



SECOND WORLD SUMMIT OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE FUTURE 2023

BRINGING THE FUTURE TO THE PRESENT

The Democracy of the Future, Artificial Intelligence and Parliaments

Outcome Document

Introduction

The Second World Summit of the Committees of the Future in Montevideo, Uruguay, brought together over 300 parliamentarians, experts and practitioners representing 70 parliaments from around the world between 25 and 27 September 2023. Jointly organized by the Parliament of Uruguay and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the meeting built on the outcomes of the First World Summit held in Finland and was enriched by the participation of over 25 prominent international experts.

The Summit focused on strategies to enhance the “use of the future” (anticipatory capacities and activities which include, among others, foresight) in parliament and how to embrace artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential impact on democracy, human rights and society at large. Together, parliamentarians, experts, academics, and representatives from leading artificial intelligence development companies, civil society stakeholders and influential international organizations engaged in workshops and plenary sessions marked by intense exchanges, which have led to the crafting of this outcome declaration.

I- Awareness of the current context

1. We are at a historic turning point. Rapid technological advances, intertwined with diverse political, social and environmental phenomena, are resulting in profound, complex and uncertain changes. As artificial intelligence grows in capacity and becomes more deeply immersed in our society, we must face its potential for positive innovations and solutions but also the threats and challenges it poses to democracy and society at large. As artificial intelligence evolves, it could act autonomously to solve novel problems with novel strategies beyond human abilities (referred to as artificial general intelligence or frontier AI). Many experts believe this is possible within five years. We recognize that this accelerated and potentially disruptive evolutionary phase of AI may generate problems of compatibility with our current knowledge and work models, values and democratic systems, and compels us to re-examine our governance approaches and regulations.
2. We also recognize that our societies, while facing similar challenges, are also at different levels of development with regard to AI. Initiatives and solutions will need to build on lessons learned from across the globe, be inclusive, facilitate coordination and collaboration, and work towards common objectives while being tailored to specific needs and situations.
3. We highlight the exceptional responsibility of large technology platforms concerning big data models, which evolve at exponential speed, and the need for corporate accountability and transparency as well as a willingness to collaborate with public actors.

II - Our commitment to democracy in the age of AI through anticipatory governance

4. We acknowledge that AI challenges our democratic institutions in ways we are only just beginning to understand. Issues of surveillance, data privacy and even AI-driven “deepfakes” can undermine truth, justice, fundamental rights and democratic processes. We recognize the need for a nuanced and multidimensional approach that respects both innovation and human rights.

5. Our conventional reactive mechanisms are being challenged and are ill-equipped to manage the rapid advances and risks presented by AI. To address this, we call for a paradigm shift towards an anticipatory stance in governance, focusing on proactive measures and responsible foresight, including long-term vision and taking account of evolving complex dynamics. These are essential in safely ensuring beneficial AI outcomes for our societies and preventing undesirable trajectories.

III - Integrating anticipatory capacities in parliaments for more effective decision making

6. We welcome the fact that many parliaments today are taking steps to enhance their capacity to “enter the future” into the present (vision, imagination, prospection, aspiration, possibility analysis) in a rigorous and systematic way, and in doing so, that they are stepping up the leadership they provide in dealing with the future through proactive action with anticipatory and transformative capacity. In an era marked by accelerated, interdependent and disruptive changes, our governance institutions need to be able to anticipate. Parliaments can serve as focal points for collective intelligence-based knowledge creation to better understand the evolution of AI, discern potential hazards, and recommend anticipatory and proactive local and international practices and regulations.
7. For parliaments to play their role, they need to build their understanding, knowledge, and ability to integrate future-oriented methodologies and approaches in their work across the board. This is a question of capacity but also of political will and culture-shift. We call on parliaments to make this an objective and to develop strategies and look at all opportunities to begin transformation towards more futures-literacy-oriented work.
8. We recognize that Committees of the Future are key instruments and unique mechanisms to lead future-oriented transformation in parliaments. Unlike the traditional parliamentary ethos of reacting to change, Committees of the Future are designed to proactively anticipate, respond and be creative in order to transform policy. Committees of the Future can detect emerging challenges early and, acting in an agile fashion, envision opportunities and ensure governance remains relevant and effective. We call on parliaments to consider establishing permanent Committees of the Future and to provide them with the necessary resources and mandate. We commit, wherever possible, to foster their growth, evolution, effectiveness and wider proliferation.
9. Today’s challenges demand systemic, holistic and complex approaches. We call on parliaments to engage more strongly in inclusive and effective multi-stakeholder engagement and recall that Committees of the Future inherently promote inter- and transdisciplinary dialogues, integrating insights from various actors and fields to create collective knowledge.
10. We underscore that policy decisions must be more evidence-based than ever and encompass diverse, comprehensive perspectives. Committees of the Future serve as a critical bridge between scientific advancements and legislative processes. They ensure policies are informed by the latest research, making the knowledge underpinning governance more robust, evolving and dynamic. The work of Committees of the Future enhances understanding of the interacting patterns of threats and opportunities and of alternative futures, including visionary futures, which informs the work of other committees across and beyond their own policy areas.
11. Well-informed citizenry and public engagement are also crucial in ensuring the effective future-oriented work of parliaments. Public consultations, participatory initiatives and outreach programmes foster an environment in which the public is both a beneficiary and an active participant in shaping future-focused policies. Committees of the Future are instrumental in facilitating such engagement. These Committees, with their dynamic ethos suited to networked action modes, can engage in fruitful exchanges with their counterparts, promoting collective solutions to shared challenges.

IV - Reflection on current AI regulations and the road ahead

12. We advocate for a balanced approach to AI regulation, harmonizing the need for innovation with ethical considerations. We acknowledge the urgent need to build legal frameworks related to AI and recall the importance of keeping the human being at the heart of all initiatives. AI or any other innovation should not breach fundamental rights, including

non-discrimination. International cooperation should ensure that global AI developments are equitable and universally beneficial, preventing potential “AI races” devoid of ethical and rights-based considerations. International human rights standards must be built into the process of developing new technology from the outset and be the starting point of any regulatory process.

13. Across nations, foundational AI principles have started to emerge — transparency, fairness, human oversight and accountability being the mainstays. Entities from the European Union to the Global Partnership on AI have laid the groundwork through frameworks that balance innovation with rights and safety. However, with the possible advent of artificial general intelligence (AGI) there is a pressing need to go further. This requires:
 - **Global harmonization of AI standards:** AI by its very nature defies national boundaries. Thus, a coordinated international set of standards, underpinned by a shared understanding of ethics and safety, is paramount.
 - **Anticipatory regulatory mechanisms:** We must not just respond to the present, but also prepare for the possibilities of the future. This involves anticipating future AI trajectories, potential applications, misuses and harmful side effects; incentivizing beneficial applications; and preemptively creating regulatory buffers. We therefore call on parliaments to consider developing national digitalization and AI strategies, including regulations for both current narrow AI and future forms of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) from an anticipatory perspective.
 - **Interdisciplinary collaboration:** The multifaceted challenges of AI demand insights from technologists, neuroscientists, sociologists and anthropologists, as well as human rights, policy and legal experts, among others. We advocate for interdisciplinary committees that can offer holistic viewpoints on the AI regulatory landscape.
 - **Public involvement and literacy:** As the ramifications of AI permeate society, a democratically engaged and AI-literate citizenry is essential. We recommend national programmes focusing on AI education and public consultations on AI policy decisions.
 - **Sustained human rights-based approach, gender mainstreaming and future generations:** Any action and reflection on the future must take stock of lessons learned and address historical inequalities and discrimination. We urge all relevant stakeholders, in particular parliaments, to proactively ensure that AI does not impede the full enjoyment of all human rights by people, without distinction of any kind.). Particular attention should be paid to integrating a gender perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programmes and projects related to AI. The voice of youth and the most marginalized populations must also be taken into account as well as the interests of future generations. This is our duty towards future generations.

V - Strengthening inter-parliamentary collaborations

14. We recognize that current challenges related to AI require a collective and collaborative response. We encourage the facilitation of platforms of exchange, coordination and networking among parliaments and committees of the future. This Second World Summit is a testimony of how such initiatives serve to amplify and enhance impact. An online interactive world map of parliamentary actions on AI issues, reports and draft regulations would facilitate such shared learning. We also call on the IPU to continue its engagement on anticipatory governance and building parliaments' use-of -the- future capacities, , fostering the establishment of Committees of the Future in parliaments and integrating these issues into its current structures and debates with a view to catalyzing parliamentary action.

VI - Appeal to the United Nations:

15. We call upon the United Nations to spotlight the centrality of anticipation and foresight in parliaments through their main functions – accountability, oversight, legislative and representative – in addressing the multifaceted challenges and opportunities posed by AI. The 2024 UN General Assembly and the 2024 UN Summit of the Future should prominently feature parliaments, including through the IPU as the global organization of parliaments. Parliaments' democratic mandate and future-oriented initiatives hold the key to sustainable solutions.

16. We must aim to create a universally shared AI governance framework, considering the accelerated, powerful, uncertain and disruptive evolving nature of AI. This framework, which must take into account the interests of all nations, irrespective of their economic and social system, will have a dual focus: first, protecting human rights and humanity's interests, safety and security, and second, harnessing AI's positive evolution for the global good. An anticipatory AI global framework needs to address these challenges, and we call on parliaments to collaborate with the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General and his Envoy on Technology to develop a UN Convention on Artificial Intelligence and design adequate global processes and structures to meet this objective and ensure its implementation.

VII - Next steps

17. Through the plenary sessions and workshops, the consensus of the participants on the importance of continuing the initiatives of Committees of the Future in parliaments, globally networking, became evident. A next step will be to propose and organize pathways for international exchanges and collaborations. There was also a consensus that Summits of Committees of the Future should continue to be held at least once a year. This was confirmed by the final message from the President of the IPU. Chile's offer to host the Summit in 2024 was noted, with confirmation to be agreed upon during the next IPU Assembly in Angola.

In conclusion, our democracies, while tested by the evolving context of AI, need to advocate for anticipatory capabilities to strengthen anticipation, resilience, creativity, responsibility and wisdom, to navigate the complexity and uncertainty that the world is facing. Through unity, foresight, ethical considerations, collaboration and an unwavering commitment to human rights and democratic values, we pledge to champion a future where technology serves humanity. The global collaboration of our parliaments, the role of the parliamentary Committees of the Future and international coordination are fundamental contributions to achieve this.