



SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

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Informal Consultations on Chapter 3: Science, Technology and Innovation and Digital Cooperation, 11 December 2023



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Closed Informal Consultations on Chapter 3: Science, Technology and Innovation; Digital Cooperation – Conference Room 2, 11 December 2023

ABOUT: The co-facilitators of the preparatory process for the Summit of the Future (SOTF), Germany and Namibia, convened closed informal consultations on Chapter 3 of the Pact for the Future on 11 December 2023. The co-facilitators of the Global Digital Compact (GDC), Sweden and Zambia, were also present in this meeting. The objective of this meeting was “to hear directly from Member States on the substantive issues that they would like to see reflected in the zero draft of the Pact for the Future on a chapter-by-chapter basis”.

NOTE: Since the 11 December consultation was closed to civil society and not broadcast on UN Web TV, this bulletin relied on secondary accounts from representatives present in the room and statements made available online.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On Chapter 3, most, if not all, states, impressed on the importance of linking Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to the 2030 Agenda and utilizing its potential as an accelerator. Many developing states called for the Pact and the GDC to draw reference to technology transfer and capacity building as a means to close the tech and digital divide, as well as expanding digital connectivity. Developing nations should be part of the governance process with respect to emerging technology, such as AI, to ensure inclusive development and that no one is left behind. Numerous references were made to human rights approaches and women and girls, ensuring that they were factored in the design phase of new tech, but also ensuring that they had access to education to ensure digital literacy, increasing their presence in STEM education, as well as increasing digital access more broadly as well as present in decision-making processes on STI-related matters. Canada and Egypt had a rare interactive exchange on the issue of technology transfer and closing digital divides with Canada emphasizing the importance of human rights and gender equality and Egypt expressing concern that this created “a flavor” of conditionality.

HEADLINES:

- ✚ “No hierarchy may be established between the Pact (for the Future) and the (Global Digital) Compact”.
- ✚ We need to take a people- and development-centered approach.
- ✚ Human rights are equally valid online as they are offline.
- ✚ No one should be left behind and no one should be left offline.
- ✚ “We would like to emphasize that the text included in Rev. 3 of the draft decision on the scope [and elements of the Pact], does not constitute a good basis for the zero draft in regard to Chapter 3. As we have indicated in the letter we sent to the co-facilitators on 17 August, the excessive and negative caveating of technology transfer language in a manner that goes beyond the 2030 Agenda is unacceptable” – G77 and China.
- ✚ “It should also recognize that intellectual property rights should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation in a way that favors social and economic welfare taking into account national laws, and should call for applying the flexibilities enshrined in relevant international legal obligations ... as well as the consideration of more potential flexibilities to developing countries to assist them in attaining global environmental objectives” – G77 and China.
- ✚ “The EU strongly supports the Internet Governance Forum as the premier independent forum for multistakeholder input for internet governance”.

RESOURCES:

1. [Letter from the co-facilitators on the Preparatory Process for the SOTF](#) – 19 October 2023
2. [Letter with the draft decision on scope of the SOTF \(rev. 3\)](#) – 30 August 2023
3. [Statement of G77 and China](#)
4. [Statement of the European Union](#)

KEY REMARKS:

<p><u>Cuba</u> (on behalf of G77 and China)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>“We would like to emphasize that the text included in Rev. 3 of the draft decision on the scope, does not constitute a good basis for the zero draft in regard to Chapter 3. As we have indicated in the letter we sent to the co-facilitators on 17 August, the excessive and negative caveating of technology transfer language in a manner that goes beyond the 2030 Agenda is unacceptable”.</i> ▪ <i>“This Chapter must provide concrete solutions for the promotion of technology transfer from developed countries to developing countries, as well as for capacity building and technological and scientific cooperation to close the digital and technological divide”.</i> ▪ <i>“we agree to continue working on the development of science and technology in developing countries by strengthening South-South cooperation, which is necessary to optimize our potential and complement our resources and expertise, while offering viable pathways to address common challenges among developing countries”.</i> ▪ <i>“should call upon the international community, the United Nations System and the International Financial Institutions to support the efforts of the countries of the South to develop and strengthen their national science, technology and innovation systems”.</i> ▪ <i>“It should also recognize that intellectual property rights should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation in a way that favors social and economic welfare taking into account national laws, and should call for applying the flexibilities enshrined in relevant international legal obligations in the field of intellectual property rights, where applicable, as well as the consideration of more potential flexibilities to developing countries to assist them in attaining global environmental objectives, as well as facilitating the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries”.</i> ▪ <i>“The Group emphasizes the importance of the full and equal participation of all countries in any decisions and processes regarding recommendations for the international governance of artificial intelligence”.</i> ▪ <i>“We would like to take this opportunity to request the co-facilitators of the global digital compact to convene, at least one informal consultation on the issues paper with member states before the release of the zero draft, as we have not been given an opportunity to provide feedback on it ... We would also like to enquire into the timeframe in which the co-facilitators plan to release the zero draft”.</i>
<p><u>European Union</u> (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>“We insist on the political importance of the GDC and its potential to accelerate the progress towards the SDGs, and recall that no hierarchy may be established between the Pact and the Compact”.</i> ▪ <i>“The EU strongly supports the Internet Governance Forum as the premier independent forum for multistakeholder input for internet governance”.</i> ▪ <i>“We are committed to contributing to global connectivity and digital access for all, in the framework of the twin - digital and green - transition. We expect the Pact to prioritize global connectivity and enhanced capacity building as essential steps to closing the digital divides”.</i> ▪ <i>“The digital transformation must be human-centric and human-rights based, directed towards progress in implementing the Agenda 2030”.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>“In particular, all women and girls must have full and meaningful access to digital education to overcome the gender digital divide. They must also be protected from technology-facilitated gender-based violence”.</i> ▪ <i>“In order to contribute to sustainable development, AI must be ethical and responsible, in conformity with the UNESCO Recommendations on the Ethics of AI”.</i> ▪ <i>“The protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights not only allows but encourages and enhances, by creating the necessary trust and incentives, the transfer, promotion and dissemination of technological innovation at the global level, in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare”.</i>
Finland (on behalf of Nordic countries)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gender must be mainstreamed. ▪ International law must be upheld.
Canada (on behalf of CANZ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In response to statements made by the G77 and Africa* group, Canada acknowledged that digital development should benefit all, and that digital infrastructure is necessary, but also mentioned that gender equality, human rights and civil liberties that together constitute human dignity are critical. ▪ The critical need for digital infrastructure will need to be included in the GDC.
Egypt (on behalf of Arab group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 3 must acknowledge the need for access to technologies, means of implementation and the role of STI in addressing climate change. ▪ The GDC should focus on development issues.
Nepal (on behalf of LDCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only 49% of people in LDCs had access to broadband, and ordinarily were reliant on 2G and 3G networks that are to be phased out.
Netherlands (on behalf of Benelux)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human rights must be upheld online, in particular right to privacy and freedom of expression. ▪ We must Leave No One Behind in the digital transition.
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We need to take a people- and development-centered approach. ▪ Encourage open cooperation on STI. ▪ Need to increase the representation and voice of developing countries.
Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In response to Canada’s statement emphasizing the importance of gender equality and human rights, Egypt expressed concern that this created “a flavor” of conditionality. ▪ On human rights, we legally agree, but on some issues we are not there.
Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We should take a people-centered approach. ▪ No one should be left behind and no one should be left offline. ▪ We must use the GDC and the Summit of the Future to harness the opportunities of Artificial Intelligence.
Israel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Importance of STI cannot be overstated.
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We must include civil society in these consultations.

* Note: The project team was not able to source the statements or notes for the following Member States or group of States who spoke at this consultation, hence are not included here. List of MS – Singapore, Zambia (on behalf of Africa), Indonesia, Morocco and United States.