

Global Digital Compact - Stakeholders Consultations

February 12, 2024

Thank you. I'm representing Derechos Digitales, a latin american NGO with more than 19 years of experience working in the intersection of technology and human rights. We have conducted extensive research on these issues, particularly emphasizing the necessity of placing human rights at the forefront of these discussions, especially in light of the gender-differentiated impacts.

On the global challenge of attaining universal and meaningful digital connectivity, recent reports emphasize the importance of addressing inequality, high prices, and infrastructure from a holistic and intercultural perspective. Meaningful access to the internet is crucial for enabling the exercise of human rights and aligns with global agendas on digital transformation and sustainable development.

We understand that the Digital Compact should stress States to prioritize policies addressing global internet access disparities, particularly in marginalized regions, to promote universal access to the internet as an enabler of various human rights. This includes developing comprehensive public policy proposals that integrate interculturality, ensuring effective participation, and fostering digital literacy. Furthermore, fostering the development of public policies aligned with guiding principles such as equal access, pluralism, non-discrimination, privacy, net neutrality, and multisectoral governance is essential.

From a human rights perspective, AI initiatives should leverage existing advancements to address AI risks, drawing from discussions at the IGF, Human Rights Council Resolutions, and the High Commissioner for Human Rights' report advocating for a moratorium or ban on AI tools that violate international human rights law. It is imperative to underscore states' obligations to uphold human rights in AI development and deployment, with a focus on promoting transparency, non-discrimination, and diversity throughout the entire AI life cycle. Moreover, the tech sector must prioritize respecting and safeguarding human rights within their processes. This should include incorporating human rights impact assessments and due diligence, aligning with UNESCO's Recommendation and the B-Tech Project on Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

To ensure concrete commitments to protect the digital rights of women and LGBTQIA people, initiatives must promote actions aimed at guaranteeing a digital space free of technology-facilitated gender-based violence from an intersectional perspective ensuring balance of rights. It is crucial to reaffirm and recommit to the promotion of freedom of expression, privacy, peaceful assembly, and the participation of women in all their diversity across all aspects of life. Civil society participation in all international, regional, and national discussions is vital, and we reinforce the need for civil society to be heard.

In conclusion, a human rights-based approach to technology development and regulation is imperative. The Compact must not only uphold existing consensus but also address widening gaps and inequalities exacerbated by technological advancements.

Thank you