

CONCEPT NOTE:
UN Security Council Briefing on
Artificial Intelligence and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security

Overview. Artificial intelligence is changing our ways of life, our ways of work, and our ways of war. On December 19, 2024, at 10.00am, U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken will chair a UN Security Council briefing to address the implications of artificial intelligence (AI) for the maintenance of international peace and security. Ministers are invited to review progress and discuss the way forward for efforts to seize the promise of and mitigate the risks associated with the deployment of Artificial Intelligence in the peace and security context.

Strengthening the Global Consensus for Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy AI. President Biden, in his September 2023 address to the UN General Assembly, emphasized that we must “make sure we govern this technology — not the other way around, having it govern us.” Over the past 18 months, the United States, in close cooperation with a diverse group of Member States and stakeholders from civil society and the private sector, pursued concrete steps at the United Nations to build a global consensus around common sense principles and guardrails for the safe, secure, and trustworthy use of AI. These diplomatic efforts led, in March 2024, to the adoption by consensus of the first-ever UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution on AI, which reflected Member States’ strong conviction that the benefits of AI should be harnessed for sustainable development, even as we manage the risks of AI. The subsequent adoption, in July 2024, of a UNGA resolution on AI capacity building also reinforced Member States’ constructive dialogue and underscored the broad support for helping to ensure that the benefits of AI are available to all countries. Additionally, the Global Digital Compact, adopted in September 2024, further cemented Member States’ support for the principles and objectives detailed in both UNGA resolutions. More recently, the First Committee of the UNGA recently adopted a resolution regarding the implications of the military use of AI. In parallel to these efforts at the United Nations, Member States have convened a series of Summits and meetings focused on AI Safety. These events reflect a shared belief that international discussions regarding rules of the road for AI must be informed by a scientific consensus regarding the risks posed by this breakthrough technology.

As President Biden explained to the General Assembly in September 2024, these and other efforts to shape the development and use of AI reflect only the “tip of the iceberg of what we need to do to manage this new technology. Nothing is certain about how AI will evolve or how it will be deployed.”

Implications for International Peace and Security. The Security Council first convened in July 2023 to discuss the implications of Artificial Intelligence for international peace and security. During that meeting, Member States recognized the potential for AI to transform all aspects of our lives, including economics, war-fighting, and peacemaking. For example, Member States broadly emphasized the importance of the Security Council considering the ways in which AI technologies might be used to spark armed conflicts or ethnic violence, including through the spread of disinformation. They also discussed the risk that AI enabled technologies could be used

to threaten UN peacekeepers and personnel — and the opportunity for AI to be used to mitigate risks of civilian casualties in conflict.

This briefing aims to build on that initial discussion and subsequent efforts by Member States to advance global dialogue on these and other pressing challenges, including by addressing the following questions:

- How can we ensure the responsible development and use of AI to support, rather than undermine, the core principles that human life has value and humans deserve dignity?
- What have we learned from decades of research and development on AI systems and related technologies that can help us bolster the core principles that human life has value and humans deserve dignity?
- How do we as an international community govern AI, so as to contribute to international peace and security while narrowing digital divides?
- What additional steps can Member States take to foster a robust international ecosystem to help identify and mitigate the risks posed by AI, while also avoiding a patchwork of global governance that could hamper innovation and deny developing countries access to the benefits of AI?
- What additional steps can Member States take to ensure appropriate safeguards to mitigate potential risks associated with the application of AI in the military domain?