



---

# General Assembly First Committee

## Background Guide 2024

---

Written by Nathan Poon and Aidan Lapp





Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2024 Alberta Intercollegiate Model United Nations Conference hosted by MacEwan University. Our team is delighted to introduce our committee for this year's AIMUN Conference, the General Assembly First Committee (GA1). The MacEwan United Nations Club Executive Team will be at the forefront of this year's AIMUN. This year's committee directors are Secretary-General Nathan Poon and Deputy Secretary-General Aidan Lapp.

Nathan Poon serves as the 30th Secretary-General for the MacEwan United Nations Club. He is in his third year of a Computer Science degree with a minor in Political Science. He has also participated in numerous local and international Model United Nations simulations, earning awards such as Outstanding Delegation for representing China in last year's AIMUN and Distinguished Delegation for representing Norway and Ukraine in the National Model United Nations Conferences in New York and Germany. Aidan Lapp is the Director-General of MacEwan's Model UN Club. He is in his fourth year of a Political Science degree with a focus on international relations, and has received such commendations as the Provost Entrance Scholarship, Mad Hatter's Gala Scholarship, and a place on MacEwan University's Dean's List. He has also participated in Model UN simulations locally and internationally, receiving a Distinguished Delegation award while representing Norway in the NMUN New York 2023 as a member of General Assembly 1, and tackled the topic of the illicit arms trade. The preparations for this year's conference were supported by Brant Harker, Christian Galera, Ethan Fleger, and Mara Labastida.

The Topics on the agenda for this committee are:

1. Artificial Intelligence and the International System
2. Cybercrimes and Human Security

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics of this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member States' policies in depth and use the bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for this conference, each delegation must submit a one-page position paper on the two topics to [macewanunclub@gmail.com](mailto:macewanunclub@gmail.com) by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, February 26, 2024. Pre-written resolutions will not be accepted at the conference.

In addition, this conference strictly follows the National Model United Nations (NMUN) conference system. This includes the position paper guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers Website](#).

- The [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#), which explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting process.
- The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#), which includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the conference.



# 1. Artificial Intelligence and the International System

## Introduction

In October 2023, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres stated during the formation of the High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, “It is already clear that the malicious use of Artificial Intelligence could undermine trust in institutions, weaken social cohesion, and threaten democracy itself.” Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming highly prominent in multiple sectors of the international community - from healthcare to research and the military- and is now widely accessible to the general public. Within two months of its release in 2022, ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence chatbox, received an unprecedented 100 million users.<sup>1</sup> According to experts, AI has the potential to add up to \$15.7 trillion USD to the global economy across various sectors by 2030.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, an analysis by the International Monetary Fund estimates that AI is expected to impact 60% of jobs in advanced economies.<sup>3</sup>

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has stated that “AI technology brings major benefits in many areas, but without the ethical guardrails, it risks reproducing real world biases and discrimination, fueling divisions and threatening fundamental human rights and freedoms.”<sup>4</sup> UNESCO has further elaborated that AI has the potential to carry embedded biases and severe ethical concerns while having the ability to bolster disinformation, human rights issues, and climate degradation.<sup>5</sup>

While the positive effects of AI in research, healthcare, and global economies cannot be understated, its negative externalities pose an opportunity to outweigh it. In June 2023, for the first time, the UN Security Council discussed AI, its associated risks, and its potential to threaten international peace and security, showcasing AI’s newly realized potential harm among international organizations.<sup>6, 7</sup> Autonomous weapons systems (AWS) are “weapon systems that select targets and apply force without

---

<sup>1</sup> Milmo, Dan. “ChatGPT reaches 100 million users two months after launch.” *The Guardian*.

[www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/feb/02/chatgpt-100-million-users-open-ai-fastest-growing-app](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/feb/02/chatgpt-100-million-users-open-ai-fastest-growing-app).

<sup>2</sup> “Sizing the prize - PwCs Global Artificial Intelligence Study: Exploiting the AI Revolution.” PwC.

<https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/issues/data-and-analytics/publications/artificial-intelligence-study.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Mauro Cazzaniga, Florence Jaumotte, Longji Li, et al. “Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work.” *International Monetary Fund*.

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Staff-Discussion-Notes/Issues/2024/01/14/Gen-AI-Artificial-Intelligence-and-the-Future-of-Work-542379?cid=bl-com-SDNEA2024001>.

<sup>4</sup> Ramos, Gabriela. “Ethics of Artificial Intelligence.” *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*. <https://www.unesco.org/en/artificial-intelligence/recommendation-ethics>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Tokariuk, Olga. “Ukraine’s Secret Weapon - Artificial Intelligence.” *Center for European Policy Analysis*. <https://cepa.org/article/ukraines-secret-weapon-artificial-intelligence/>.

<sup>7</sup> “Press Conference by Security Council President on Programme of Work for July.” *United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. [https://press.un.org/en/2023/230703\\_sc.doc.htm](https://press.un.org/en/2023/230703_sc.doc.htm).



human intervention – pose serious humanitarian, legal, ethical and security concerns.<sup>8</sup> Recently, AWS has been at the forefront of military applications in the Israel/Gaza and Russia/Ukraine conflicts.<sup>9</sup> The International Committee of the Red Cross describes AWS as an “immediate cause of humanitarian concern and demand[s] an urgent, international political response.”<sup>10</sup> Additionally, AI has shown its potential to spread global disinformation by creating hyperrealistic deepfakes of world leaders.<sup>11</sup>

### ***International Frameworks and the Role of the International System***

In 2021, Member States unanimously adopted the first global standard on AI ethics, the UNESCO Recommendation on Ethics of AI.<sup>12</sup> This report outlines the principles and recommendations that all Member States should follow regarding AI development and is intended as an “ethical compass.”<sup>13</sup> Four core values are asserted as part of this recommendation for the foundation of AI systems: Human rights & human dignity; living in peaceful, just, and interconnected societies; ensuring diversity and inclusiveness; environment and ecosystem flourishing.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, the recommendation calls for a “human rights approach to AI.”<sup>15</sup>

Within the secretariat, various initiatives have been instigated by the Secretary-General. In October 2023, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres created the “High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence” to “undertake analysis and advance recommendations for the international governance of AI.”<sup>16</sup> In December 2023, the United Nations’ AI Advisory Body released its interim report “Governing AI for Humanity,” outlining various frameworks on which AI development should lay its foundation.<sup>17</sup> The “Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation” is a multi-year plan on

---

<sup>8</sup> “Joint call by the United Nations SG and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for States to establish new prohibitions and restrictions on Autonomous Weapon Systems.” *United Nations Secretary-General*. <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2023-10-05/note-correspondents-joint-call-the-united-nations-secretary-general-and-the-president-of-the-international-committee-of-the-red-cross-for-states-establish-new>

<sup>9</sup> Vincent, Elise. “Israel’s use of AI in bombings raises questions over rules of war.” *Le Monde*. [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2023/12/15/israel-s-use-of-ai-in-bombings-raises-questions-over-rules-of-war\\_6345351\\_23.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2023/12/15/israel-s-use-of-ai-in-bombings-raises-questions-over-rules-of-war_6345351_23.html).

<sup>10</sup> Davison, Neil. “What you need to know about autonomous weapons.” *International Committee of The Red Cross*. <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/what-you-need-know-about-autonomous-weapons>.

<sup>11</sup> Quinlan, Matthew. “AI is finding its voice and that’s bad for democracy.” *World Economic Forum*. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/11/ai-is-finding-its-voice-and-that-s-bad-for-democracy/>.

<sup>12</sup> Ramos, Gabriela. “Ethics of Artificial Intelligence.” *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*. <https://www.unesco.org/en/artificial-intelligence/recommendation-ethics>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> “High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence.” *United Nations Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology*. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/ai-advisory-body>.

<sup>17</sup> “Interim Report: Governing AI for Humanity.” *United Nations AI Advisory Body*. <https://www.un.org/en/ai-advisory-body>.



technology among numerous stakeholders, specifically outlining the need for global cooperation regarding the development of AI.<sup>18</sup>

Human Rights Council (HRC) resolution 51/22 acknowledges the human rights implications of emerging technologies, such as AWS, in the military domain. Subsequently, in December 2023, General Assembly resolution 78/241 was passed and outlined the need for Member States to address challenges and ethical concerns pertaining to AWS.<sup>19</sup>

### **Conclusion**

According to UN-appointed independent experts, “regulation is essential to curb AI for surveillance and disinformation.”<sup>20</sup> The relationship between Artificial Intelligence and the International System is a multifaceted topic that carries beneficial and adverse externalities on societal norms' legal, ethical, and social aspects. AI challenges Member States to derive the most efficient balance of AI governance - one that allows the newly harnessed technology to revolutionize society and assist in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Ethically questionable applications of AI in militaries, government surveillance, and datasets that reinforce discrimination have the potential to undermine the global community. More state and non-state actors will continue to realize the unharnessed power that AI entails and implement it within its activities.

### **Further Reading**

As you conduct your research, it may be helpful to consider the following questions: How can Member States work multilaterally to safeguard the positive externalities of AI while eliminating its negative traits? What are the connections between AI growth and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? How can effective AI policies and guidelines be better implemented nationally?

---

<sup>18</sup> “Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation.” *United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/>.

<sup>19</sup> “A/RES/78/248 - Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2023.” *United Nations General Assembly*. <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/431/11/pdf/n2343111.pdf?token=uk6OAxgNdhV1pci888&fe=true>.

<sup>20</sup> Yang, Chris. “Regulation essential to curb AI for surveillance, disinformation: rights experts.” *United Nations News Global perspective Human stories*. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1137302>.



## 2. Cybercrimes and Human Security

### *Introduction*

In an address to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) in 2018, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stated that “cybercrime is an area in which there is much work to do and no time to waste... The online sexual exploitation and abuse of children is proliferating, and women and girls are disproportionately harmed.”<sup>21</sup> Cybercrime notoriously lacks an internationally recognized definition,<sup>22</sup> but the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) notes that “broadly, cybercrime can be described as having cyber-dependent offences, cyber-enabled offences and, as a specific crime-type, online child sexual exploitation and abuse.”<sup>23</sup> The UNODC elaborates that “perpetrators of cybercrime and their victims can be located in different regions, and its effects can ripple through societies around the world, highlighting the need to mount an urgent, dynamic, and international response.”<sup>24</sup> Cybercrime is a novel, pressing threat to both international and state security; however, this committee will address not just these risks, but the risks placed on **human security** as well. As per General Assembly resolution 66/290, human security is defined as “an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people.” It further notes that “human security calls for people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people.”<sup>25</sup> In their 2023 Summary Report, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) emphasized the challenges posed in constructing policy that both curbs the threats to human security posed by cybercrimes while avoiding encroaching on civil liberties and human rights.<sup>26</sup> Bear this in mind as you begin considering responses to the ever-evolving threat posed by cybercrime.

---

<sup>21</sup> “United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres highlights priorities, urgent need to tackle global threats at UN Crime Commission in Austria.” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2018/May/united-nations-secretary-general-antnio-guterres-highlights-priorities--urgent-need-to-tackle-global-threats-at-un-crime-commission-in-austria.html>

<sup>22</sup> McLaughlin, Jenna. “UN debates how to define cybercrime.” *National Public Radio*. <https://www.npr.org/2023/09/13/1199324577/un-debates-how-to-define-cybercrime>

<sup>23</sup> “A UN treaty on cybercrime en route.” *United Nations*. <https://unric.org/en/a-un-treaty-on-cybercrime-en-route/>

<sup>24</sup> “Cybercrime.” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Romena*. <https://www.unodc.org/romena/en/cybercrime.html>

<sup>25</sup> “A/RES/66/288 - Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 June 2012.” *United Nations General Assembly*. <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FRES%2F66%2F288&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

<sup>26</sup> “Emphasizing challenges posed in cybercrimes.” *Internet Governance Forum*. [https://intgovforum.org/en/filedepot\\_download/300/26575](https://intgovforum.org/en/filedepot_download/300/26575).



## ***International Frameworks and the Role of the International System***

In 2019, the General Assembly successfully passed resolution 74/247 on “Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes.”<sup>27</sup> This document set in motion a years-long process of negotiation for a treaty on cybercrime, one that is still yet to be completed. It further established an intergovernmental ad hoc committee to prepare this treaty,<sup>28</sup> one chaired by H.E. Ms. Faouzia Boumaiza Mebarki from Algeria, and composed of an “intergovernmental committee of experts [and] representative of all regions.”<sup>29</sup> This committee has engaged in eight sessions since its inception (6 main, 2 organizational), and its final session will conclude on February 9th, 2024.<sup>30</sup>

While a formal agreement on cybercrime is yet to be fully realized, a firm groundwork has been laid. As early as 2012, the Human Rights Council passed resolution 20/L.13, calling for the recognition of the internet as a theatre for both the realization and stifling of the human right to freedom of expression.<sup>31</sup> Security Council resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017) both set forth a mandate for Member States to engage collaboratively to counter terrorist efforts in abusing technology.<sup>32</sup> The UNSC Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) further unanimously adopted the Delhi Declaration, which committed Member States “to prevent and combat digital forms of terror, notably using drones, social media, and online terrorist financing.”<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, efforts have also been made at establishing capacity-building initiatives targeted squarely at cybercrime and cybersecurity. For example, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) has worked diligently in the realm of cybersecurity to improve the resilience of all Member States to cybercrime. UNOCT has launched such initiatives as the Cybersecurity and New Technologies programme.<sup>34</sup> This program bears four primary goals: Developing knowledge and raising awareness of challenges and opportunities related to new technologies in countering terrorism; Enhancing skills and capacities required to develop and implement effective national counter-terrorism policy responses to the challenges and opportunities of new technologies; Enhancing skills and capacities required to protect critical infrastructures against terrorist cyber-attacks; and Enhancing criminal justice capacities to

---

<sup>27</sup> “A/RES/74/247 - Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 December 2019.” *United Nations General Assembly*.  
<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FRes%2F74%2F247&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> “Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes.” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/cybercrime/ad\\_hoc\\_committee/home](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/cybercrime/ad_hoc_committee/home)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> York, Jillian C. “UN Human Rights Council Resolution on Internet and Human Rights a Step in the Right Direction.” *Electric Frontier Foundation*.  
<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2012/07/un-human-rights-council-resolution-internet-and-human-rights-step-right-direction>

<sup>32</sup> “Cybersecurity and New Technologies.” *United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism*.  
<https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/cct/programme-projects/cybersecurity>.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.



counter and investigate terrorist use of new technologies.<sup>35</sup> Through programs such as this, Member States are supported in their endeavours to maintain both state and human security from threats posed by cybercrime, while also being able to actively pursue perpetrators.

### **Conclusion**

The Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), in referring to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), asserted that "[W]hen a State party imposes certain restrictions on the exercise of freedom of expression, these may not put in jeopardy the right itself."<sup>36</sup> It is thus imperative that, in addressing the risks posed by cybercrime, one does not neglect the protection of human rights. It is for this reason that an approach following the principles of human security is emphasized. With a strong groundwork of resolutions, treaties, and initiatives aimed at bolstering Member State resilience to cybercrimes, as well as a landmark treaty near fruition, now is the time to consider innovative approaches to the challenges of cybercrime. In so doing, human rights will be better protected, UN initiatives will face fewer obstacles, and human security, and by extension state and international security, will be upheld.

### **Further Reading**

As you engage in your research, consider the following questions: how can Member States work within the constraints of International Organizations to address the challenges posed by cybercrime; How can cybercrime be traced and monitored without encroaching on civil liberties and human rights, such as the right to privacy noted in Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR);<sup>37</sup> how can state sovereignty be protected while recognizing the need for global cooperation when addressing the topic of cybercrime, bearing in mind the borderless nature of the crime; how can international policy be developed that is capable of keeping up with the developments of new technologies?

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> "General Comment No.34: Article 19: Freedoms of opinion and expression." *Refworld Global Law & Policy Database*. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4e38efb52.html>

<sup>37</sup> "Universal Declaration of Human Rights." *United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights#:~:text=Article%2012.against%20s uch%20interference%20or%20attacks.>