, diversified economies, and planetary flourishing.

¹ The [Global Digital Justice Forum](#) (GDJF) is a coalition of 45 civil society organizations that includes sustainable development organizations, digital rights networks, feminist groups, corporate watchdogs, communication rights advocates, trade unions, and cooperatives from across the Global South, working in close association with allies and like-minded organizations in the North.

² The [Global South Alliance \(GSA\)](#) is a network of 26 civil society organizations from across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. We've been involved in UN processes since the Global Digital Compact, including the WSIS+20 Review, and constantly engaging in National and Regional IGF Initiatives (NRIs), besides the global Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

2. Apply the Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) principle in international AI cooperation

The reckless path of data and AI technologies, designed and controlled by a few, has led to predatory value capture, strengthening the geo-economic and geo-political power of a handful of corporate actors and countries. The human and planetary costs arising from such opportunism are indeed a common concern. However, power differentials in international economic law have led to a status quo where trade, taxation, and Intellectual Property regimes clearly disadvantage developing countries, disproportionately enabling a massive transfer of wealth from the South to the North. This seriously undermines the development of digital infrastructure and human and institutional capabilities in developing countries. Such asymmetry must be remedied through global commitments to underwrite the development of regenerative, locally-led, AI infrastructures and models in the South.

3. Address corporate impunity in data and AI value chains

A global moratorium on the sale and use of AI systems that pose a high risk to human rights (such as remote biometric recognition, social scoring, spyware, and AI-driven autonomous weapons) is urgently needed. The proposed UN Binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations (TNCs) to hold global businesses accountable for human rights violations and environmental degradation in supply chains needs to be adopted without delay and appropriately future-proofed against the specific risks of harms and abuses in data and AI value chains.

4. Design a data governance framework that delivers on global equity

A 'one-size-fits-all' policy playbook for cross-border data flows governance will not deliver on equitable development. Development sovereignty must be recognized as a core principle in the global governance of cross-border data flows. Furthermore, the governance of the non-personal data commons requires a societal approach that includes safeguards for collective privacy and the rights of communities to steward the use and re-use of their data resources in innovation ecosystems, together with strong personal data protection rights.

5. Invest in the development of global public compute

The foundational infrastructure of compute is controlled by a few corporations. Even open-source AI models are often dependent on closed/proprietary infrastructure systems for their hosting and distribution. To ensure that data science and AI innovation deliver on public innovation, a global facility for public compute is needed. A 'CERN for AI' could support a distributed network of AI research centers coordinated by a central hub and provide access to innovators and researchers from developing countries.

The current trajectory of AI innovation is not working for the majority. The Global Dialogue on AI Governance must move the needle with conviction and courage towards people's participation, planetary wellbeing, and public value. Anything less will not do justice to the people of the South.

Please find the links to prior submissions from GDJF and GSA to official consultations of the Global Dialogue below:

- [GDJF's April 2026 submission](#)
- [GSA's April 2026 submission](#)