

First UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance meets in Geneva on panel's first report

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Independent International Scientific Panel on AI

FAQ

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What is the Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence?

The Independent International Scientific Panel on AI serves as the first global scientific body on Artificial Intelligence (AI), bringing together leading experts to assess how AI is transforming our lives.

When was the Panel established and under what authority?

The Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence was established within the United Nations by the UN General Assembly through resolution A/RES/79/325, adopted by consensus on 26 August 2025. Its creation builds directly on the Global Digital Compact adopted in 2024 as part of the Pact for the Future, as well as on the recommendations of the Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence.

What is the mandate and scope of the Panel?

The Panel has been mandated to produce an annual report with evidence-based scientific assessments related to the opportunities, risks and impacts of artificial intelligence, which will be presented annually at the United Nations Global Dialogue on AI Governance. It may also prepare thematic briefs on issues of concern as it deems necessary, provide updates on its work to the General Assembly up to twice a year, form working groups and consult informally with external experts as needed. The Panel will examine the opportunities, risks, and impacts of artificial intelligence in the non-military domain.

Why is the Panel important?

The Panel is the first global scientific body dedicated entirely to artificial intelligence. It: Acts as an early-warning system and evidence engine, helping distinguish between hype and reality. Levels the information playing field by making complex assessments accessible to all Member States and stakeholders. Bridges the gap between AI research and policy by producing policy-relevant annual reports and thematic briefs on AI's risks, opportunities, and impacts. Informs international debates by presenting findings to the Global Dialogue on AI Governance. Ensures inclusive perspectives, with 40 members reflecting gender, geography, and diverse levels of technological development, including from the Global South.

Why is the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI needed now?

In an era of rapid technological advancement, effective AI governance requires policy dialogue that is grounded in robust, independent evidence, which is why this Scientific Panel on AI is needed now. The establishment of the Scientific Panel on AI within the United Nations places science at the centre of global efforts, at a moment when governments urgently need credible, multidisciplinary insight to keep pace with fast-moving developments. Comprising 40 experts from all regions and disciplines, the Panel provides independent assessments of AI's opportunities, risks, and impacts, serving as a global early-warning system and evidence engine that helps distinguish signal from noise and foresight from fear. By informing the Global Dialogue and broader international processes, the Panel enables the global community to anticipate emerging challenges, make better-informed governance decisions, and level the information playing field for policymakers worldwide.

Is the Panel a regulatory or enforcement body? Will the Panel's work lead to binding international regulation of AI?

The Panel is not a regulatory body, and will not set rules, enforce standards or prescribe policy. It provides rigorous, evidence-based, policy-relevant but non-prescriptive analysis that inform decision-making requires.

Does the Panel seek to slow down AI innovation or regulate it?

The Panel is not a regulatory body, and will not set rules, enforce standards or prescribe policy. The Panel has issued its Preliminary report and will continue to provide evidence-based scientific assessments synthesizing and analysing existing research related to the opportunities, risks and impacts of artificial intelligence.

What distinguishes this Panel from other international efforts on AI?

The international landscape includes numerous initiatives addressing aspects of AI governance. The Panel holds a distinct position within this ecosystem, designed to fill the gaps that existing bodies currently do not address. Several features distinguish the Panel from these existing efforts: It is a dedicated scientific body, not a policy forum. The Panel is the first global scientific body focused exclusively on AI, designed to generate independent, evidence-based analysis on AI's opportunities, risks, and impacts. It provides ongoing, independent scientific assessments, as opposed to one-off reports or time-limited initiatives. It serves as an early-warning and evidence engine. The Panel is positioned to identify emerging developments, assess evolving risks, and provide timely scientific findings to inform decision-making. Its mandate bridges science and policy. Established in the same Resolution as the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, the Panel maintains a distinct link to multilateral policy processes while preserving scientific independence. Inclusivity and representation are built into its design. The Panel is mandated to include experts from diverse disciplines, geographies, and levels of technological development, helping to reduce global information asymmetries and give historically underrepresented regions a voice in evidence-based assessments. The Panel is interdisciplinary. The Panel members include those with backgrounds in opportunities, risks and impacts.

Is the Panel duplicating the work of existing bodies or organisations?

The international landscape includes numerous initiatives addressing aspects of artificial intelligence governance. The Independent International Scientific Panel on AI occupies a distinct and complementary position within this ecosystem, designed to fill a specific gap that no existing body currently addresses. The Panel is the first global scientific body focused exclusively on artificial intelligence, established to generate independent, evidence-based analysis on AI capabilities, risks and impacts. Unlike one-off reports or time-limited initiatives, it delivers ongoing assessments, serving as an early-warning and evidence engine for the international community. Established in the same Resolution as the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, the Panel bridges science and policy while preserving its scientific independence. Critically, inclusivity and representation are built into its design: members are drawn from diverse disciplines, geographies and levels of technological development, helping to reduce global information asymmetries and ensuring historically underrepresented regions have a meaningful voice in shaping the evidence base that will inform AI governance worldwide.

How does the Panel relate to existing national or regional AI governance efforts?

The establishment of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI represents a significant step forward in addressing a fundamental challenge of our time: governing a technology that transcends borders, jurisdictions, and traditional regulatory frameworks.

The Panel will not seek to replace or duplicate the important work being undertaken at national and regional levels. Rather, it is responding to the clear need for an independent, scientifically-grounded body that can provide

authoritative assessments and foster genuine multilateral cooperation on AI governance. A mapping of existing efforts and how a scientific panel within the United Nations could fit into them is outlined in the *Governing AI for Humanity: Final Report*.

Why is this unique in regards to precedence of the work the UN has done?

The Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Body on AI, convened in 2023, was a temporary expert group tasked with examining international cooperation on AI governance. It concluded its work in 2024 with the report *Governing AI for Humanity*, which proposed the establishment of a scientific Panel and a universal global dialogue. Whereas the Advisory Body was a time-bound, policy-oriented expert group providing advice to the Secretary-General, the Scientific Panel is a standing United Nations mechanism established by the General Assembly mandated to produce annual scientific assessments for presentation at the multistakeholder Global Dialogue on AI Governance. The first annual Global Dialogue on AI Governance was held in Geneva on 6–7 July 2026. The Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) is a separate internal UN group that provides cross-cutting scientific advice to the Secretary-General and senior UN leadership across disciplines.

What is the Global Dialogue on AI Governance?

The Global Dialogue on AI Governance is a universal, inclusive forum that brings all countries to the table on AI governance, established by the United Nations General Assembly through resolution A/RES/79/325, adopted on 26 August 2025. No country can address the opportunities and risks of AI alone; international cooperation on AI governance is essential to ensure AI development benefits all. The Dialogue was created to advance that cooperation among all UN Member States, alongside representatives from academia, industry, civil society, and the technical community. The Global Dialogue is mandated by the Global Digital Compact, the first universal intergovernmental agreement on digital cooperation and AI governance, adopted by Member States in September 2024 as part of the Pact for the Future. It provides an inclusive space within the UN system for governments and stakeholders to share practices, build common understanding, foster interoperability between national approaches, and advance implementation of the Global Digital Compact's AI governance commitments. This includes examining how international cooperation on AI governance can accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals while managing risks, upholding international human rights standards, and reducing AI divides between and within countries. The Dialogue is not a regulatory or enforcement body. The Dialogue was formally launched on 25 September 2025 during the High-Level Week of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The first annual Global Dialogue on AI Governance was held in Geneva on 6–7 July 2026, informed by the Panel's preliminary report launched on 1 July 2026. A subsequent session is planned in New York in 2027, in the margins of the multistakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, coinciding with the high-level review of the Global Digital Compact at the 82nd session of the General Assembly.

How does the Panel relate to the Global Dialogue on AI Governance?

The Panel and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance are two mechanisms established by the same UNGA resolution. The Panel is mandated to produce an annual report with evidence-based scientific assessments of AI's opportunities, risks, and impacts, which is presented at the Dialogue. This relationship ensures that intergovernmental deliberations on AI governance are informed by independent scientific evidence. By making its assessments available to all Member States simultaneously, the Panel supports informed and equitable participation in the Dialogue, regardless of a country's level of technological development.

How does the Panel relate to the Global Digital Compact?

The Panel is one of the key mechanisms created to implement the Global Digital Compact, which called for inclusive and cooperative approaches to the governance of artificial intelligence. The Panel's outputs, including preliminary report, annual reports and thematic briefs, will feed into follow-up processes of the Compact, including the high-level review scheduled for 2027 during the 82nd session of the General Assembly.

How many members serve on the Panel?

There are 40 members of the Panel.

What is the composition of the Panel members?

The Panel includes 40 members from all five of the UN's regions. There are 19 women and 21 men. The Panel members are from various different backgrounds, including academia, private sector, civil society and the

technical community. The members have backgrounds in core technical AI expertise; applied AI, safety and infrastructure experience; and AI policy, ethics and impact.

How many applications were received for the Panel?

Over 2,600 applications were received from over 140 countries.

Was the nomination process open to all countries and regions?

The nomination process was open to candidates from all countries and regions. An Open Call for nominations was posted from 25 September to 31 October 2025, inviting qualified individuals worldwide to apply. Full details were made available on the website .

How were the 40 Panel members identified?

The 40 Panel members were identified from among applicants to an open call that resulted in over 2,600 applications from more than 140 countries, ensuring world-class expertise. All candidates were assessed on merit-based criteria of outstanding expertise in AI and related fields, whereafter the 40 members were identified on the basis of this expertise, an interdisciplinary perspective, geographical and gender balance, and inclusion of candidates from developing as well as developed countries, with due consideration to nominations from Member States. The applicant pool demonstrates a broad geographic spread and multidisciplinary reach, consistent with the Panel's objectives.

Who nominated and appointed the Panel members?

The UN Secretary-General recommended a list of 40 candidates to the General Assembly, which appointed them as Panel members in February 2026.

When were the Panel members appointed?

The General Assembly appointed the Panel members in February 2026.

Who are the first co-chairs of the Panel?

At its inaugural meeting on 3 March 2026, the Panel's 40 members elected Yoshua Bengio of Canada and Maria Ressa of the Philippines to facilitate the first truly global scientific body dedicated to artificial intelligence. Yoshua Bengio is a Professor at Université de Montréal, Co-President of LawZero, Founder of Mila - Quebec Artificial Intelligence Institute, and recipient of the 2018 Turing Award. Maria Ressa is a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, journalist and co-founder of Rappler, and a global advocate for information integrity, press freedom, and human rights.

Do Panel members represent their governments, employers or other organisations?

No. Under resolution A/RES/79/325, all Panel members serve in their personal capacity. When carrying out Panel work, they hold the status of Experts on Mission, which means they do not seek or accept instructions from any Government or other source. Panel members hold positions in academia, industry, civil society or other organizations, however they do not represent those organisations in their work for the Panel, and they disclose them under the panel's conflict of interest process.

Does the Panel represent the interests of any single country or group of countries?

The Panel does not represent any single country or group of countries. The Panel includes members from each of the UN's five regions, with no more than two members from any nationality.

How will the Panel ensure scientific integrity and remain independent in its work?

To safeguard impartiality, Panel members are required to disclose all financial, professional, or personal interests that could create a conflict of interest. Serving in a personal capacity and under these disclosure requirements helps to ensure that the Panel's advice remains impartial and independent.

How does the Panel manage conflicts of interest?

Before the Secretary-General made his recommendations to the General Assembly, candidates under consideration for nomination completed a Declaration of Interests form covering appointments, employment and consulting, research support, investments, intellectual property, public positions and non-financial interests. Each

declaration was assessed for possible or actual conflicts, and mitigation measures, including recusal from specific discussions, were agreed. Resolution A/RES/79/325 requires Panel members to disclose conflicts of interest on an ongoing basis.

How is the Panel funded?

In resolution A/RES/79/325, the General Assembly encourages States, as well as the private sector, financial institutions, foundations and other donors in a position to do so, to support the effective functioning of the Panel through voluntary contributions that are made public in the interest of full transparency. To enable Secretariat support for the Panel, the United Nations uses the Digital Cooperation Fund, a pooled funding mechanism that makes targeted investments to implement the Global Digital Compact. Contributions to support the Panel's Secretariat are pooled through the Fund and are not earmarked for the Panel's substantive work. In addition, contributions that support the Secretariat outside the Digital Cooperation Fund, such as in-kind support for in-person meetings¹ or separate contributions to UN entities supporting the Panel², are also made public. No contribution gives donors a role in the Panel's agenda, evidence, drafting or findings. ¹ The Government of Spain provided in-kind support for the Panel's first in-person meeting in Madrid. ² The Government of Japan provided support to the UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies to promote global AI governance, including the start-up of the Panel.

How is the Panel Secretariat structured and what is its role?

The Panel Secretariat is coordinated by Under-Secretary-General and Special Envoy for Digital and Emerging Technologies Amandeep Gill and the UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies, and includes members from ITU and UNESCO while also drawing on other system-wide capacities. Its role is enabling, including logistical, administrative and other substantive support as requested by the Panel. The Secretariat does not direct the Panel's scientific work, and the Panel's findings are not subject to UN review or approval.

Who supported the drafting of the Panel's reports?

The Panel selected drafting and editing consultants through a merit-based process, from candidates nominated and approved by Panel members. They worked under Terms of Reference agreed by the Panel and reported directly to the Panel on all substantive matters. The United Nations University administered their contracts. Responsibility for the Panel's scientific assessments and final content remained with the Panel.

How are the Panel's publications reviewed?

Drafts are prepared by working groups of Panel members, reviewed by the full panel and agreed by the Panel before publication. Findings reflect the evidence cited in each publication and the collective judgement of its 40 members, who hold a wide range of views on AI.

What real-world issues will the Panel address?

This group of 40 experts provides independent insights into the opportunities, risks and impacts associated with AI that are relevant to policy, including in the context of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance. The Panel's Preliminary report looks at AI's opportunities, risks and impacts. The Panel's focus also includes topics such as the development of safe, secure and trustworthy AI systems; the development of open-source software, open data and open AI models; the social, economic, ethical, cultural, linguistic and technical implications of AI including; transparency, accountability and robust human oversight of AI systems; and respect for and protection and promotion of human rights in the field of AI. The Panel can also issue thematic briefs on topics of their choosing, if deemed necessary.

What is the Preliminary Report?

The Preliminary Report of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI: Evidence-based assessment of opportunities, risks and impacts of AI is the Panel's first scientific assessment of where AI capabilities stand and where they are heading. It gives UN Member States and other stakeholders a shared evidence base for navigating a fast-moving technology, and informed the inaugural Global Dialogue on AI Governance in Geneva on 6–7 July 2026. Reflecting the best available evidence at the time of publication, it marks the beginning of a sustained scientific process rather than a one-off product.

What is the Thematic Brief on AI Agents, Misalignment and the Risk of Losing Human Control?

The brief is the Panel's first thematic brief, released as an advance unedited version on 21 September 2026. It

assesses the breach of Hugging Face's systems by AI agents under evaluation at OpenAI in summer 2026, and sets it against wider research on agentic misalignment and AI control. It separates what the incident shows from possible future risks, without predicting severe loss of control, and reviews safeguards used in other high-risk sectors such as aviation, medicine and cybersecurity. The brief is available [here](#) .

How does the Panel decide the topics of its thematic briefs?

The Panel decides which issues to cover in thematic briefs, as provided in resolution A/RES/79/325. Donors and the Secretariat have no role in recommending or selecting topics.

How will the Panel's findings be used, and how will the Panel communicate its findings and make them accessible to stakeholders?

The Panel presents its work at the United Nations Global Dialogue on AI Governance. Its preliminary report, launched on 1 July 2026, informed the first Dialogue, held in Geneva on 6–7 July 2026. The report is also available in all six official UN languages, supporting equitable access for Member States and stakeholders worldwide.

How will the Panel ensure its assessments are accessible to non-specialists?

Ensuring scientific assessments are accessible and useful to diverse audiences is central to the Panel's purpose. The Panel's mandate reflects clear recognition that its value rests in its ability to inform decision-makers and stakeholders. The Panel is mandated to produce policy-relevant, non-prescriptive summary reports. These reports synthesize and analyse existing research in a manner designed to inform rather than dictate policy choices. Assessments will be presented annually at the United Nations Global Dialogue on AI Governance, involving Governments and all relevant stakeholders. The Panel's intended audience extends well beyond the scientific community. Members are aware from the outset that their work must serve a wide range of stakeholders.

How will the Panel's work benefit Member States, particularly developing countries?

The Panel's work helps level the information playing field for policymakers worldwide. The work provides Member States with policy-relevant, evidence-based scientific assessments, guided by principles of independence, scientific credibility and rigour, multidisciplinary and inclusive participation.

How will the Panel address the rapid pace of AI development?

The Panel addresses the rapid pace of AI development by providing regular, independent, and science-based assessments that help policymakers anticipate risks and opportunities rather than react after the fact. As highlighted by the Secretary-General, the Panel acts as an early-warning and foresight mechanism, grounding global discussions in evidence while feeding into the Global Dialogue on AI Governance.

What are the key milestones for the Panel? When was the first report released?

The Panel's first report, titled Preliminary Report of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI: Evidence-based assessment of opportunities, risks and impacts of AI , was released on 1 July 2026. It synthesizes existing research related to the opportunities, risks and impacts of artificial intelligence. A key milestone was the presentation of the Panel's preliminary report at the first Global Dialogue on AI Governance on July 2026 in Geneva. The Preliminary Report is available in all official UN languages and can be accessed [here](#) . The report has also been translated into Japanese .

What is next for the Panel?

The Preliminary Report marks the beginning of the Panel's work, not its conclusion. From here, the Panel will deepen its evidence base through structured consultations with the scientific community and engagement with external experts. The Panel will also issue thematic briefs on emerging or fast-moving issues, including but not limited to: AI and the environment; AI and child safety; AI governance instruments and the evaluation of their effectiveness, or broader sectoral briefs on the applications of AI in space, quantum, legal and judicial systems, as well as financial markets. This work builds toward the Panel's next annual report, which will inform the second Global Dialogue on AI Governance, scheduled for May 2027 in New York. This iterative model is central to the Panel's purpose: in a field where evidence dates quickly, the Panel is designed to keep assessing, updating and clarifying the science so that international AI governance keeps pace with the technology rather than falling behind it.

How will the Panel engage stakeholders in its work?

As per the resolution, the Panel established working groups during the drafting the Preliminary report. The Panel may also consult informally with external experts in producing forthcoming reports and thematic briefs.

How can stakeholders engage with or follow the work of the Panel?

As per the resolution, the Panel will establish working groups as needed, and the Panel may also consult informally with external experts. Further information, including the Panel's Preliminary report, is available on the website .