São Luís Declaration:

Artificial Intelligence

Joint Statement from Engagement Groups
to the G20 States on Artificial Intelligence

C20 CIVIL 2024 BRASIL

L20 LABOUR 2024 BRASIL

T20 THINK 2024 BRASIL

W20 WOMEN 2024 BRASIL

Introduction:

1. As representatives of Civil Society Organizations, Labour Unions, Think Tanks and Women (respectively C20, L20, T20 and W20), we recognize the crucial importance of artificial intelligence (AI) in the current context for an inclusive digital transformation. We recognize that AI and other emerging technologies, when shaped to be safe, secure, and trustworthy, can be pivotal for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We also consider in this joint declaration, the role of AI in helping to address the three main priorities of the G20 Brazilian presidency, which are the reduction of poverty and inequalities in energy transition, and also some changes in global governance institutions.

2. We acknowledge the relevance of ensuring an inclusive digital transformation for societies regarding decent work, meaningful inclusion and climate and social justice, especially taking into account the specificities of different jurisdictions and hyper-vulnerable groups through an intersectional approach (e.g, gender and race). For that purpose, we make this political commitment to partnering with G20 countries to foster responsible innovation and promote the development and use of AI for socioeconomic progress, sharing its benefits with all.

3. We spotlight this as an opportune moment in global governance for international cooperation initiatives to bridge the digital divide between developed and developing countries. We recognize the need for a collaborative position on data governance and representative datasets, adopting a framework for weighing up the potential benefits and harms of data lifecycles in order to ensure that public interest drives data, rather than the contrary. In this sense, we aim for the data justice approach, which means actively avoiding discrimination and acknowledging power asymmetries at the global level. We also recognize that AI poses a fast-changing scenario, bringing challenges and opportunities for governments and society, urging a debate around its impact on the future of work, education, productive systems, conditions for a dignified life, informational self-determination and fundamental human rights. Developing and developed countries have diverse contexts and particularities that require new frameworks for infrastructure, capacity building, decent work, education opportunities, inclusive and non-discriminatory AI development and implementation, especially considering the specificities of the Global South.

4. We call attention to the potential environmental impacts that AI may have on energy and water consumption, on the one hand, while emphasizing AI's crucial role in mitigating climate change, on the other. Therefore, it is critical that G20 countries prioritize investments on a large scale for clean energy production, allocate funds for research initiatives and optimize AI infrastructure. Strategic for sustainability, AI can promote cleaner and more sustainable environmental practices with optimized data.

5. We recognize the role of the public and private sectors, civil society, academia, research institutions and technical communities in the whole life cycle of AI. Recalling the G20's adoption of the OECD's AI Principles in 2019; UNESCO's Recommendations on the Ethics of AI; the Hiroshima AI Process' comprehensive policy framework which includes a Voluntary Code of Conduct for organizations and Guiding Principles for all AI actors; the Bletchley Park Declaration; the UN General Assembly Resolution on AI (A/78/L.49); and the work of the UN High-Level Advisory Body on AI, we are committed to aligning our efforts with these global initiatives to promote ethical and responsible AI governance, and encourage G20 members to advance and reinforce interoperability between AI governance frameworks. The G20 has an opportunity to promote interdisciplinary knowledge at a global scale, similar to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), by supporting the UN's AI Advisory Body in the creation of a scientific panel on AI. To address globally significant risks and opportunities of AI while taking into account power asymmetries, this panel should be based in a Global South country to ensure an inclusive and genuinely global vision for its recommendations.

Regarding the international level:

6. **We encourage all national states to collaboratively foster informational transnational solidarity,** promoting the exchange of best practices, knowledge and experiences in AI policies, including governance, ethics, privacy, and cybersecurity. We aim to achieve regulatory interoperability amongst our AI governance approaches, to promote greater certainty, transparency and accountability, while recognizing that approaches and policy instruments may vary across G20 members. Also, a commitment to and compliance with safety standards is needed to access the benefits of AI, avoiding governance fragmentation.

7. **We endorse that AI policies, regulations, and governance approaches should conciliate the current risk-based to a rights-based approach** and be forward-looking to preserve an open, social innovation and enabling environment for AI development and deployment that maximizes and distributes the benefits of the technology for people and the planet while mitigating its risks. Examples of such actions include the obligation for data subjects to review and contest automated decisions, to increase transparency and, ultimately, due informational process to whom is being significantly impacted by automated decision-making, and the disclosure of human rights impact assessments conducted by AI systems deployers and providers. International coordination and sectoral contextualization are essential to work towards a shared understanding of risk management and advance international standards for AI development and deployment, as well as considering limiting AI uses that severely risk human rights.

8. **We call upon the development of collaborative frameworks to prevent and mitigate AI-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence** ensuring that technologies equitably serve diverse populations and vulnerable groups according to countries' specific realities. We also emphasize the importance of AI systems with broad and diverse databases, besides increasing diversity of the workforce in technical roles in machine learning models that reflect the realities of the Global South and are not subject to biases.

9. **We call upon the G20 States to work collaboratively and share experiences on methodologies for assessing environmental impacts,** to effectively implement a green transition. We acknowledge that open technological advancements offer substantial benefits, including increased efficiency in the use of natural resources, as well as inclusive innovation that can benefit different populations and economic sectors, leading to sustainable development, aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Enhanced climate models and process optimizations already facilitate the identification of patterns and trends in environmental and resource management, providing actionable data to combat deforestation and alert about potential climate events. We aim to promote sustainable AI use through policies that prioritize energy efficiency, minimize environmental impact, and foster innovation in sustainable technologies.

10.

When addressing climate justice, we understand it is important to recognize the gender and racial digital divide and the disproportionate impacts of climate change on hyper-vulnerable and underrepresented populations. This calls for an intersectional inclusive approach - especially racial-gender-sensitive – in methodologies developed and policies implemented, such as work-integrated educational initiatives, oriented towards upskilling and reskilling. Furthermore, promoting biodiversity and preservation requires technological developments that incorporate the rights and knowledge of indigenous communities and other vulnerable groups.

Regarding the interplay between the national-transnational levels:

11.

We call for investments and political commitment in AI training and adopting policies aimed at enhancing the quality and relevance of education programs, with a focus on digital literacy, financial education, and sustainability. We consider that the new generations need to be prepared for a labor market increasingly influenced by AI and other digital and greener technologies, including skills related to the cycle of data, data analysis, cyber-education and programming. A coordinated educational effort is necessary to develop a resilient and productive workforce, by expanding investments in work-integrated educational initiatives, such as capacity-building programs, while also avoiding a technosolutionist adoption of AI in schools and educational contexts. Alongside risk and rights-based regulatory frameworks, this helps drive inclusive growth and safeguard workers from the negative impacts of AI implementation, while expanding the reach of public services and empowering individual talents and businesses with new opportunities facing the platform economy.

12. **We aim to empower today's workers to adapt to these transformations without compromising the value of their work,** which should be appropriately remunerated, carried out in freedom, security, and equity, and ensure a dignified life - fair remuneration being vital in light of the recurring use of extremely precarious labor in economic chains of AI, such as in data labeling tasks. Guarantees should be ensured for collective bargaining, reduction of working hours without a reduction in salary, social oversight, and worker participation in the formulation and monitoring of public policies related to AI, as well as public policies. We reassert that promoting social dialogue is key to guarantee that AI is implemented in a way that improves the quality of work and respects human rights, and we urge G20 members to reassert the central role of social dialogue and collective bargaining in general.

13. **We call on the need to implement open data use policies that promote cultural and linguistic diversity,** benefitting from technological advancements, and prioritize diverse representation in AI development and usage, with particular emphasis on gender and racial equality, and also to accelerate cultural awareness of AI. Our recommendation is to incorporate public data generated by citizens, to ensure that policy guidelines are informed by and connected to the most local levels of communities, which are often invisible to the state - it could even be through a 'data spaces' approach, within a data economy strategy that aligns with society's demands and foster interoperability. Additionally, we recognize that these policies should promote equitable data sharing, with appropriate benefit-sharing mechanisms, while protecting privacy and securing data in ways that are lawful, transparent and accountable, and also avoiding private capture. In this sense, reform of intellectual property regimes is crucial to realize the true benefit of AI innovation for all, since data enclosed in trade secrets by digital transnational corporations has the effect of stifling genuine innovation and makes AI systems non-transparent and unexplainable.

14. **We call on AI model developers and deployers to publicly report the capabilities and limitations of advanced AI models and systems,** enhancing transparency and accountability, and promoting fairness and trust, through a rights-based approach. This includes having regulatory frameworks with independent oversight and appropriate transparency and public visibility into the implementation of shared responsibilities among all actors involved in the AI value chain. Disclosure of human rights risk assessments and impact assessments for high-risk AI applications should be mandatory, along with the provision of data access to qualified researchers, external audits, and those assessments should be subjected to broader public scrutiny.

15. **We recommend G20 countries to foster meaningful multistakeholder partnerships and support open innovation initiatives to drive AI research and development,** to address global challenges such as poverty, health, climate change, and sustainable development. In implementing AI that advances the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we recognize that promoting access to infrastructure development and capacity building— including connectivity, electricity, computing power, and addressing social inequalities in access to digital devices and skills— is a crucial first step. Therefore, we also recommend that processes follow the guidelines established by NetMundial+10, enabling meaningful participation of affected communities in the design and deployment of AI, and to evolve multilateral processes so that they are more inclusive and diverse, in addition to being more transparent and better documented.

16. **The G20 countries should foster public funding mechanisms** through Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) commitments, to enable meaningful participation of developing countries. It is important to stress the funding gap between countries to build the required infrastructure for AI, therefore, international and regional financial institutions are vital for AI research in developing countries.

17. **We aim to continue the work of other existing frameworks** such as the recently updated OECD AI Principles, the Hiroshima AI Process, and especially the work of the UN High-Level Advisory Body on AI to achieve regulatory interoperability, giving an immediate opportunity to move forward together on a shared set of values and principles on AI. We call on all countries to fortify the UN General Assembly Resolution on AI (A/78/L.49)'s proposal to enable international innovation-based environments to enhance the ability of developing countries to develop technical expertise and capacities. In this sense, the UN's High-Level Advisory Board on AI's work offers a concrete step towards establishing a multilateral body akin to the IPCC, that would assemble scientists from diverse backgrounds to produce knowledge as a global commons in the realm of AI. Additionally, we aim to deepen UNESCO's Recommendations on the Ethics of AI, and the OECD reporting framework, in order to broaden its adoption through G20 to make it possible for more countries to access the best AI tools and solutions consistently across borders.

18. This statement represents our commitment to a collaborative and inclusive approach to harnessing the potential of AI, while ensuring that ethical principles, fundamental rights and the interests of communities and the global populace are protected and respected. We invite other engagement groups to join us in this call to governments and to act based on these guidelines. We urge the G20 countries to act together with us to promote responsible AI governance at the transnational level.