Zero draft of the WSIS+20 Outcome Document:

Comments from the Global Digital Justice Forum

03 October 2025

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Contents

[1] The Global Digital Justice Forum is a dynamic coalition of civil society organizations from the Global South and their allies in the Global North who are committed to returning digital power to all peoples. Through multi-pronged action grounded in a structural justice perspective, the Forum seeks to bring to fruition the vision of an equitable, just, and development-oriented international digital order. The Forum represents a diverse array of civil society stakeholders, including sustainable development organizations, digital rights networks, feminist groups, corporate watchdogs, communication rights campaigners, trade unions, and cooperatives. For any clarifications or queries, please reach out to anitagurumurthy@gmail.com

Summary

Twenty years after the adoption of the Tunis Agenda, the challenge before us is not just to bridge the divides in Internet access and Information and Communication Technologies. It is equally about the spectre of digital inequality. The dividends of digital innovation are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few powerful corporations and countries. Social media platforms have failed to democratize voice, and digital marketplaces have largely benefited just a few players. We must face up to the fact that contrary to early expectations, the connectivity revolution has not been an equalizer.

The Global Digital Justice Forum's comments to the WSIS+20 zero draft seek to inform the WSIS+20 outcome document of the vital nuances that capture the reality and expectations of the majority.

An optimistic approach can still be pragmatic but only if attentive to the unease and aspirations of those in the margins; those hopeful of a better digital tomorrow. This must first honestly acknowledge that a profit-centric technological revolution has failed to open up pathways for a people-led, inclusive and development-oriented information society. This mainstream digital paradigm must be replaced by an alternative public technological paradigm that distributes the innovation dividends of the data and AI revolution.

Unfortunately, the WSIS+20 zero draft offers only a patchwork analysis – an overly-optimistic reading of what has worked, without a coherent structural analysis of digital injustice today.

The text therefore needs to grapple with the challenges confronting digital democracy and to give power to the possibilities latent in alternative digitalities. We believe that much remains to be done in this direction to ensure the document is ***fair to the present in order to be fit for the future.***

Our key messages are organized according to the sections of the WSIS+20 zero draft below. This is followed by our paragraph-specific textual comments.

Introduction

- We urge tempering the techno-optimistic reading of progress towards WSIS commitments, with an explicit acknowledgement of the challenges facing us today in terms of universalizing connectivity, governance of runaway algorithms that amplify sexism and other forms of hate, and the consolidation of market power in the data and AI revolution.

- Instead of an individualized reading of the problems of access and inclusion, we call for identifying the systemic and structural bases of exclusion and exploitation of the many by the unaccountable few who benefit disproportionately.

Information and communication technologies for development

- Among barriers to Internet access, it is important to underscore interruptions to connectivity stemming from shutdowns and restrictions in war zones.

- We also highlight the importance of 'do no harm' safeguards in the design and development of digital public goods.

Bridging digital divides

- A robust intersectional perspective on the gender digital divide is required to target measures on effectively closing the access gap for women and girls – in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), rural and remote areas. The story of unequal access is a mosaic of complex realities that aggregate averages fail to capture. What disaggregated statistics show is that regional realities shaped by the market paradigm are glossed over in the narrative of digital divides.

- While interventions must address demand-side barriers such as household-level restrictions/surveillance of women and girls' Internet behavior, this is not enough. Regulation and licensing frameworks that focus on supply-side business valuation priorities, such as spectrum auction price and investments, need to be revisited to secure affordable access for all. Alternative imaginaries of the public value of connectivity are urgently needed for inclusive, gender-transformative digital use ecosystems.

- Public access programs and community-centred connectivity initiatives, open standards that support a multilingual internet, and data and AI literacy, must be recognized as important measures to universalize meaningful access.

The digital economy

- The absence of an explicit commitment to address the governance deficit in the digital economy has led to market concentration and monopolies. Appropriate regulatory frameworks that encourage diversified economies and the inclusion of smaller economic actors are essential to a healthy digital economy. The push for universal financial inclusion through digital services and fintech must be matched by concomitant attention to a rights-based governance scaffolding.

- The increasing violations of foundational labor guarantees in platform work arrangements and AI value chains must be addressed.

- There should be a commitment to making public investment and to building effective regulatory frameworks for digital food systems.

Social and economic development

- Investment in critical thinking, public digital infrastructure, and overhauling education systems to build these capabilities is critical for human development in the AI age.

- Data and algorithmic discrimination in digital public services such as health, and the erosion of cultural commons in generative AI innovation systems, must be recognized as key threats to be addressed.

- Investment in public data exchanges and in public 'AI for SDGs' must be seen as important priorities by member states.

Environmental impacts

- Water consumption of data centres is as important as greenhouse gas emissions and energy footprints in assessing the environmental impacts of AI models.

- Technology choices in building and deploying AI – such as the location of data centres on the basis of robust Environment Impact Assessments and Social Impact Assessments – must be seen as critical to a sustainable digital transition.

The enabling environment for digital development

- Facilitating data accessibility is a critical feature of an enabling environment for digital development.

- Fiscal justice in the digital economy, particularly digital taxation regimes that enable developing countries to raise revenues for infrastructural and human development, must be seen as an important policy priority.

Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs

- A duty of care must be imposed on Internet platforms to prevent hate and violence, through diligent techno-design and human rights-based content governance.

Financial mechanisms

- Member states must commit to setting up a Global Taskforce on Financing for Inclusive Digital Transformation with representation from member states and experts in public finance and fiscal justice. A mechanism similar to the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force For People and the Planet is needed to ensure that digital corporations that gain the most from the digital revolution can support digital, data, and AI infrastructure development in developing countries and LDCs.

Human rights and ethical dimensions of the Information Society

- This section should acknowledge that the question of human rights protection in the life cycle of digital and emerging technologies is not just about user rights, but about the rights of all those who are implicated/affected in the digital value chain. This includes precarious data labor in AI development, environmental rights of communities affected by data centres, livelihood rights of marginal farmers affected adversely by agritech ecosystems, cultural rights of indigenous communities whose knowledge is colonized for generative AI models, and so on.

- It is not sufficient to call on all stakeholders to protect and promote human rights. The impunity of transnational digital corporations must be challenged head-on. This section should call for the global enforcement of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights without dilution, exception or selective application. It should also explicitly condemn the participation of transnational digital corporations in the economy of genocide.

Data governance

- This section should affirm mutuality, solidarity and the sovereign equality of all states as the foundational norms for international data governance, that is, data governance approaches which prioritize mutual benefit and solidarity for people across geography and generations.

Artificial intelligence

- Digital sovereignty and the right to development should be recognized as the cornerstone principles of any global AI governance regime, in accordance with the BRICS Leaders' Declaration.

- Fair use exemptions in traditional copyright law are inadequate to address the misappropriation of knowledge in the public domain and the cultural commons by the Big Tech corporations developing Generative AI models. This calls for Intellectual Property (IP) reform – new principles such as fair learning, for instance – to ensure that the public domain is not impoverished by the future trajectories of AI innovation.

- Member states should commit to international cooperation for a shared cloud and data infrastructure for AI innovation, in the manner of establishing a CERN for AI.

The development of the WSIS framework

- This section should underscore that in multistakeholder digital governance arrangements, the respective roles and responsibilities of stakeholders should be defined in an issue-specific manner (This is also articulated by the Net Mundial Principles - 2014). Only then will a multistakeholder governance process be able to ensure outcome legitimacy and be rooted in principles of democracy and public interest.

- Enhanced cooperation must be recognized as a distinct yet complementary and mutually reinforcing process to the multistakeholder dialogue mechanism of the UN IGF, in line with the WSIS outcomes.

- The principle of sovereign equality of all states in the Geneva Declaration of Principles (Para 6) and the acknowledgment in the Tunis Agenda (Para 68) that "all governments should have an equal role and responsibility for international Internet governance" must guide future implementation of the WSIS framework.

- A mandate (through the ECOSOC) is necessary for the UN CSTD to have a standing agenda item at its annual review of WSIS to discuss implementation of the Global Digital Compact (GDC) tracks on data and AI governance, in consultation with all stakeholders. The CTSD's annual review of WSIS should take forward recommendations of the report of the CSTD working group on data governance (expected in the 81st session of the General Assembly) on how to further responsible, equitable and interoperable data governance for development.

- This section should highlight the need for a dedicated action line on gender equality, the establishment of gender-specific indicators and targets, mandatory gender impact assessments, increased representation for women, gender budgeting, and systemic measures for tackling TFGBV.

Monitoring and measurement

- Member states should commit to ensuring the public availability of data for enabling progress towards and tracking of the SDGs.

Paragraph-specific text suggestions on the Zero Draft of the WSIS+20 Outcome Document

Text suggestions are in red.
Deletions are in ~~strikethrough~~

1. Preamble

No suggestions

2. Introduction

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 3. We reaffirm the value and principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the World Summit on the Information Society process since its inception, and recognise that effective participation, partnership and cooperation of Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders, in their respective roles and responsibilities, with balanced representation of all countries has been and continues to be vital in developing the Information Society, including the implementation of Summit outcomes.	As WSIS Tunis Agenda for the Information Society highlights in Para 31, the legitimacy of global digital governance and cooperation is based on "the full participation of all stakeholders, from both developed and developing countries, within their respective roles and responsibilities". Para 6 of the UN Global Digital Compact affirms this principle in the following commitment – "As Governments, we will work in collaboration and partnership with the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all other stakeholders, within their respective roles and responsibilities, to realize the digital future we seek".

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 4. We reaffirm that the full inclusion of developing country governments and other stakeholders is critical to achieving the WSIS vision. Addressing this requires attention to capacity building, the sharing, transfer and development of technology and public financing for digital infrastructure development ~~financial resources~~ to promote equitable access and innovation. We will address the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular African countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), under fair, transparent and mutually agreed terms.	The market mechanism has failed to bridge the gap in digital infrastructure capabilities between the global North and South. Evidence suggests that public financing is essential for digital infrastructure development in the majority world in order to ensure the equitable distribution of the development dividends of the digital revolution. General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/291 (para. 29) underlines the importance of enhancing support to countries in special situations–in particular African countries, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS–by promoting access to technology and innovation under fair, transparent, and mutually agreed terms. Para 10 of UN GDC also acknowledges the imperative for "technology transfers on mutually agreed terms."
Para 6. We welcome the tremendous growth in connectivity and development of the Internet, social media and other applications that has taken place since the World Summit and recognize that the fruits of meaningful connectivity remain unevenly distributed among geographies and populations. While digital technologies and their applications ~~These improvements~~ have enhanced the ability of governments, businesses, civil society and other organisations and individuals ~~to develop and deploy applications and digital resources that can play a central role in driving~~ for economic growth, social development and innovation, coordinated and urgent action is required for an equitable and inclusive information society.	Progress to close the gaps in universal, meaningful and quality connectivity has remained uneven. The digital divides in the African and Latin American region particularly belie the optimisticdescription/assessment of the paragraph in its original form. Also, in recent years, there is rising evidence of the connectivity paradox – where access to the Internet does not mean meaningful participation in the digital economy and society but rather an unfair cooption/adverse incorporation into the exploitative data order.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 7. We note that the widespread availability of the Internet has transformed traditional structures of public discourse. This has had significant impacts, including pollution of the information environment, online violence and abuse, addiction, violation of the epistemic rights of people and erosion of democratic integrity. This has altered societal behaviour, policy-making processes and the dynamics of information reliability and public trust.	The attention-economy based social media business models has fuelled addictive behavior especially among the youth and incentivizes gender-based violence, abuse and hate speech. Further, the algorithmically mediated digital public sphere has skewed the values of pluralism and diversity in media into a post-truth regime that threatens communicative and epistemic rights of people, undermines trust in public institutions and electoral processes.
Para 12. We are concerned that there remain critical digital and data infrastructural divides between and within countries in access to and use of digital technologies. These constrain the achievement of WSIS goals, restrict the achievement of economic and social development, threaten to increase social and economic inequalities and may be exacerbated by new technological developments. Bridging them requires measures concerned not just with connectivity but with the affordability of networks and devices,the availability of relevant content and services in local languages, and the development of digital skills, literacy and capabilities, and tackling existing concentrations of technological capacity and market power.	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. Para 8 (f) of the UN GDC also acknowledges this : “Equitable and meaningful inclusion in the digital economy requires tackling existing concentrations of technological capacity and market power. Our cooperation will aim to ensure that the benefits of digital cooperation are fairly distributed and do not exacerbate existing inequalities or impede the full achievement of sustainable development.”

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 13. We reaffirm that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and their full, equal and meaningful participation in the digital space, are essential to close the gender digital divide and advance sustainable development. Our cooperation will empower all women and girls, encourage leadership of women, mainstream a gender perspective and counter and eliminate all forms of violence, including sexism, misogyny and sexual and gender-based violence that occurs through or is amplified by the use of technology and technology design that does not respect women's human rights.	Major social media platforms have failed to abide by feminist techno-design principles and adherence to women's human rights in the design of their algorithmic environments and content moderation policies. The WSIS+20 Outcome document must explicitly recognize the fact that the proliferation of sexual and gender-based violence is amplified by the design choices of mainstream social media platform business models.
Para 14. We are committed to addressing the access and specific information and technology challenges facing children, adolescents and young people, the elderly, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and marginalised communities, and to the needs of future generations. This calls for structural measures to remove the barriers to their effective participation in digital innovation and enable their full inclusion.	We need to move away from references that individualize the problems of access and inclusion, pointing to the structural foundations of exclusion that result in benefits for the few and exploitation of the many by the digital innovation mainstream. A structural overhaul of the current Big Tech-led information society paradigm is necessary so that the most marginalized groups can belong on an equal footing

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 15. We recognise that the pace and power of emerging technologies are creating new possibilities but also new risks for humanity, some of which are not yet fully known. We recognise the need to identify and mitigate these risks through fundamental rights impact assessments for all technological systems and follow the precautionary principle in the adoption of technological applications. We further recognize the need to ensure adequate human oversight of technology through effective public accountability mechanisms at global and national levels in ways that advance sustainable development and the full enjoyment of human rights.	The WSIS20 review must build on international standards, such as Human Rights Council Resolution 48/4, and the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, both of which call for a moratorium, and potentially, a ban, on AI tools "that cannot be used in compliance with international human rights law". The precautionary principle refers to the idea that states must desist from the pursuit of technological applications if "there are reasonable indications of possible important (highly damaging, irreversible, systemic, etc.) impacts on human health and the environment, even in the face of inconclusive data, lacunae in scientific knowledge, and doubts about the respective cause-and-effect relationships". Despite no uniform understanding of its meaning, the definition contained in Principle 15 of the 1992 Rio Declaration is widely recognized by states and provides practical guidance in the development and application of international law: "In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation." Further, human oversight of technology is not the same as the need for institutional process that guarantees public accountability.

3. Information and communications technologies for development

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 18. We are deeply concerned, however, that the capacity of these technologies to support development remains constrained by digital divides and inequalities between and within countries, regions and communities. A third of the world's population still does not make use of the Internet, while many people with access make little use of it for reasons that include lack of affordability, limited content including content in locally relevant languages, ~~and~~ limited digital skills, and internet shutdowns and disruptions in protest, war, conflict zones and occupied territories. Strengthened international cooperation and enabling policy environments are required to address gaps in access and affordability, digital skills, financing and technological resources.	State-imposed internet shutdowns and war-zone restrictions of the internet impacts all aspects of life — from work and education, to medical care and banking. It restricts free expression and community organizing, access to life-saving information and humanitarian aid, and blocks journalism.
Para 20. We acknowledge that developing digital public goods and digital public infrastructure are critical drivers of inclusive digital transformation and innovation and recognise the need to increase investment in their successful development with the participation of all stakeholders. Digital public goods include open-source software, open data, open artificial intelligence models, open standards and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable international laws, standards and best practices and do no harm, empower societies and individuals to direct digital technologies to their development needs and can facilitate digital cooperation and investment. Resilient, safe, inclusive and interoperable digital public infrastructure has the potential to deliver services at scale and increase social and economic opportunities for all. We recognise that there are multiple models of digital public infrastructure, and we recognise that each society will develop and use shared digital systems according to its particular priorities and needs. Transparent, safe and secure digital systems and user-centred human rights safeguards can promote public trust and use of digital services.	We have built on agreed language from Para 15 of the UN GDC on the importance of transparency, safety and security in the design of society-wide digital systems to promote public trust, also underscoring safeguards to protect human rights.

4. Bridging digital divides

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 24. We are particularly concerned by persistent gender digital divides. Only 77 per cent of women aged ten and over worldwide use a mobile phone compared with 82 per cent of men, while only 65 per cent of women are using the Internet compared with almost 70 per cent of men. However, in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), only 29% of women use the Internet, a significant difference from the 93% of women using the internet in high-income countries. Women and girls also face restricted access to devices, gendered disinformation, social surveillance, technology-facilitated gender-based violence, all of which hinder their equal participation in the digital economy and society. They ~~Women and girls~~ are also under-represented in education, employment and other areas of digital activity. All stakeholders have a part to play in addressing and rectifying these gender digital divides. We recognise that closing gender gaps in the digital sphere requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond connectivity and fosters safe, meaningful and affordable Internet access, digital literacy and skills development, and supports women's and girls' participation in STEM fields as well as in leadership and decision-making processes.	Source of the statistic added: https://www.itu.int/hub/2025/05/wtisd-25-gender-equality-in-digital-transformation/ The full participation of women and girls is hindered by structural barriers that go beyond connectivity. In many parts of the world, women's access to devices is controlled and surveilled by male members of the family. Further, studies have shown that amplification of sexism, misogyny, gendered disinformation and technology-facilitated gender-based violence systemically suppresses women's participation and political presence online. The proposed language reflects and builds upon existing UN commitments. The UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/78/213 reaffirms the importance of promoting women's and girls' equal access to, and participation in, science, technology and innovation, including through digital literacy and skills development. Similarly, ITU WTDC Resolution 37 (para. 1) stresses that bridging the digital divide requires particular attention to gender equality. The GDC (para. 11(g)) explicitly calls for closing the gender digital divide by ensuring women's and girls' access to digital technologies, promoting their participation in STEM and leadership roles, and addressing online safety. In addition, the CSW 67 Agreed Conclusions (para. 58) underline the need for comprehensive strategies to create safe and enabling digital environments.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 27. We are particularly concerned that digital divides between and within regions and countries, and within societies, and the rapid pace of development of digital technologies, ~~may~~ exacerbate economic and social inequalities.	Social and economic inequalities arising from the current trajectory of digitalization is a reality and not a possibility.
Para 29. We are committed to achieving entry-level broadband subscription costs that are accessible to the widest section of the population through regulatory reform that recognizes digital (including spectrum) and data resources as public goods, experimental policy measures for more public wifi, license-exempt spectrum, allocation of spectrum to entities providing public services, and incentivization of public access programs and community-centred connectivity initiatives.	The market-driven approach to connectivity infrastructure has failed to ensure affordable connectivity for all. Regulation and licensing frameworks have focused on business and innovation impulses, which are driven by supply-side valuation priorities, such as spectrum auction price and investments for next-gen technology. This policy vision needs to be overhauled and more efforts need to be taken to underwrite the expansion of connectivity in order to realize its public value. Community-centred connectivity initiatives have been recognized as innovative, bottom-up solutions to address persistent digital divide, that can be a powerful complement to state-sponsored and commercially provided internet services. Studies reveal the significant role of community initiatives in reducing digital inequalities, providing connectivity that is shaped by community itself, tailored to their different needs and interests.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 30. We reiterate the need for the development of local content and services in a variety of languages and formats that are accessible to all people and recognise the vital importance of multilingualism to ensure the linguistic, cultural and historical diversity of all nations. We commend the work that has been done since the World Summit to extend the multilingual nature of the Internet, including the introduction of Internationalised Domain Names, and urge all stakeholders to ensure that the Internet and digital services become fully and freely accessible to all, including Indigenous Peoples and speakers of minority languages.	Universal standards for localization/ a multi-lingual internet are vital for accessibility/ real access for the majority.
Para 31. We reiterate the need for all users of the Internet and digital services to develop the capabilities and capacities, including media, information ~~and~~ digital, data and AI literacy skills, to develop and make more extensive use of information and communications technologies.	Apart from digital and media literacy, it is also important for people to have data and AI literacy that goes beyond skilling to meaningfully engage with the Internet and critically assess the benefits of data and AI innovation, its impact on their individual and community rights and wellbeing, and relevant mechanisms and institutions for seeking redress and reparation.

5. The digital economy

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 35. We recognise that equitable and meaningful inclusion in the digital economy requires global governance efforts to tackle concentrations of technological capacity and market power in order to ensure that the benefits of digital ~~cooperation~~ innovation are fairly distributed and do not exacerbate existing inequalities or impede the full achievement of sustainable development.	The governance deficits in the digital economy reinforce the monopolistic power of transnational digital corporations.
Para 36. We note that financial services have evolved rapidly to take advantage of the capabilities of digital transactions, and that Internet banking, cashless payments and mobile money systems have changed the ways in which many businesses and customers now interact, increasing ease of access to financial services for many who were previously excluded. We will support developing countries, in line with their national circumstances and priorities, in creating enabling domestic environments and appropriate rights-based regulatory frameworks for development of digital financial services for all.	Poorly regulated digital financial services, especially FinTech platforms, have led to exploitative lending practices rather than facilitating genuine financial inclusion. Key issues include leveraging data and AI for credit scoring, which often results in denying credit to those most in need or forcing them into unnecessary loans. This has pushed many into debt traps.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 39.We recognise that information and communications technologies have tremendous potential to contribute to ~~contributed significantly to~~ the development of agriculture, enabling productivity improvements in large-scale food production, through precision targeting of resources and production cycles, and supporting small-scale and subsistence farmers to access information, expertise and capital. However, in order to realize this potential, public investment in and effective governance of digital agricultural ecosystems at global and national levels is essential.	The mainstream agritech paradigm is led by a few corporations and countries and has not delivered on furthering food sovereignty for all, as its trajectories are focused on value realization at the distribution and logistics ends for lead firms rather than improvements to agricultural productivity at the cultivator-end. For course correction, it is important to increase public investment in digital agricultural ecosystems at both global and national level.
Para 40. We note that digital technologies have had significant impacts on employment, including changes in workplace environments and training requirements, opportunities for more flexible working and the emergence of digital labour platforms, and that automation, robotics and artificial intelligence are expected to have further substantial impacts on employment opportunities, including the displacement of some professional, clerical and manual types of work. At the same time, we note with concern the displacement of workers due to AI-driven automation, labor exploitation in AI value chains, as well as precarious working conditions, algorithmic work management and surveillance, and the absence of foundational labor guarantees in platformized work environments.	The impact of digital technologies on employment and workers is not uniform and raises serious concerns especially for workers in informal and precarious jobs. There is growing concern about AI-driven automation replacing jobs in low-skill sectors such as manufacturing and logistics, with such displacement disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations, including women and workers in developing countries. The AI industry relies on underpaid, precarious labor, primarily in the Global South, where workers lack redress mechanisms due to the opacity of supply chains and the systemic invisibility of their contributions. Workers on digital labor platforms face significant challenges with respect to regularity of work and income, working conditions, social protection, skills utilization, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Further, the rising trend of platformization of work generate "threats and concerns about further labor exploitation, work intensification, obscured employer accountability for workers' rights, increased information asymmetry between employer and workers (including their representatives), and potential (automated or semi-automated) discrimination against specific segments of the working population."

6. Social and economic development

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 44. We recognise that digitalisation has enabled new ways of providing education and training in schools, higher and adult education including innovative educational approaches such as distance learning, open educational resources and online courses. We are concerned~~, however,~~ that the benefits of digitalisation are still not available to many children and young people as a result of digital divides in meaningful and critical connectivity. At the same time, we note with concern that the application of certain technologies in educational settings, such as artificial intelligence or facial recognition, may legitimize surveillance practices and lead to the mass collection of children's and adolescents' data, an area carefully regulated by many national legislations, including those on data protection. We reaffirm our commitment to connecting every school to the Internet by 2030 and the importance of quality public education in the AI age as a human right.	Critical connectivity refers to the need for uninterrupted connectivity that underpins essential services and core public systems where no disruptions can be tolerated and the risk of connectivity failure has significant risks of societal harm. As public services, like education, transition into a digital mode, critical connectivity assumes great significance for equity and inclusion. The Special Rapporteur for the Right to Education, in her Report on Artificial Intelligence in Education, apart from recognizing opportunities for AI in education in different areas, has raised concerns on data privacy, digital divide, privatization and platformization of education.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 45. We also recognise that digitalisation has enabled new ways of addressing health and medicine by facilitating dissemination of public health information, including information on reproductive rights and protection against communicable diseases, remote diagnosis to support local health workers, improved analysis of health data and improvements in clinical practice. However, we note with concern the exclusions arising from data and algorithmic biases and discriminatory profiling in digital health services.	A market-first digital healthcare model undermines access to health as a fundamental right for all and takes the focus away from values of trust, care, and sensitivity important in healthcare. A data maximalist approach to health and centralization of such sensitive data into singular repositories makes them vulnerable to cyber attack and data leaks, posing threat to patient's privacy. Further, the integration of privately owned, opaquely developed, and unilaterally controlled AI solutions into healthcare delivery can cause material harm for patients and impose undue liability on care providers, affecting overall quality of care negatively.
Para 46. We note that information and communications technologies have had substantial impacts on diversity of cultural expression and development of the cultural and creative sectors. We urge all stakeholders to recognise the importance of ensuring the preservation of cultural heritage and access to recorded information in the digital environment, including addressing the emerging threats to the cultural commons in the context of generative AI technologies.	A crucial element of the training process in AI model development, particularly LLMs, includes the use of complete and exact replicas of original work. This includes not just work protected by copyright but also public domain knowledge that lacks intellectual property protection, including, traditional knowledge commons and art forms. Such knowledge commons enclosure to build proprietary and closed AI systems is unjust, as benefits are not shared with artists and traditional knowledge holders.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 48. We remain concerned, however, that equitable delivery of social and economic development programmes and opportunities is hampered by digital divides, particularly in countries and communities where access is constrained by poor connectivity and lack of affordability. We also note with concern the biases and exclusions encoded in emerging technologies such as AI, with disproportionate impact on marginalized communities. More attention is required to digital inclusion and digital literacy, capacity building, digital public infrastructures including data exchanges and public AI, and financial mechanisms in order to achieve greater impact and ensure progress towards the achieving Sustainable Development Goals.	The biases and exclusions encoded in AI makes them not useful and even harmful even if they are accessible. A GPAI study report points out that "AI models lack diverse representation and perpetuate knowledge and other types of exclusion, resulting in epistemic injustice: the exclusion of knowledge, cultures, languages". Regional consultations and dialogues with Indigenous communities conducted as part of the study underscored how dominant AI development modes clash with local knowledge systems, reinforce social hierarchies, and are further constrained by resource limitations in many regions. Investments in digital public infrastructures – particularly in the data and AI innovation layer – are critical to further progress towards the SDGs through addressing digital inequality.

7. Environmental impacts

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 50. We are concerned, however, about growing levels of energy consumption arising from digitalisation and consequential impacts on greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, including those arising from growth in the manufacture and use of digital devices, the volume of data traffic, the number and impact of data centres, growing use of the Internet of Things and rapid growth in the energy and water requirements of artificial intelligence. We call for the development of global reporting standards on environmental impacts and cooperation by all stakeholders to ensure the environmental sustainability of digital transformation.	AI has a significant water footprint, using water both for cooling the servers that power its computations and for producing the energy it consumes. One study estimates that AI-driven data centres could consume 1.7 trillion gallons of water globally by 2027. Producing the AI hardware involves resource-intensive mining for rare materials, extraction of which has a significant impact on the environment and contributes to water pollution. Communities living near data centers are facing shortage of safe drinking water and pollution of their water resources.
Para 52. We are further concerned about rapid growth in the volume of electronic waste, including toxic waste. The volume of e-waste is growing rapidly, particularly in developing countries, leading to pollution and risks to human health, while rates of recycling and recovery are low. We call on all stakeholders to improve data gathering, conduct social and environmental impact assessment, undertake public consultations prior to construction of data centers, facilitate collaboration in safe and efficient waste management, including sharing of technology and best practices, and ensure compliance with the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. We also underline the need to ensure that the deployment and operation of data centers respect the rights of local communities, especially indigenous and tribal groups, and safeguard environment accountability mechanisms.	Decisions on the location of data centers should be guided by careful prior assessment of human rights implications and ecological and social costs for local communities. The inclusion of the right to free, prior and informed consultation is consistent with international human rights standards and environmental safeguards. ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, as reaffirmed in the ILO publication on prior consultation (2015), establishes that States have the obligation to carry out consultation processes whenever legislative or administrative measures may directly affect Indigenous Peoples (Articles 6 and 15).

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 53. We recognise the need to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, including sustainable lifestyles, and circular economy approaches. We also recognize the need to steer technological choices in the AI paradigm towards sustainability and respect for planetary boundaries. We call on governments and the private sector to develop global standards for the design of sustainable digital products as well as for reuse, repair and recycling.	A just and sustainable digital transition requires confronting the current energy-intensive technological choices of AI for its mounting ecological pressure, and rethinking scale by prioritizing decentralized, local approaches to AI instead of large, centralized AI models.

8. The enabling environment for digital development

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 55. We acknowledge the importance of a positive enabling environment for investment, innovation, data use and reuse, and technological development in enabling the development and implementation of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society.	The UN CEB Data Principles note that maximizing the value of data requires an enabling environment for data use and reuse. Appropriate access, responsible use and reuse of data are emphasized: "This principle includes providing equal access to the benefits of data and the related technologies, devices and tools. This principle also envisages educating and empowering individuals, communities and organizations to produce or co-create, work with, inform decisions with, derive benefits from and understand data effectively".
Para 56. We recognise that science, technology and innovation are integral to digital development, and that rapidly growing capabilities of digital technologies have contributed greatly to research and development across all scientific fields, enabling researchers to explore complex problems using methods that were unavailable before the Summit. We recognise the importance of ensuring that stakeholders in all countries are able to play a part in digital innovation. This calls for measures to address the unequal distribution of digital infrastructural and human capabilities in the global digital economy.	Data power consolidation among select countries and corporations and disparity in access to crucial digital infrastructure and digital skill gap is a huge barrier for many developing countries to reap the dividend of digital transformation. For instance, while there are ~3 data centres per million people in North America, the ratio drops to ~0.8 per million in South Asia. Nearly 65% of the cloud computing market has been cornered by just three firms, Amazon, Google, and Microsoft.

	Studies have shown that large parts of Africa and Asia are struggling to keep up with the demand for digital skills needed to encash the benefits of data and AI and to retain skilled professionals, thereby limiting these countries' ability to move up the digital value chain. The computing infrastructure in Latin America is characterized by an uneven distribution of resources and capabilities. There are 405 data centers distributed in 15 countries in Latin America; Brazil holds the largest number of these (127), followed by Chile (40), Argentina (29) and Colombia (21). This means that there are 0.6 data centers per million people in Latin America. Even in countries with data centers, it is global providers such as Amazon Web Services, Azure, Google Cloud, Oracle Cloud Infrastructure, and Huawei Cloud who dominate the market.
Text suggestions	**Rationale**
Para 58. We note the importance of legal and regulatory frameworks concerned with the deployment of digital services including those concerned with market structure, concentration of technological capacity and market power, digital transactions, data protection and data privacy, consumer rights and intellectual property, human rights, taxation, and environmental impacts.	As the UN GDC observes, "Equitable and meaningful inclusion in the digital economy requires tackling existing concentrations of technological capacity and market power." Taxation: The Global South has been forced to cede vital fiscal space by restrictions imposed on taxation in bilateral trade deals and the WTO e-commerce moratorium. Estimates show that between 2017 and 2020, developing countries and LDCs lost USD 56 billion in potential tariff revenue, with USD 48 billion lost by developing countries and USD 8 billion by LDCs. Developing countries also face monumental costs of base erosion and profit shifting, as digital behemoths take advantage of an anachronistic international tax architecture and its arcane rules on physical presence and permanent establishment.

9. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 64. We recognise that we must urgently counter and address all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, which occurs through or is amplified by the use of technology, all forms of hate speech and discrimination, misinformation and disinformation, cyberbullying and child sexual exploitation and abuse. We will establish and maintain robust risk mitigation and redress measures that also protect privacy and freedom of expression and policy measures that institute a duty of care on platforms for safeguarding human rights throughout the technology life cycle.	There is ample evidence to show that the business model of online platforms and their techno-design choices based on the logic of attention economy and surveillance capitalism incentivizes the creation and dissemination of illegal and harmful content and prioritizes engagement and profit over truth and reasoned debate. In the spirit of upholding Para 22 of the GDC, where member states have committed to upholding their duty to protect human rights throughout the technology life cycle (which today is cross-border), the Zero Draft must urge for specific recognition of state obligation to protect against human rights abuses by their digital business in global technology value chains and to ensure effective implementation of HRC guidance for technology companies in respect of remedies.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 65. We recognise the challenges that States, in particular developing countries, face in building confidence, public trust and security in the use of information and communications technologies. We reiterate the call made by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/125 of 16 December 2015 for renewed focus on capacity-building, education, knowledge-sharing and regulatory practice, as well as promoting multistakeholder cooperation at all levels and raising awareness among users of information and communications technologies, particularly among the poorest and most vulnerable. Targeted support for capacity building is needed to enable all countries, particularly developing countries, to improve cybersecurity governance, align regulatory frameworks with international norms and ensure effective cooperation between Computer Emergency and Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CERTs/CSIRTs).	The GDC acknowledges in Para 15 that "transparent, safe and secure digital systems and user-centred safeguards can promote public trust and use of digital services," demonstrating the crucial role of public trust in the digital ecosystem.

10. Capacity development

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 69. We recognise the need to build digital literacy in order to empower individuals with the skills and knowledge to safely and critically interact with content and with information providers and to enhance resilience against the harmful impacts of misinformation and disinformation, ~~needed to~~ identify reliable information that will help them to access opportunities and improve their quality of life, and to protect themselves against misinformation and abuse. We call on all stakeholders to promote digital literacy and awareness-raising efforts to empower individuals, especially those in vulnerable situations, to understand and exercise their right to participation in decisions about primary and secondary uses of their data, data protection and privacy rights, make informed choices about their personal data and take appropriate steps to safeguard their online security and privacy .	In Para 35(a) of the GDC, member states have committed that by 2030, they will "design and roll out digital media and information literacy curricula to ensure that all users have the skills and knowledge to safely and critically interact with content and with information providers and to enhance resilience against the harmful impacts of misinformation and disinformation." Individuals have a right to be consulted not just in relation to primary uses of their data for access to data-based services, but also secondary uses of data arising from the re-use of their data through pooling for other downstream uses of aggregate datasets.

11. Financial Mechanisms

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 72. We recognise that harnessing ICTs for development and bridging digital and data divides will require further sustained investment in infrastructure and services, capacity-building, promotion of joint research and development and transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, with public as well as private investment.	Global South countries are often not optimally positioned to govern data to bring forth development. The crucial elements for building AI systems (including large datasets) are largely confined with Big Tech. These companies further utilize trade secrets and intellectual property rights to monopolize advanced technical knowledge. Given the data divide, experts have estimated that around 70% of AI generated economic value may accrue to only two countries (US, China). Harnessing the power of ICTs for development entails acknowledgement of the digital as well as data divides, as well as suggestions on means to counter them.
Para 74. We note that the Sevilla Commitment, the outcome document of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development held in July 2025, recognised that closing the infrastructure gap in critical sectors, including information and communications technologies, will greatly improve access to essential services, employment opportunities, economic growth and sustainable development. We reaffirm the call in the Sevilla Commitment for coordinated investment in digital infrastructure, including digital public infrastructure, and digital public goods, and international collaboration between governments, development partners and private sector actors, to support countries in their design of digital infrastructure, its financing models and impact assessment. We also call for effective governance of public-private partnerships for digital public goods and digital public infrastructure development to protect citizen rights, preserve data sovereignty and the right to development.	To nurture improved access to essential services, innovation and equitable value distribution for public well-being, investments in digital public infrastructure (DPI) are crucial. It is often claimed that 'public' in DPI does not mean government ownership but public interest or oversight - a combined functional (associated with normative values such as social value, capabilities, human rights, essential needs) and attributes (interoperability, open standards, etc.) perspective is needed for framing 'publicness', coupled with governance and a proactive state.

	There is thus a need to reiterate the necessity of a proactive role on behalf of Member States – else there is a risk that essential societal functions will be exclusive (knowledge) property of private corporations. For states to prioritize investments, it is essential to consider that DPI's value is not just in what it does, but in what it enables. As noted in the BRICS' Leaders Statement, development of domestic infrastructure is closely linked with advancement of digital sovereignty goals, capabilities and the right to development for all countries – building a clear case for increased public financing.
Text suggestions	**Rationale**
Para 75. We recognise the critical importance of the private sector ~~investment~~ in the development of information and communications technology infrastructure, content and services. We call on transnational companies that have benefited from a free and open internet for decades to contribute towards infrastructure development in developing countries in a manner that is respectful of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. We commit to setting up a Global Taskforce on financing for inclusive digital transformation with representation from member states and experts in public finance and fiscal justice in order to explore a mechanism for raising solidarity levies to support digital, data and AI infrastructure development in developing countries and LDCs. ~~and we encourage governments to create legal and regulatory frameworks conducive to increased investment and innovation.~~	The UN Secretary General, in 'Our Common Agenda' has highlighted the need for a Digital Development Tax (as proposed by the UN Secretary General) upon dominant transnational companies that have benefited from a free and open Internet so as to enable, amongst others, the connectivity of the 3.8 billion people still offline and equitable distribution of benefits in the digital economy. Infrastructure development initiatives supported by private sector contributions should have guardrails to ensure all participating private entities comply with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The institution of a Global Taskforce on Financing for Inclusive Digital Transformation with member states as well as experts in public finance and fiscal justice can play a crucial role in this regard. The Taskforce can take a leaf out of initiatives such as the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force: For People and the Planet and enable coordinated action by Member States.

	As highlighted by the Global Digital Justice Forum in its demand for fiscal justice, the illicit capital flight from developing countries is around ten times the annual global aid flows. In view of the global taxation constraints, the citizens in Global South are disproportionately burdened with regressive taxes. In view of loss of revenue from taxation, Global South countries are unable to build the requisite infrastructure and bridge the digital divide for the marginalized in their countries. There is thus a critical need to recognise that fiscal justice is a necessary condition for the realization of global digital justice.
Text suggestions	**Rationale**
Para 76. We recognise that development partners, including regional development banks, and public funding have also played an important role in financing information and communications networks and services, particularly supporting their deployment in areas that have been considered commercially unviable. Innovative mechanisms, including universal access funds and community networks, have contributed to extending connectivity in remoter areas. At the same time, we stress that international cooperation and support involving the deployment of technologies, particularly those with surveillance capabilities, should be subject to prior human rights impact assessments, regardless of the purposes of their implementation, to ensure consistency with international human rights obligations.	The proposed addition is consistent with the GDC, particularly Para 25(a), which calls on stakeholders to establish appropriate safeguards to prevent and address adverse impacts on human rights arising from the use of digital and emerging technologies. Building on this commitment, the inclusion of language on human rights due diligence and human rights impact assessments ensures a concrete mechanism to operationalize these safeguards.

12. Human rights and ethical dimensions of the Information Society

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 77. We recognize that human rights have been central to the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society and that information and communications technologies have shown their potential to strengthen the exercise of human rights, enabling access to information, the right to privacy, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly and association.	The right to privacy is particularly under threat in the business models of Big Tech.
Para 80. We recall the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 78/213 on 22 December 2023, which set out principles and actions concerning the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of digital technologies, and commit to respect, protect and promote human rights in the digital space. We will uphold international human rights law throughout the life cycle of digital and emerging technologies, including their design, development, deployment, use, monitoring, and, where necessary, their discontinuation, withdrawal, or reversal, and ensure safeguards to prevent and remedy violations of individual and collective rights. ~~so that users can safely benefit from digital technologies and are protected from violations, abuses and all forms of discrimination.~~	The question of human rights protection in the life cycle of digital and emerging technologies is not just about user rights, but about the rights of all those who are implicated/affected in the digital value chain – precarious data labor in AI development, environmental rights of communities affected by data centers, livelihood rights of marginal farmers affected adversely by agritech ecosystems, and cultural rights of indigenous communities whose knowledge is colonized for generative AI models and so on.
Para 81. We commit to establish appropriate safeguards to prevent and address any adverse impact on human rights arising from the use of digital and emerging technologies and protect individuals against violations and abuses of their human rights in the digital space, including through comprehensive and continuous human rights impact assessments of digital technologies, human rights due diligence and establishing effective oversight and remedy mechanisms.	Human rights impact assessments should not just be ex ante before the introduction of a technological application, but have to be undertaken periodically at regular intervals throughout the technological life cycle.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 83. We recognise the responsibilities of all stakeholders in this endeavour. We call on the private sector and all relevant stakeholders to ensure that respect for human rights is incorporated into the conception, design, development, deployment, sale, procurement, operation, use, evaluation and regulation of all new and emerging digital technologies to prevent adverse impacts and ~~to~~ provide for redress and effective remedy for the human rights abuses that they may cause, contribute to, or to which they may be directly linked. We remind ~~also call on~~ the private sector to comply with their mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence obligations in consonance with~~i apply~~ the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights without dilution, exception or selective application. We condemn the participation of transnational digital corporations in the economy of genocide.	A laissez-faire digital economy has seen flagrant human rights violations. Exhorting these corporations to respect the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights has not met with any success, also since dominant transnational companies often hide behind the smokescreen of 'virtualized' operations that deflects attention from real impacts of their pan-global activities. Unfortunately, current human rights and humanitarian law standards do not have provisions on extraterritorial obligations of states. Given the urgency to address the cross-border harms unleashed by dominant transnational companies, and in the spirit of upholding Para 22 of the GDC, where Member States have committed to upholding their duty to protect human rights throughout the technology life cycle (which today is cross-border), there is a need to recognize the additional responsibilities that dominant transnational digital corporations have to comply with their obligations as per the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 91. We recognize that digital and emerging technologies can facilitate the manipulation of and interference with information in ways that are harmful to societies and individuals, and negatively affect the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. We will work together to promote information integrity, tolerance and respect in the digital space, as well as to protect the integrity of democratic processes. We will strengthen international cooperation to address the challenge of misinformation and disinformation and hate speech online and mitigate the risks of information manipulation in a manner consistent with international law. We encourage online platforms and social media companies to align their business models, operations and data practices with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and to conduct human rights due diligence on their products, particularly regarding the role of algorithms and ranking systems in amplifying disinformation and hate speech.	The proposed language reflects commitments already affirmed in UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/78/213 that call on businesses to respect human rights in the design, development and use of digital technologies, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and to carry out human rights due diligence across their operations.
ADD NEW Para. 93a. We recognize that older persons are excluded from connectivity and digital services which impedes the full enjoyment of their human rights.	There have been instances of digital exclusion preventing elderly persons from receiving welfare services such as pensions. Member States need to ensure that welfare entitlements are not impacted by digital barriers and structural flaws.

13. Data governance

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 94. We recognize that responsible, equitable and contextually interoperable data governance is essential to advance development objectives, protect human rights, foster innovation and promote economic growth.	Objective 4 of the GDC refers to responsible, equitable and interoperable data governance approaches. We would like to submit that interoperability at a technical level i.e. use of common data formats, protocols differs from interoperability of data governance regimes i.e. "set of legal foundations, data handling rules, consumer rights, oversight institutions, and enforcement mechanisms that jointly enable the safe and trustworthy exchange of data flows across jurisdictions". While the former is a key element in countering monopolistic practices of dominant transnational companies, the latter i.e. data governance interoperability carries the risk of driving standards to the lowest common denominator with focus on select rights such as privacy while ignoring key issues such as benefit sharing, sustainable growth, and value creation. Further, as noted in an UNCTAD survey, national differences in beliefs, values lead to countries adopting different definitions of sensitive data, and also lend to differing approaches to concepts of consent, privacy, public interest, etc. Data governance interoperability thus risks ignoring the political, cultural, economic realities of each country and their autonomy to balance a multitude of goals such as privacy, innovation, etc. To advance the development objectives of Global South countries, and balance human rights, innovation and economic growth, an equitable and contextual approach to interoperable data governance is necessitated – wherein interoperability is designed for public value maximization and distributive justice.

Text suggestions	Rationale
ADD NEW PARA. Para 94a. We affirm mutuality, solidarity and the sovereign equality of all states as the foundational norms for international data governance. We encourage data governance approaches that prioritize mutual benefit and solidarity for people across geography and generations so that data can be used for the greater good of society, considering both individual and collective needs, interests and responsibilities.	The GDC underlines responsible and fair data sharing among countries for equitable and sustainable development (Paras 38, 44 and 48 of the GDC). The UN CEB Data Principles (Principle 12) also note this. International data solidarity centered around the pillars of facilitating data use that creates significant public value; harm prevention and mitigation; and sharing corporate profits with publics (See Barbara Painsack et al. 2022 and El Sayed et al., 2025) is key in ensuring global data equity to maximize the benefits of data and eliminate harms. Para 6 of the WSIS Geneva Declaration – "In keeping with the spirit of this declaration, **we rededicate ourselves** to upholding the principle of the sovereign equality of all States". This principle must be extended to international data governance as well.
Para 96. We note the establishment of a working group of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to engage in a comprehensive and inclusive multistakeholder dialogue on data governance at all levels as relevant for development, including the development of recommendations towards equitable and interoperable data governance arrangements, which may include fundamental principles of data governance ~~arrangements.~~; proposals to support interoperability between national, regional and international data systems; considerations of sharing the benefits of data; and options to facilitate safe, secure and trusted data flows, including cross-border data flows as relevant for development (all SDGs).	Edited to reflect the language used in Para 48 of the GDC.

14. Artificial intelligence

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 97. We note the significant developments that have taken place in the Information Society with the emergence in the public sphere of artificial intelligence, which significantly advances the pace and scale with which artificial intelligence is expected to have an impact on many aspects of human societies. We emphasize that human rights and fundamental freedoms must be respected, protected and promoted throughout the life cycle of artificial intelligence systems, and call on all Member States and stakeholders to refrain from using systems that cannot comply with international human rights law. We ~~and~~ also acknowledge concerns about the potential negative impacts on employment, labour, the environment, human rights, and information integrity. A balanced approach is needed to protect Intellectual Property and safeguard the public interest in this epoch of AI and to ensure that public domain is enriched for democratic AI innovation.	The Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law underscores the need to ensure that activities within the lifecycle of artificial intelligence systems are fully consistent with human rights, democracy and the rule of law, while being conducive to technological progress and innovation. It emphasizes human rights compatibility in the development and use of AI applications and calls for a moratorium on AI incompatible with these rights. Also as the BRICS Leaders Declaration on the global governance of AI acknowledges, intellectual property rights regimes need to appropriately maintain the balance between "proprietary rights, transparency, and accountability to safeguard public interest, the international transfer of technology, and compliance with domestic legislation and applicable international law". Appropriate protection of intellectual property rights and in particular copyright against unauthorized AI use must be in place to prevent exploitative data extraction and violation of privacy, allowing for fair remuneration mechanisms. Safeguards must ensure accountability and compliance with relevant legislation, including transparency over AI model inputs and outputs.

Text suggestions	Rationale
ADD NEW PARA Para 97a. We recognize that digital sovereignty and the right to development are central to global AI Governance. We firmly support the right of all countries to harness the benefits of the digital economy and emerging technologies, particularly Artificial Intelligence, while upholding fundamental rights, and to establish their own regulatory frameworks within their jurisdictions, for protecting the fundamental rights of their citizens and maximizing public value innovation.	As highlighted in the BRICS Declaration, digital sovereignty and the right to development are central to AI governance, and the right of all countries to establish their own regulatory frameworks and harness the benefits of the digital economy and emerging technologies such as AI should be supported.
ADD NEW PARA Para 98a. We affirm that governance of AI should mitigate potential risks through impact assessment frameworks, mandatory reporting of serious AI incidents and remedy mechanisms.	To ensure algorithmic fairness, appropriate mechanisms are key to deal with AI entrenched biases. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), through its Recommendations on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence has emphasized that States should introduce impact assessment frameworks to identify the impact of AI systems on human rights, fundamental freedoms, labor rights, environment, etc. The necessity of such impact assessment frameworks should be highlighted herein as well – to ensure harms, including those associated with underrepresentation and discrimination are mitigated. Further, certain national frameworks (for instance, the EU AI Act) impose the requirement of mandatory reporting of serious AI incidents such as death, serious harm to health, infringement of fundamental rights, etc. upon providers of high risk AI systems.

	There is a need to impose a similar requirement in the global context with effective oversight and remedy mechanisms. In the same vein, while we appreciate the commitment noted under Para 81 of this draft regarding establishment of appropriate safeguards, oversight and remedy mechanisms to prevent and address adverse impacts on human rights from use of digital technologies, the manner in which this commitment will be operationalized needs to be detailed.
Text suggestions	**Rationale**
Para 99. We emphasize the importance of leveraging existing resources within specialized agencies, funds, programmes, other entities, bodies and offices, and related organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to improve capacity building efforts on artificial intelligence, including through using appropriate inter-agency mechanisms, conducting research, mapping and analysis, reporting on progress and challenges in this field, and leveraging their resources and expertise to provide tailored assistance. In particular, we direct UNESCO to further its work in the following areas: a) disclosure guidelines for AI models, including training data, model architecture, deployment parameters, computational resources, and transparency and availability of model weights to enable independent audit, and b) human-rights based regulatory frameworks to hold media platforms accountable for compromising democratic integrity whether through illegal/harmful and AI-generated content; deployment of AI systems for coordinated, inauthentic behavior; or unlawful/unethical advertising, among others.	Despite progress on AI ethics, there is considerable ground to be covered in respect of designing the techno-architectures of a democratic digital public sphere. As a starting point for democratic accountability, UNESCO should be directed to further its work in the areas highlighted above.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 100. We request the Secretary General to establish an AI Research programme, leveraging existing UN system-wide capacities and within existing resources, with a particular focus on developing countries with the purpose of increasing AI research expertise in the Global South. Further, we recognize the need for international cooperation for a shared cloud and data infrastructure for AI innovation.	In light of availability of high-performance computing hardware, data centers and complex infrastructure being limited to a few institutions and countries, the UNCTAD 2025 Technology and Innovation Report has highlighted the need for a "CERN for AI model" i.e. a shared resource to be used by researchers globally based on principles of international cooperation, open science, open access and pooling of resources and expertise in AI. This shared cloud and data infrastructure for AI innovation, which envisions a new mode of DPI, offering scalability and accessibility for innovation, requires a globally financed and internationally governed model like CERN.

15. Internet governance

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 103. We reaffirm the working definition of Internet governance in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society as the development and application by governments, the private sector and civil society, in their respective roles and responsibilities, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programmes that shape the evolution and use of the Internet.	Adopt the multistakeholder framework as laid down in the Tunis Agenda and reiterated in the GDC.
Para 104. We recognise that the management of the Internet as a global facility includes multilateral, transparent, democratic and multi-stakeholder processes, with the full involvement of Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders in accordance with their respective roles and responsibilities. It should ensure an equitable distribution of resources, facilitate access for all and ensure a stable and secure functioning of the internet, taking into account multilingualism (as per Para 29 of the Tunis Agenda). We reaffirm the principle agreed in the Geneva Declaration of Principles that the management of the Internet encompasses both technical and public policy issues and should involve all stakeholders and relevant intergovernmental and international organizations, within their respective roles and responsibilities, as set out in paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda. We reaffirm that effective Internet governance must preserve the open, free, global, interoperable, reliable and secure nature of the Internet, and reject models of state-controlled or fragmented Internet architectures.	Adopt language used in Tunis Agenda (Para 29).

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 108. We reaffirm that Internet governance should continue to follow the provisions set forth in the outcomes of the summits held in Geneva and Tunis, including in relation to enhanced cooperation. We reaffirm enhanced cooperation as a distinct yet complementary and mutually reinforcing process to the multistakeholder dialogue mechanism of the UN Internet Governance Forum, in line with the WSIS outcomes.	Para 69 of the Tunis Agenda recognizes "the need for enhanced cooperation in the future, to enable governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities, in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, but not in the day-to-day technical and operational matters that do not impact on international public policy issues". Such a process towards enhanced cooperation is distinct from the multistakeholder dialogue mechanism of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), as evident from Paras 70 and 71 of the Tunis Agenda.
Para 109. We recall the work of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, established by the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/125, to develop recommendations on how to further implement enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda. We request the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), to establish a standing agenda item at the Commission's annual session dedicated to enabling intergovernmental discussion on the ever-expanding issues on Internet-related public policy relevant to enhanced cooperation.	The set of Internet-related public policy issues is ever-expanding, particularly in the current moment of the big data revolution and generative AI technologies. As Para 34 of the Tunis Agenda acknowledges, Internet governance "is the development and application by governments, the private sector and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programmes that shape the evolution and use of the Internet."

16. The development of the WSIS framework

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 120. We recognise that multistakeholder participation has been crucial to the success of the World Summit's implementation framework, drawing expertise and experience from governments, international organisations, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia. We reaffirm the values and principles of multistakeholder cooperation and engagement that were established at the Summit, reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 70/125, and reinforced in the Global Digital Compact. We further reiterate that in multistakeholder digital governance arrangements, the respective roles and responsibilities of stakeholders should be defined in an issue-specific manner in order to ensure outcome legitimacy and rooted in principles of democracy and public interest	There is a need to ensure multistakeholder participation does not enable capture of the agenda and discussion of vital public interest issues by the private sector. For instance, participation in the 4th Financing for Development conference was not proportionate; private sector counted for 40% of the total attendance and unsurprisingly, the conference saw a push for private sector investments. Further, there are concerning reports that civil society organisations' access to the conference was restricted, with some even alleging confiscation of campaign materials. Multistakeholder dialogues should be based on democratic norms that are alive to the operations of social power and to public interest bottomlines, and enable meaningful representation of a plurality of voices. Multistakeholder participation must serve as a safe space for people's movements and civil society to challenge the political and economic hegemony of powerful actors and demand accountability from states and corporations. The NETmundial 2014 statement also recognizes that "the respective roles and responsibilities of stakeholders should [only] be interpreted in a flexible manner with reference to the issue under discussion."

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 121. We reaffirm the principle of the sovereign equality of all States. We recall Paragraph 68 of the Tunis Agenda that recognizes that "all governments should have an equal role and responsibility for international Internet governance and for ensuring the stability, security and continuity of the Internet. We also recognize the need for development of public policy by governments in consultation with all stakeholders." We believe that the equitable participation of governments and stakeholders from all countries is crucial to achieving the goals established at the Summit and to ensuring that no country or community is left behind in the pursuit of a people-centred, inclusive and development oriented Information Society.	The principle of the sovereign equality of all states can be realized in global digital cooperation only by ensuring that all governments are on an equal footing in international internet governance and recognizing the legitimate role of governments in leading the development of Internet-related public policy through multi-constituency consultation processes.
ADD NEW PARA Para 129a. We affirm the need for a mandate (through the ECOSOC) for the UN CSTD to have a standing agenda at its annual review of WSIS to discuss implementation of the GDC tracks on data and AI governance, in consultation with all stakeholders. The CTSD's annual review of WSIS should take forward recommendations of the report of the CSTD Working Group on Data Governance (expected in the 81st session of the General Assembly) on how to further responsible, equitable and interoperable data governance for development.	As noted in Para 122, there is a need for alignment of implementation of the WSIS and GDC, amongst others by building synergies to ensure their effective implementation and avoiding wasteful duplication of resources and decision-making processes.

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 131. We recognize the need for a dedicated action line on gender equality with mandatory gender impact assessments. We further call on all Action Lines and Action Line facilitators to address gender equality and empowerment of women as a core theme within their work to implement the outcomes of the Summit, with the full involvement of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and other stakeholders.	There is an urgent need to close the gender digital divide by addressing the structural inequalities that hinder the full participation of women and gender-diverse people. This goes beyond targeted connectivity strategies and community/public initiatives to promote women's and girls' participation in the digital economy and society. It requires dismantling systemic barriers that shape unequal experiences in digital spaces. The amplification of sexism, misogyny and technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) has garnered attention in public discourse, but an effective international response that prioritizes safety of victim-survivors while holding digital platforms accountable for profiteering from harmful techno-design choices is lacking. There is thus a need for a dedicated Action Line on gender equality that calls for the establishment of gender-specific indicators and targets, mandatory gender impact assessments, increased representation for women, gender budgeting, and systemic measures for tackling TFGBV.

17. Monitoring and Measurement

Text suggestions	Rationale
Para 133. We commit to strengthen international cooperation to close the current serious gaps on data for development and to increase its public availability. We will champion the responsible use and sharing of data within and between countries to advance progress across the Sustainable Development Goals. We commit to: (a) increase financing for data and statistics from all sources and enhance efforts to build capacity in data and related skills, as well as responsible data use, particularly in developing countries. we will scale up predictable financing for sustainable development data (SDG 17); (b) strengthen efforts to collect, analyze and disseminate relevant, accurate, reliable and disaggregated data for better monitoring and policymaking to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 agenda, while respecting privacy and data protection. We will aim for a 50 per cent increase in the data available to monitor the sustainable development goals, disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts (all SDGs); (c) develop open and accessible data systems to support effective disaster early warning, early action and crisis response (SDGs 3 and 11).	Adopt language as per Para 45, GDC.