

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
IN A DIGITAL AGE (AIDA)**

Joint hearing on the external policy dimension of AI

**PANEL I
with the AFET Committee**

**AI DIPLOMACY AND GOVERNANCE IN A GLOBAL SETTING:
TOWARDS REGULATORY CONVERGENCE?**

Irakli Beridze, Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations

Kristin de Peyron, Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS

Bruno Sportisse, Chair and CEO, National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology (INRIA)

Agostinho Almeida, Head of the Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Colombia (C4IR.CO), affiliated to the World Economic Forum

Robin Kelly, member, U.S. Congress (D, IL)

BRUSSELS

MONDAY 1 MARCH 2021

1-002-0000

IN THE CHAIR: DRAGOȘ TUDORACHE

Chair of the Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age

(The meeting opened at 16.52)

1-003-0000

Chair. – Dear colleagues, I understand we are all ready to go, right? Then, good afternoon if you happen to be on this side of the Atlantic, or good morning to those following us from the US, because I know that there are a few.

Before introducing today's hearing, a few mandatory housekeeping issues. First of all, we need to adopt today's agenda, so if there are no objections to that, I will consider that to be adopted, and also to approve the two draft minutes of the webinar with the European Union Institute on 14 January and the hearing on AI and the Green Deal on 27 January, both of them available online. So again, if there are no objections, I will deem them approved.

We move on to the substance of our hearing, one which is held jointly by AIDA, the Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age, and our Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), so I would start by welcoming the members of the two committees as well as our panellists. This is a hearing taking place over two dates – today and on 4 March, when we will be joined by our colleagues in the AFET Subcommittee on Security and Defence.

The topic of today's panel is AI diplomacy and governance in a global setting. This hearing is highly relevant for both of our committees. AIDA's mandate includes to analyse the approach of third countries and their contribution to complementing EU actions. This was by design. As we prepare the European-level complex legislation setting the rules of the digital world, we need to start working on promoting our views, values and rules beyond our Union.

Becoming a geopolitical global actor also means adapting our foreign policy vision and external action to the digital future, and a key component to this is strengthening the transatlantic relationship, especially in the digital field.

At a fundamental level, the EU and the US share a worldview based on freedom, human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These values need to serve as cornerstones for the digital future. We need to work together to forge this worldview in multilateral fora such as the OSCE, the UN or the Global Partnership for AI, to name but a few, and alongside like-minded partners like the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea. We need to work together so that the risks and threats to the online world – disinformation, election interference, radicalisation, but also state control of free expression and basic liberties – when amplified by new technologies do not become alternative models of the digital global space.

We hope that digital cooperation, finding solutions to current irritants, aligning our regulatory efforts, working closer together on R&D and investment on new technologies, and cooperating on the global stage to set rules and standards, will be a key part of a renewed and strengthened transatlantic partnership. Building global synergies and harnessing regulatory convergence can only lead to more growth and wider-scaling of AI in the future, which will benefit citizens and businesses alike, whether they are in the EU, the US or other nations across the world.

This is essentially what today's hearing is about: how to secure long-term regulatory convergence on innovative AI technologies and how to learn from one another. What new regulatory concepts and tools can we explore together, and what is already in place and what

can be done in the future? With that, I will pass the floor to my colleague, the Chair of the AFET Committee, Mr David McAllister. I thank him again for agreeing to do this joint hearing. David, you have the floor.

1-004-0000

David McAllister, *Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*. – Just a couple of welcoming remarks from my side on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

As the chair of AIDA just mentioned, the potential changes in our societies and our economies due to the rapid development of artificial intelligence cannot be overestimated. It is vital to use the transformative potential of artificial intelligence to improve the lives of the European people and to maintain our position at the forefront of technological and scientific developments. This global and fast-moving process poses significant challenges to legislators.

I am therefore pleased that the Committee on Foreign Affairs is joining the Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in the Digital Age for this hearing on the external policy dimension of AI. I believe this is a good opportunity to focus on an issue that will undoubtedly play an increasingly significant role in our relations with partners and rivals around the world. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the distinguished panellists for their participation in this important and timely event.

In Europe, we are facing both internal and external challenges. Internally, we need to adopt the common European framework for AI. The publication, last year, of the Commission's White Paper was an important step in defining a truly European approach to AI development. The White Paper states that the European Union must act as one and define its own way to promote the development and deployment of AI, which should be based on European values. We are now all eagerly waiting for a legislative proposal from the Commission.

The external challenge is to work together with like-minded countries, but also with global players. In my view, we should promote the approach to AI that embraces respect for fundamental rights, which are the bedrock of our democracies and our societies. From various national AI policies and strategies, it is clear that there is strong support for international cooperation on AI and for addressing the important legal and ethical questions of its development.

We all know that the development of AI is being driven by three main players: the United States, the European Union and China. Each has its own strengths and its own interests in shaping the global regulatory framework. The transatlantic partnership plays such a special role in our network of alliances. We are looking forward to revitalising our relations with the US in the face of common challenges and with common interests in mind. I believe we should use this momentum also to foster cooperation on technology, including artificial intelligence.

So, to conclude, ensuring trust in AI is one of the cornerstones of our European approach. There is growing concern about how the power wielded by tech giants can affect the fundamental rights of the people, such as the freedom of expression. Just last month, we were debating in the plenary democratic scrutiny on social media and the protection of fundamental rights, and many Members, across party lines, stressed that responsibility for law enforcement in digital services must remain with public authorities in the EU and not with private commercial entities. Members rightly called for adequate oversight and judicial redress mechanisms.

The rapid development of AI presents opportunities, but it also presents challenges and even threats. To address them, we need a regulatory framework that respects and protects international law and fundamental values. By joining forces with like-minded partners around the world, we can ensure that the development of artificial intelligence will be beneficial not only for our societies, but for humankind as a whole.

We're all looking forward to a stimulating and thought-provoking discussion. Once again, Dragoş, thanks for setting this up. Colleagues, I'm looking forward to a really interesting meeting.

1-005-0000

Chair. – Thank you very much, David, and that brings us to the substance of our discussion. The panel first and then the Q&A with the Members.

A few housekeeping rules as to how the hearing will proceed. First, I will give the floor to the speakers, one by one, for five minutes each, and I would kindly ask them to stick to the five minutes. Then we will start with the groups, where we alternate the AFET and the AIDA Members, one by one, in the order of the political groups. Each Member will have two minutes for the question, followed by a two-minute slot for the panellists to reply, and I would kindly ask the Members to also indicate the speaker to whom they are addressing their question.

With that, and with warm thanks once again to the panellists who have agreed to join us for this discussion, I will now introduce them and then give them the floor.

We have Irakli Beridze, Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations.

Kristin de Peyron, Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Issues at the European External Action Service.

Bruno Sportisse, CEO, GPAI Centre of Expertise in Paris, National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology.

Agostinho Almeida, Head of C4IR Colombia, Affiliate Centre for the OECD's Fourth Industrial Revolution Network.

And last, but certainly not least, a very warm welcome to Congresswoman Robin Kelly from the US Congress, representing Illinois. She is able to be with us for 45 minutes, so I would kindly ask the Members with questions for Congresswoman Kelly to try and ask them in the first part of our Q&A.

With that, I will give the floor to the first speaker. Irakli Beridze, you have the floor for five minutes.

1-006-0000

Irakli Beridze, Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations. – Thank you Chair, it is really a great honour for me to speak to you here today on behalf of UNICRI, United Nations, on the work it carries out at its Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics. Therefore, I thank the AIDA Committee, together with the AFET Committee, for inviting me to join you today.

UNICRI has been active in analysing AI in the context of its mandate on crime prevention, criminal justice, the rule of law and security since 2014, making it one of the earliest UN entities working in what many now recognise as the bleeding-edge case of the use of AI. This culminated in the establishment of our specialised Centre for AI and Robotics in The Hague in 2017, with the generous support of, in particular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the Municipality of The Hague.

AI, and digital technologies in general, have had a prominent role within the UN in recent years, with many UN programmes, funds and agencies exploring its impact and opportunities in relation to their respective mandates, which in turn further lends credence to the growing global

relevance of artificial intelligence. Notably, the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation and the resulting roadmap that was released last June considered AI, among other issues, and underscored the need to protect human rights and human agency.

A system-wide strategic approach and roadmap of supporting capacity development of artificial intelligence serves as an AI strategy for the UN itself in terms of building capacities related to AI technologies in UN Member States and especially in developing countries. Indeed, the need to overcome what is becoming a growing digital divide is one of the primary concerns with respect to AI. The AI for Good Summit convened by ITU to test AI capabilities in fulfilment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the work of UNESCO in the global standard setting of the ethics of AI are further good examples of the UN's engagement in the topic. UNICRI is proud to be involved and support all the above processes.

Coming back to our Centre for AI in UNICRI, our work on the governance of AI is in the context of crime prevention, criminal justice, the rule of law and security, and predominantly in the context of providing support to UN Member States through soft law approaches, fitting into policy discussions as opposed to engaging directly in regulatory matters. UNICRI, among other issues, supports knowledge development on how AI is, or can be, used in crime prevention, for example, in terms of online child abuse, trafficking and counter-terrorism, or how it can be misused and directly used by criminals and terrorists.

Most notably, we organise annual global meetings on AI for law enforcement, in partnership with Interpol, starting in 2018, bringing law enforcement agencies together with industry, academia and civil society. This is a unique platform for dialogue and cooperation committed to developing AI in a way that respects human rights and observes the principles of fairness, accountability, transparency and explainability. In connection with this, we are preparing a practical and operationally oriented toolkit to support law enforcement engaging with AI and, in doing so, to ensure that their use of AI is responsible and merits the trust of the public.

This toolkit and the methodology behind it are representative of our approach to AI governance. We are also very proud that this work is being supported by the European Commission, with whom we are working hand in hand. We believe that, through open cooperation such as this, we can build consensus around key issues and achieve results in a way that can be complementary to other potential hard law approaches.

In conclusion, at UNICRI, we envision a world where AI and related technologies – new technologies – are used to prevent and combat crime, terrorism and other threats to our collective security, but in a manner that does not erode human rights, deepen inequality or exacerbate discrimination. We share the concerns voiced by the European Union through, for instance, the valuable work of the European Commission's High-Level Expert Group on AI, for ensuring that AI is developed in a human-centric manner and in full respect of human rights and the rule of law.

Lastly, UNICRI stands ready to share its experience and work together with the EU institutions and the EU Member States. As, the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, said:

‘Together, let us make sure we use artificial intelligence to enhance human dignity and serve the global good’. Thank you for your time.

1-007-0000

Kristin de Peyron, *Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS*. – Thank you very much, Chair, it's a pleasure to be here today.

Artificial intelligence has really become an area of geostrategic importance at the crossroads of geopolitics, commercial stakes, security concerns. We know that it can bring solutions to many of our challenges in society, from treating diseases to minimising the environmental impact of farming, but it's also clear to all of us that artificial intelligence comes with a number of socioeconomic, legal and ethical impacts that all have to be carefully addressed.

On the global stage, regulation in this area is still very much in its infancy, yet there's little secret that the EU's vision on artificial intelligence and new technologies differs from the state-centred and authoritarian visions of China or Russia. And we have a little bit of a different approach from the US as well, but we'll hear from Congresswoman Robin Kelly.

What is the EU's approach to artificial intelligence? Well, it will be presented in a legislative proposal this year after having been sketched out in the white paper last year that was referred to. Our approach is a balanced framework, which is based on an ecosystem of excellence and trust. Excellence relies on research, collaboration between Member States, proper investment into development of AI and deployment, in order to not be left behind. But it's also about boosting research and industrial capacity.

Trust is the other core element. The aim is for the EU to push for a globally competitive AI, while at the same time ensuring respect for European legislation and values stemming from a legal framework that addresses the technology's risk for fundamental rights and safety.

Of course, we can rely on the single market's attractiveness when it comes to the EU and its regulatory environment but, at the same time, the implications of new digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, need to be addressed globally. This is the approach we've also laid out in the recent joint communication adopted on 17 February on multilateralism. It actually has a whole section on all new technologies, including AI.

So Europe has a solid basis to promote the regulatory approach on the global stage for the safe and trustworthy use of human-centric AI systems, contributing to the creation of an environment in which economic and technological development can thrive. It's also precisely because different regulatory approaches to AI are emerging that the EU needs to engage further in active regulatory cooperation, including in international law-setting organisations, through leveraging our financial and regulatory power to help to shape global norms and standards.

As an example of multistakeholder initiatives, there's the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, in which both the European Union and the United States are present, and which was launched as the result of an idea developed within the G7. The aim for us is to build alliances, as the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs Mr McAllister also mentioned, to promote this human-centric and rules-based governance of artificial intelligence technologies not only within international standards-setting bodies, but also in other multilateral fora. There are initiatives in UNESCO and the Council of Europe, for instance.

Finally, this leads me to the question of the transatlantic digital diplomacy. And it's, of course, very exciting to be here and to be able to hear Congresswoman Kelly today.

Indeed, the cooperation between the EU and the US is not only desirable, it's necessary. In a recent communication on a new EU-US agenda for global change from December last year, we said that Europe and the US account for about a third of the world's trade, and the standards we set reach every corner of the world. So, there's really a window of opportunity for the EU and the US to join forces to shape technologies they use and the regulatory environment, as well as to face the challenges of rival systems of digital governance. That's why we have proposed to start working on a transatlantic AI agreement.

To conclude, in the future many of us will live in smart cities. They will rely on intelligent connectivity and standards for emerging technologies, such as facial recognition systems, big data analysis, 5G and AI cameras. The stakes are high, and we need to be vigilant that AI is not used to control us and bring us down, but rather that AI empowers us and lifts us up.

1-008-0000

Bruno Sportisse, *Chair and CEO, National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology (INRIA)*. – Members of the European Parliament, dear panellists, it's an honour to be here with you in these hearings. I am Bruno Sportisse, the Chair and CEO of INRIA, the French Institute for Computer Science and Applied Mathematics. My institute is in charge of the coordination of the French AI strategy and also hosts the so-called expertise centre in Paris in the framework of the general partnership on AI.

So some words to start, following the previous panellists. First to say that, in my view, AI is not the so-called general AI, but is only the new wave of digital science and technology, that is to say, the combined power of data, algorithms and computing capabilities with a lot of impact on all domains for forecasts and decisions, ranging from industry to health and to public policies, and also with a lot of impact on the dynamics of innovation with the increasing velocity of innovation. This has a lot of implications for our global sovereignty, whatever the form of this sovereignty is, and this, of course, raises issues for geopolitics.

This results in many issues and these justify the need for an ecosystem of excellence and of trust. As I said before, scientific issues come first – for instance, how to master these AI algorithms – and these justify the need for appropriate mathematical foundations of AI in order to guarantee the robustness of what we do. This is one key point for the so-called trustworthy AI, that is to say the compliance with some rules and the ability to have a human oversight.

This also raises tech issues related to the so-called digital infrastructures, not only for cloud and computing capabilities, but also for software infrastructures. A software infrastructure is, for instance, a toolbox for data scientists, and this is the backbone of any ecosystem of developers and with the key role of open source dynamics. This also raises entrepreneurial issues because start-up companies are probably the most powerful way to apply the current algorithm to a given-use case with large sets of data.

This of course also raises funding issues for the scale-up of these companies to be able to have an impact and that's why an initiative such as the European Innovation Council here in Europe is so important for giving the appropriate funds for such AI-driven start-up companies. One key issue and, in my view, the mother of all battles, is the issue related to talents and skills: the shortage of competencies, how to have more students in applied maths and computer science at the beginning of higher education, and how to train people who have scientific skills to AI.

To end, regulation is of course a key issue at INRIA. In my research institute we have two actions related to regulation. The first is the so-called Regalia project. The objective is to build a science-based toolbox for regulation bodies about algorithms. The second action is the so-called Paris Centre of Expertise in the framework of the Global Partnership on AI (GPAI). This is a multi-stakeholder initiative, which hosts two groups of experts in the framework of GPAI. The first group is devoted to the future of AI and the second is devoted to innovation and commercialisation. This new venture, so to speak, has to be seen as a 'do tank' able to achieve experiments in order to answer some key issues related to the trustworthy AI. Thank you for your attention.

1-009-0000

Agostinho Almeida, *Head of the Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Colombia (C4IR.CO), affiliated to the World Economic Forum*. – (start of speech inaudible) to show what we've been doing here in Colombia.

The Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Colombia is one of the 13 affiliate centres that exist in the world that were created within a global network by the World Economic Forum. The main overarching goal that this network has is to maximise the impact that the fourth industrial revolution has on people's lives and on economic and sustainable development.

At the Centre in Colombia, being the only Spanish-speaking centre, we were the fifth affiliate centre in the network and have been focused since 2019, hand in hand with the World Economic Forum, on four main goals. What we want to make happen is, under the different challenges the previous speakers have been mentioning and using a human-centric approach, to be really transformative in terms of impact.

So there are four main goals, as I mentioned. Number one is trying to move Colombia and Latin America to a data-based economy to impact its competitiveness not just in the region but globally. The second one would be more specifically associated to digital transformation and the impact on productivity of SMEs with emerging technologies. The third is very sector specific. We are very much focused – and I'll show you a very quick couple of examples – on Agriculture 4.0 and how we move that and make Colombia an example within the region, thinking about emerging technologies but also decisions based on data to impact not just economic drivers but also sustainable development, the region finally making Colombia and Latin America an example of how to produce these ethical and regulatory frameworks in terms of emerging technology.

Day to day, how do we make this happen? All our projects and initiatives, in which AI is one of the main drivers in terms of technology as a platform, are focused on trying to create evidence to create a balance between technology governance, the use of data and technology adoption.

I have a couple of quick examples of what we've been doing in terms of our artificial intelligence platform. Number one, we've been very much interested in trying to seek racial and gender neutrality in AI systems and in the data that feed them. Actually this was an initial project we started last year. It was just nominated to become the first pilot of the hub for that in the region of fAir LAC in the Inter-American Development Bank initiative. We're actually the hub for the Andean region here at the Center in Colombia. Another example is how do you AI in data to really transform agriculture digitally? We've been working on developing issues such as how to introduce an economic valuation model in terms of not just crops and the productive part itself but value chains, for example. We actually integrated blockchain within those regulatory frameworks, together with AI and data decision-making protocols. We've also developed a guide for digital transformation for small and medium farmers to use the data strategically and a model to try to prioritise these variables when you think about crops that are very important for the region, like coffee, cocoa and avocado.

In 2021 we will be implementing these guides technically with different emerging technology and a sensor system where AI will be a strong component. It will be important to make sure we guarantee that human-centric approach in the data evaluation and capability of driving economic transformation within the whole value chain of agriculture.

We've also been working with local public entities to try to develop public policy strategic recommendations. We have fitted artificial intelligence and the different integration of these systems within things like digital talent, using data in artificial intelligence for economic recovery and also, as I mentioned, data-driven solutions that run from understanding what type of competencies and capabilities you do need and how that impacts a much more integral sense of the value chain and, finally, strong recommendations regarding how to strengthen productivity in SMEs, as I mentioned.

As a last example, we're now working on a strong joint programme with different actors – the national government, the World Economic Forum etc. – where we're trying to make data in AI a strong value-maker for common purpose. We're working on AI procurement guidelines for the public sector. We've also developed a toolkit, together with the World Economic Forum, that has just met here for Colombia and Latin America, and we have been working on a project led by the Development Bank CAF on the strategic use of data and AI in the public sector.

Finally, just to finish off, we've also been working with the national government on their ethical framework for artificial intelligence, one of the first countries here in Latin America to develop that. I'll be more than open to answer any questions you might have.

1-010-0000

Robin Kelly, *member, U.S. Congress (D, IL)*. – Thank you so much for inviting me to testify today. I am humbled to be with you, the other Members and the fellow panellists. For the past four years, I've been studying artificial intelligence as a member of the US House of Representatives. I do not come to these issues with a technical background or particular IT expertise. I have spent most of my working career in local, state and now federal office.

In 2017, I was elected the ranking Democrat of the House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Information Technology. The Chair of the Subcommittee, a Republican from Texas, Will Hurd, was a former CIA agent and private sector cybersecurity adviser. We came to the issue from different perspectives but from a shared desire to understand the issue and best position the US to be leaders in AI. We held some of the first congressional hearings on AI to help educate our fellow members of Congress and understand current federal government initiatives.

Following these hearings, I felt there was more work to be done and that the US lacked a clear strategy for AI. For more than a year, former Rep. Hurd and I worked with the Bipartisan Policy Center to outline the top priorities for a US national strategy. We published four White Papers on AI and national security, ethics and bias, research and development, and the workforce. And last year we passed a House resolution laying the foundation for a national AI strategy. In January of this year, the National Defense Authorization Act became law, which advanced some of the priorities outlined in our White Papers and resolution.

Even after these successes, there's still a lot of member education needed. How can we be expected to legislate on an issue that is rapidly evolving, in its infancy and highly technical? At the end of the day, it is the responsibility of governments to build trust and confidence in AI. For me, issues around ethics, bias and the workforce are personal. From an AI-bias perspective, people who look like me have the most to lose. Consistently, persons who are older, darker-skinned and women are the most inaccurately classified by AI. While often unintentional, bad data sets and real-world biases can creep into algorithms. Tech companies cannot hide behind the shield of stifling innovation to avoid all regulation. Companies must be reminded that if things are illegal in the real world, they are also illegal in an algorithm.

Issues of civil rights must be prioritised in the development and integration of AI systems. Gaps in existing frameworks must be addressed using a risk-based approach that recognises the disparity in AI-related risk across different sectors. At the same time, there's a real danger of over-prescriptive regulations. Nations that do not share our commitment to democratic values are racing to be the leaders in AI and set the rules for the world. We cannot let this happen.

While I understand your desire to be the first to write regulations, I encourage you to be narrow and flexible and consider the US's perspective. A pro-innovative approach with close collaboration is the best path to promote our shared prosperity and values. Do not mistake our lack of regulations for disinterest in AI. Both the Obama and Trump administrations took

positive steps toward putting forth policies around AI. The US has supported both OECD AI principles and the G20 AI guidelines, two key global frameworks for AI. The Biden administration looks to continue working on AI and has already moved to increase inter-agency collaboration.

Today, while I'm speaking to all of you, the US National Security Commission on AI is releasing their final report to the President and Congress. I have no doubt that many of their proposals will have bipartisan support and lead to agency and congressional action. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is now working on creating a framework for AI to develop measurable standards for evaluating fairness and mitigating potentially harmful bias.

Regulation alone will not cure all of AI's potential harms. Both of us must commit to building a diverse tech workforce. Neither the US nor the EU can compete against China based on the raw numbers of computer science graduates and the amount of data they collect on their citizens. What we lack in pure numbers of computer science majors and engineers, we must make up for in ingenuity and creativity. We must increase public-private partnerships and encourage transatlantic cooperation and collaboration. DeepMine Technologies, based in the UK but a subsidiary of Alphabet Inc., is a great example of transatlantic cooperation. Their recent breakthroughs into protein folding have the potential to dramatically change medicine and pharmaceutical development.

Increases in data localisation and digital sovereignty will not benefit the US or the EU. We must be able to share data while respecting civil liberties, privacy and human rights. It is my hope that we can work together and harmonise our AI policies so digital trade and collaboration can continue.

Both of us have profound challenges ahead, trying to chart a path forward. It is vital that democratic nations are the ones that shape this new technology in the global marketplace.

I want to apologise that I cannot stay the entire time but I look forward to your questions. Thank you so much.

1-011-0000

Chair. – Thank you very much, Congresswoman Kelly, for closing our panel and for being able to stay with us for at least 30 minutes. Thank you for that.

We will now start with the questions from the Members. As I said, we'll alternate between AIDA and AFET colleagues, according to the political groups. I would kindly remind you to stick to two minutes for the questions and also to indicate to whom you are directing your question, so who you would like to answer the questions. I will start with an AIDA representative for EPP (Group of the European People's Party). Isabel Wiseler-Lima. You have the floor.

1-012-0000

Isabel Wiseler-Lima (PPE). – Although artificial intelligence technology is liable to make our work and our daily lives easier, when used malevolently it is dangerous for our democratic societies. In the hands of those who do not share our conception of human rights or privacy, it opens the door to all kinds of abuses, including mass surveillance. When this surveillance – as was explained to us in another committee – leads to a police raid on your home because you are consuming too much electricity and it is thus deemed that you may be having unauthorised guests during the COVID crisis, we are living in a world that had hitherto been the reserve of fiction.

Yet we are reliably informed that this is already the reality today in some places.

We will not, however, stop the development of artificial intelligence elsewhere in the world, nor can we seek to halt technological progress. We must strive to better ourselves, to be able to defend ourselves and our values in the world. Alone, without seeking help, we will not reach the pinnacle of research into artificial intelligence, nor in its application. That is why I see transatlantic cooperation in this area as extremely important, and I fully agree with Ms Kelly in this respect. Indeed, while we may have our disagreements, our goals remain similar: they are not to serve authoritarian regimes. Artificial intelligence provides authoritarian regimes with hitherto inconceivable means of coercion which, once made a permanent fixture, will make it ever harder for a people to free itself from such a regime: the straitjacket of authoritarianism will be increasingly difficult to shake off.

First question: what possibilities do our speakers see for increased transatlantic cooperation and cooperation with other democratic societies on the development and, thereby, the application of artificial intelligence?

Second question: as Europe is currently drawing up concrete EU digital ambitions for 2030, what are the necessary elements for Europe to promote, together with its partners, at the multilateral level, international standards on artificial intelligence that respect human rights and thus, an artificial intelligence worthy of our trust?

1-013-0000

Kristin de Peyron, *Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS*. – For us, the human rights approach is key to it, and human rights apply online as they apply offline, so that's why we're promoting a really human rights-based approach, but at the same time, we know that the developments are there and there are enormous economic advantages, as well, of developing AI. So it's about finding this balance and a trusted system.

One of the issues you mentioned, the human rights abuses: from our side one of the issues we're particularly vigilant about is, for instance, the potential misuse of artificial intelligence that can lead to increased threats – for instance, for human rights defenders. So that is something we look out very carefully for.

And also you mentioned issues such as surveillance, etc., and here clearly we have quite strong rules in the European Union about how you can use, for instance, remote identification. You can only do it for reasons of substantial political interest. But of course, I join you very, very much, Ms Wiseler-Lima, in the need for a close cooperation, a transatlantic cooperation, and we look really forward to that.

1-014-0000

Robin Kelly, *member, U.S. Congress (D, IL)*. – The question wasn't translated, so I didn't hear everything, but I definitely agree. I hope that's what I expressed: that I think that we do need transatlantic cooperation. I feel like we are in this together, and we have like values, and how we see things for the most part. There may be some differences, but I want – and, bigger than me, President Biden definitely wants – to have a unified approach, because we will need that when we look at other countries that don't want to have a unified approach and have different values than we do.

1-015-0000

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Thank you to the experts and Congresswoman Kelly for the interesting input.

My question, I think, goes primarily to Irakli Beridze and Kristin de Peyron. Artificial intelligence not only changes the way of our everyday life but even more importantly it influences the global policy and external relations of the EU. Last but not least, it can pose

significant challenges to democracy and human rights, as was already mentioned, both at home and abroad.

Particularly the question of human rights is widely connected to the threats to the privacy of people and the problem of potential mass surveillance, which has already been mentioned, and the problem of manipulation of public opinion enabled by the wider use of AI. Although in some cases AI and facial recognition can be, for example, used to prevent terrorist attacks when these tools are not used ethically, they can be largely misused, as, for example, used in China for the surveillance of Uyghurs, or as an oppressive tool against the people of Hong Kong, but potentially used also to influence public opinion also outside of China.

In my view, this fact needs to be taken into account when creating our foreign and security strategies and ensuring that various aspects of AI are taken into account, but across different policies and in particular those dealing with the authoritarian regimes. So my first question is: what is being done in this regard, particularly in cooperation with the democratic part of the world where the transatlantic cooperation also belongs?

Another question connected to AI is the question of lateral autonomous weapons systems. Although we do not have a unified definition of these systems, we cannot overlook that the military conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh and in Libya in fact started a new era in which AI was used on a regular basis. This is also leading us to the conclusion that we should reconsider the need to include AI across our strategies and start seriously thinking how to regulate autonomous AI in this regard.

1-016-0000

Irakli Beridze, *Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations*. – I will be very brief. It's a fantastic question, and I fully agree with your assessment related to the issues related to the human rights.

I would quote the roadmap, which was adopted by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the members of the United Nations: AI brings enormous benefits to the digital era, but it can also significantly compromise the safety and agency of the users worldwide.

Enhanced multi-stakeholder efforts on global AI cooperation are needed to help build global capacity for the development and the use of AI in a manner that is trustworthy, human rights-based, safe and sustainable, and promotes peace. At the same time, what we believe is that advancements in the AI-related technologies, such as facial recognition software and digital identification, must not be used to erode human rights, deepen inequality or exacerbate existing discrimination.

In that regard, what we are doing at UNICRI (United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute) is that we are running a specialised project, together with Interpol, the World Economic Forum and the National Police of the Netherlands: how to ensure that the face recognition is used in full respect of the human rights and principles. This is a thought-challenging exercise where we are developing a policy framework and recommendations for the use of this technology in full respect of human rights.

On the issues related to lethal autonomous weapons, the UN (United Nations) has a specialised agency and body – the Office for Disarmament Affairs – which deals with that, and there is a special group which is meeting – a group of governmental experts in Geneva – and debating these issues.

And very briefly, the UN as a whole does recommend that the life and death decisions should not be delegated to machines. Human responsibility for decisions on the use of weapons

systems must be retained, since accountability cannot be transferred to machines. And I fully subscribe to that.

1-017-0000

Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D). – Chair, I should like to thank today’s speakers for their very interesting approach to the issue we’ve focused on during today’s hearing.

First, on behalf of the European Parliament – since I was the rapporteur for the legislative proposal on ethics as applied to artificial intelligence – I would like to note what Congresswoman Kelly told us: that the United States is ready and willing to work with the European Parliament in some way, and that with that in mind we should not be in too much of a rush here.

I note that and understand it, but in response I’d say that we should get these arrangements for cooperation and working together set up as soon as possible, because – as you and everyone else are well aware – this is something that is not going to stop, it’s something we have to regulate, because Europe, as one of my colleagues said, does have fundamental values, fundamental principles that, in a way, justify it in itself. This is about respect for human rights, and technology has to respect them. But there are other principles, too, such as environmental sustainability and gender equality – issues that are part of our project as a political body. So that’s why I’d say we should get those arrangements in place as soon as possible.

And second, on what Mr Almeida said, there is part of the transatlantic relationship that is not limited to the United States. For us Latin America is a fundamental partner and colleague. I don’t know whether or not this cooperation should be set up within the OECD. Things have already gone in that direction somewhat, but given this special relationship – or, at least, we want it to be a special relationship – is there any way you think we could work directly with the continent, in this case Latin America, so that we can move ahead in that special bilateral relationship as well, like the one we will have, clearly, with the United States?

1-018-0000

Agostinho Almeida, Head of the Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Colombia (C4IR.CO), affiliated to the World Economic Forum. – Thank you very much for that comment and question. I do agree completely. One of the main goals of being here is to jointly pursue a common agenda in terms of the responsible and ethical use of AI, not just in Colombia, as I mentioned, but in Latin America.

I think that the work with the World Economic Forum could be a very interesting scenario for agile international cooperation. As I mentioned, Colombia is one of the 13 centres already available. We’re actually the only one which is in a Hispanic-speaking country, which places us at the centre of the responsibility of trying to scale what we do here for the rest of the region, taking into account these transatlantic and other types of international cooperation.

So I think that through the World Economic Forum could be an interesting path to try to pursue joint agendas but, at the same time, as you saw, we’re very much interested, in the Center, in really producing technical results and evidences that search for a balance between tech adoption, use of data and the tech governance side, and not just for artificial intelligence or other types of emerging technologies. We do that within a scope which I think is very interesting, which is the leadership that the national government here in Colombia is having in terms of developing and implementing a regulatory and ethical framework for AI.

So that is also on the board and I think that could be a very interesting way to pursue at a national level, but then you bring it down to technical implementation and get the evidence of what is really happening in terms of implementation, different sectors and industries. As I mentioned, we’re very much interested in agriculture because of the impact it can have, at a

global footprint, and SMEs as an important driver for the whole ecosystem, and the private sector productivity issue that Latin America has been facing for the last three years.

Finally and very quickly, the last thing I might suggest is to try to find a common project. Congresswoman Kelly mentioned the issues around gender and racial bias. We have a project specifically focused on that and, for example, we're doing that here in Colombia with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), but also with our colleagues in the Centre in South Africa. So those are the type of examples I would leave on the table.

1-019-0000

Tonino Picula (S&D). – I would also like to thank the organisers and all the distinguished speakers for all the insightful information that we have heard. In my capacity as the Committee on Foreign Affairs rapporteur for EU-US relations, I am currently preparing a set of recommendations for future transatlantic relations and I will certainly take on board some of your observations.

My hopes are that, unlike the previous US administration, this administration will build on our cooperation based on what we are – allies in safeguarding the free and open international order. There are many positive sides of artificial intelligence, but the rules for its use have to be clearly defined, also taking into account the strong human rights dimension. A particular danger is that AI technologies provide adversaries and authoritarian governments with tools to increase censorship, automate disinformation and engage in cyber conflict.

We welcome the creation of the French-Canadian Global Partnership on AI and the eventual joining of the G7 countries, including the US. In that sense, I have questions for Ms Kelly and Ms de Peyron. How should the EU and the US build on this and develop a broader coalition of like-minded partners that share their AI visions, to work with them in the international arena to promote that shared vision? What is your view about the US and EU possibly removing obstacles to sharing defence and intelligence-related data where appropriate? How do you see the role of NATO in this sense? And could you comment briefly at the end on to what extent you think that the different geopolitical interests of the EU and the US towards China, including the controversy of using Huawei hardware in 5G networks, could be an obstacle to better transatlantic cooperation on AI?

1-020-0000

Robin Kelly, member, U.S. Congress (D, IL). – Thank you for the question. There are national security implications if we do not align. There is a fear that an EU AI law could harm interoperability and cooperation, particularly for defence. When NATO countries join forces on the battlefield their equipment should be able to talk to each other and reduce as much friction as possible. I think that NATO can take a leadership role in accelerating work-around agreements on architectures and standards. We can develop ally technical expertise and also pursue coalition AI-use cases for exercises and war games. The Joint Artificial Intelligence Center's International AI Partnership for Defense will also hopefully further AI defence and security cooperation.

So again, I think it's for a variety of reasons – national security being a big part of it – that we should definitely find ways to work together, strategise together, be a true team. And I do believe that, again, President Biden wants to see that also.

1-021-0000

Kristin de Peyron, Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS. – I will not go into the issues of defence, which are areas in which I work very little day to day.

But I really think that we have a good potential to join forces and be real tech allies, both to shape technologies and also the regulatory environment. A multi-stakeholder initiative, such as

was mentioned by the honourable Member, the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, is of course a good start for our discussions on this. We have a shared belief in a human-centric approach to this and to dealing with issues, if I mention, for instance, facial recognition.

This is why we've proposed, in the communication that was set out on the EU-US relationship, to start working together on a sort of transatlantic AI agreement where we could perhaps set a blueprint to regional and global standards that are aligned with our values. We're really keen to discuss these issues.

1-022-0000

Svenja Hahn (Renew). – I'm very happy that we're discussing the topic of international cooperation on artificial intelligence because in this committee we really want to work on a long-term perspective for the European approach to artificial intelligence.

One very crucial aspect is of course international communication and cooperation. To put it frankly – and I think the Congresswoman has already raised this – our technological future is at stake here. Who should set the international standards? Do we want an autocratic surveillance state like China to determine our way and path? I don't think so.

The answer for me and my group, Renew Europe, is clear. We want standards based on our democratic values and the freedom and dignity of the individual. Neither Europe nor the US can, or should, go this way isolated from each other. Therefore, I warmly welcome the Commission's proposal on the transatlantic agenda and the positive signals we're hearing from the US towards this important cooperation between democratic friends.

I think that, nevertheless, we really need to support the international approach. I was very happy to hear of the Global Partnership on AI today and, also at a political level, I think this is a very important topic. We need to work on broadening the transatlantic dialogue towards a democratic dialogue on tech standards with our democratic partners in the US. I believe we can all manage to make the world a very innovative place and to protect the rights of our citizens and safeguard democratic values.

Therefore, my question goes to Congresswoman Kelly. Can you share with us to what extent you discuss the involvement of other like-minded partners, apart from the US and the EU, in the standard-setting process of emerging technologies, and how should we tackle this process from your point of view? Thank you very much, Congresswoman, for your answers.

1-023-0000

Robin Kelly, member, U.S. Congress (D, IL). – Thank you so much and I will say this will be the last question I can take, because I have to get back to D.C.

But no, I do think that what we work out with the EU could actually be a model with how we work with the rest of the world of like-minded democracy. We can be the foundation of future partnerships or partnerships around the world. I think we should be inclusive, we should be transparent, we should get as many people involved as possible. As I'm listening to the panellist from Columbia, I want to know more about what you're doing around race and gender. That's extremely important to me.

So it's not just us that have all the answers, we can innovate and be creative together. But I do think that how we work out how the EU and the United States works together can be the foundation and the model setting for bringing in more countries and having a collective impact.

1-024-0000

Chair. – Thank you very much, Congresswoman Kelly. I know that you have to leave, but I really want to appreciate your presence here, the time you spent with us. And I'm sure you've also heard loud and clear our colleagues, several of them, speaking of how important the

transatlantic partnership and the dialogue on digital issues, and artificial intelligence in particular, is, and how much we are looking forward to setting up a structured dialogue on that.

We move now on to Liesje Schreinemacher – sorry for that – for Renew. You have the floor for two minutes.

1-025-0000

Liesje Schreinemacher (Renew). – Thank you Chair, also a big thank you to the speakers of the panel today: it was very interesting to hear. I'm also a member of the Committee on International Trade and I work a lot on the transatlantic trade relationship, a relationship which not has always been smooth sailing. But instead of focusing on trade irritants back and forth, I always argue that we should focus on the positive objectives that we share. So I'm really happy with the subjects that we are discussing today: our technology and how we want to develop it, because obviously, we do share many values such as freedom, human rights, democracy and rule of law, as the Chair mentioned in his introduction as well.

Actually, many of my questions have been answered on the way that we can move our transatlantic technological relationship forward. I think it's very interesting. We've heard interesting things mentioned, such as finding a common project, and also Congresswoman Kelly mentioned many values that we share. I think this really can serve as a great basis to move forward.

My question now really is on – obviously, we have the EU-US Trade and Technology Council ('Tech Council'), which is which is now being established with the OECD. We have the UN. I thought NATO was also an interesting organisation to take into the equation. And then we also have the Global Partnership on AI.

I was wondering how that could fit into – how we can further develop AI, because I don't think that it's supposed to be a standard-setting body. But how can we fit that into the more global perspective of the development of AI? I think that the best person to ask that question right now is Ms de Peyron.

1-026-0000

Kristin de Peyron, Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS. – Well, I really want to caution that I'm not an expert on AI: definitely not. I'm learning.

But I think that partnerships like the global partnership which was born out of the G7 context, even if they are not standard-setting per se, together with other multi-stakeholder frameworks and the multilateral system and organisations, can complement each other. Basically, we're working for the same aims, but there are certain bodies where we can work more on regulatory issues. We have initiatives going on, as I mentioned very briefly, but probably too quickly, in the introduction. But there are also initiatives at UNESCO and the Council of Europe. They look at these things from different angles and they complete each other.

So the key issue is to bring all this together; that's really what I wanted to say. But I do agree with Congresswoman Kelly – and this is really what we've set out in the communication as well – that together we can create a basis for something that could be a good model to follow, because we want a good model for governance in this area.

1-027-0000

Chair. – Thank you very much. Since we are good with time and the question concerned issues linked to multilateral fora, perhaps Mr Beridze you would also like to try and answer this, and perhaps also address the issue of what common projects we might put on the table for the benefit of all partners in the broader AI dialogue?

1-028-0000

Irakli Beridze, *Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations*. – Absolutely, thank you. First of all, I would like to stress that international cooperation is crucial to finding solutions to these issues, both from the threat side and from the benefit side; AI has two very distinct sides to it. On the benefit side, the United Nations has many different venues and programmes, but we are working to find ways in which AI can contribute. For example, the AI for Good Summit is now into its fourth year. This is organised by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Geneva, but all partners as a unit – and we are founding partners – we are looking at the UN Sustainable Development Goals and how artificial intelligence can contribute to the fulfilment of such goals. This is one of the top UN venues where cooperation is happening on both the private and public side. Such interactions are very important. Similarly, at UNICRI, we are running a specialised AI platform for law enforcement, together with Interpol, to find solutions to crime-related problems. How can AI support that while, at the same time, ensuring that human rights are respected and fundamental freedoms are adhered to? We are also developing a specialised and practical toolkit which will assist UN member states, and obviously all countries, in the development of AI solutions for finding and solving crime-related problems in a responsible manner with full respect of human rights.

1-029-0000

Alessandro Panza (ID). – Chair, honourable colleagues, I had a question for Ms Kelly and obviously I am passing it on to the Chair of the AIDA Committee should he wish to take it on board for the future.

I basically have two questions. Firstly: There has been little talk of work, or rather of the impact that artificial intelligence, which we all know will become an active part of our lives, will inevitably have on many jobs, so I wanted to find out from the US what policies will be established to support those who will be excluded from the world of work as a result of the introduction of artificial intelligence.

The second question I wanted to ask was about what kind of precautions the United States is taking, whether active or passive, against its real competitor, China. Because if we look at the data on the implementation of artificial intelligence, China has made the implementation of artificial intelligence and the acquisition of data a priority strategic plan, and is thus attempting to use its own global dominance by building on this.

So I wanted to understand, from an American perspective, what precautions have been taken to prevent this, both from a passive point of view, i.e. using investment, involving partners in the same identity and thought area, such as the EU, and also from an active point of view, i.e. how to tackle a threat, and I'm talking not only about cyberattacks but also about the specific consequences of Chinese dominance.

1-030-0000

Chair. – I will be taking the questions that you were planning to address to Ms Kelly; I will keep them with me as we will be launching a dialogue with the US Congress on this, we will be keeping these questions for that time. As to the question related to China, I will ask Kristin de Peyron to address it.

1-031-0000

Kristin de Peyron, *Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS*. – Clearly, we have different visions with China. I think that's evident to everybody. I think Congresswoman Kelly also pointed out that we're on a sort of uneven ground. We can never have as many people trained in these issues as China has, etc.

But, clearly, the drive of what we want to do in wanting to develop a human-centred framework, human-centred regulation – and we want to work with the United States, but also then more

broadly with other partners – that is something that we feel is our approach and we have to go that way. I think that's the short and the long of it, really.

1-032-0000

Anna Bonfrisco (ID). – Chair, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the speakers for their very interesting contributions. Today's meeting is memorable, a discussion that gives us the opportunity to focus on the key objectives regarding artificial intelligence-based technologies and systems.

From an European point of view, I would like to stress that it is not that we lack skills in robotics, machine learning, computer science and philosophy or the other areas that are very important in the use of artificial intelligence, and I imagine that we all want to ensure that new generations have better quality of life and better development prospects, a more open and richer society in terms of intellect and knowledge.

From this premise, therefore, I would like to ask Mr Sportisse for some thoughts on three points: can you confirm that it would be strategically beneficial to deepen cooperation with the US, particularly, in the light of recent US successes in space exploration, in robotics? This affects many security-related issues and I am also asking as a member of the European Parliament Delegation to NATO.

Can you confirm that it is strategically important to train more European talent in the disciplines of robotics, machine learning and cyber science, without which our negotiating position would be weaker?

And lastly, since the economic and social implications of artificial intelligence are so profoundly transformative, a sort of new era of human civilisation, how do we deal with the imbalances that arise from the geopolitical rivalry of such different political and philosophical systems, such as the Chinese and Russian systems, and with all the threats involved?

1-033-0000

Bruno Sportisse, Chair and CEO, National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology (INRIA). – I agree with you that in Europe we have a lot of competences, we have a lot of scientists, we have a lot of technologies, we have a lot of enterprises in these topics, and there are a lot of European tools in order to foster this digital revolution, this AI revolution, with Horizon Europe, with the EIC, with the EIT, etc.

Concerning your first question, with the European-American partnership. Of course, we have to promote some joint projects between Europe and the USA, and in my field I think that we have really to promote academic exchanges between the European Union and the USA.

And concerning your second question: of course, this is, as I have said in my introduction, really a key issue – the issue related to the shortage of competences, so to speak. So how to be able to train a new lot of people in robotics, in AI, in machine learning, in computer science and in prime mathematics more generally. So I really think that this is the most important issue.

And concerning your third question, well, I think that this is really one issue related to these multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the GPAI, the Global Partnership on AI, to be able to tackle such issues.

1-034-0000

Sergey Lagodinsky (Verts/ALE). – Thank you so much, Chair, and thank you to the guests. It is, of course, a little difficult to ask questions after so much of value has been said. But, if I may comment on what has been expressed, and maybe my questions are for Irakli Beridze and Kristin de Peyron. I have a feeling there is a preferential way of using and solving the questions by way of soft law: recommendations and non-binding issues. I wonder whether we should

reassess the standards of human rights regimes, data protection regimes, and also issues like mass surveillance or social scoring where we don't have any tangible rules. My question would be: are there already starting processes to reframe or create such legislative or normative regimes?

Another question would be: is there an attempt to think about the development of articles on state responsibility and how to develop them in order to adjust to artificial intelligence issues? And also, what are the initiatives in order to regulate, at international level, responsibility for private actors who act in a global way, and their power is comparable to that of state actors in regulating free speech, for example, regarding Twitter or other social media?

These are the main points, and I don't want to repeat the other ones that have already been mentioned. One further point, which Irakli Beridze could perhaps explain to me: is it still worth thinking about a ban on the transfer of certain technologies to non-democratic countries, or are we beyond that point and it is not possible any more to limit the proliferation of AI technologies to non-democracies?

1-035-0000

Irakli Beridze, *Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations*. – Very valid points and very good questions. I'll try to summarise some of the answers and if you would like to have any follow-up, I'll be happy to do it.

More on the global international scale, to do the policy-making, to create international conventions, charters, it's a very complex process. As you know, the issue related to AI is still very new, it's still very emerging and it's still developing (although it develops exponentially) within the United Nations – we started to discuss issues related to AI only from 2017 or so. The only exception was the lethal venomous weapon systems, which at the UN, in an informal setting, started to be discussed from 2014-15. So this is very new.

Creating international regulations in the form of conventions and charters, as I mentioned, is a cumbersome and lengthy process. At the same time, what we are doing is that there are certain sectoral approaches and sectoral, so-called soft law regulations, which are being created in the domain of law enforcement. What we are doing, as I said, we are creating practical toolkits to assist law enforcement to use this type of technology in a responsible manner. And as a matter of principle, we believe that the use of AI by law enforcement agencies should endeavour to adhere to the general principles such as respect of human rights, democracy, justice and the rule of law. And we do need to meet these principles. And in order to do that, users of AI should seek to adapt the requirements of fairness, accountability, transparency and explainability throughout the entire lifecycle of the system.

As far as banning technology, well, at UNICRI at the centre which I am heading, we are not a regulatory body. We are there to test the ideas and facilitate the processes. Personally, I don't believe in banning technologies. I believe that we could create an environment where these technologies could bring benefit. Plus, in addition to that, AI has enormous potential to do a lot of good for humanity, and we are testing that at our AI for Good Summit. At the United Nations, we see enormous applications which bring enormous benefit. Therefore, banning is not something which I would certainly recommend. On the contrary, I believe in multilateralism. I believe in the multistakeholder cooperation where we can actually maximise the benefits and minimise the risks of these technologies.

1-036-0000

Kristin de Peyron, *Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS*. – No, from our point of view, I mean from the EU point of view, I mentioned in the introduction that the Commission will put forward legislative proposals on the EU's approach to AI this year, based on the White Paper last year, but for us, clearly, the aim

is to push for, yes, a globally competitive artificial intelligence but, at the same time, we want to see that there is respect for European legislation and values. And we want to work at the international field, to work on extending international norms and standards and global cooperation in priority areas, and that includes these new areas of the digital arena and also artificial intelligence.

So we really feel that we need to address the implications globally. As I said before, and many others here today, in a sort of human-centric and inclusive transformation, digital transformation, but also respect for human rights, the rule of law. We want more ambitious standards and rules at the global level. But of course this is not achieved in a day, and the work with a partner like the United States, but also within the multilateral fora which I have mentioned, be it the Global Partnership, be it in the United Nations, be it in the Council of Europe, we believe that we need to take this forward on many fronts.

1-037-0000

Alviina Alametsä (Verts/ALE). – I think that the EU is already spearheading regulations on AI, but it's way behind China in research and innovation, start-ups in research organisations, filing for AI-related patents, and people with AI skills. These are important issues and they can also have geopolitical implications. I wonder how effective the EU can be in AI diplomacy if it is otherwise outside the AI boat?

The EU has some strengths on the global stage. One is its emphasis that AI has to be human-centred and at the service of human beings and natural resources. We must continue our commitment to this idea in order to prevent the creation and use of harmful AI applications and mitigate the unintended consequences. I believe that AI needs to be embedded and regulated in multilateral institutions and regulations, and that the principles of international law must be checked to see the extent to which they are responsive to the challenges of the digital age. But we also have to find a balance between preventive measures and innovation and creativity; this is our challenge. We have to allow guidelines to evolve along with the technological developments and the implementation of AI.

As a final point, if the EU seriously envisions establishing human-centric and value-based global governance, it should focus on consolidating its agenda-setting power, both among the Member States and in the wider world. Governmental initiatives should be well coordinated and aimed at building a more coherent overall European-wide narrative and strategy on AI.

I would like to hear from Ms Kristin de Peyron from the EEAS on what is being done to this effect.

1-038-0000

Kristin de Peyron, Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS. – Yes, I think that the honourable Member is absolutely right that we also need to focus on research and development and I think that's part also of the balanced approach that we have. I referred to this, what we call the ecosystem of excellence and trust. And in that excellence part, you do need to focus also on investing in development of AI and deployment, and you need to focus on research, industrial capacity and putting AI and robots at the service of the European citizens and the economy. And that in parallel with this trust approach.

I think it is very right what you say, that it's important to consolidate and pull together. And that is certainly what we aim to do through our approach of being present and impacting in the multilateral sphere. These things are not discussed in isolation. So they are brought together by our excellent colleagues in DG CONNECT and otherwise, and of course, we from the external side. So that's definitely the aim and you're very right to point it out.

1-039-0000

Marisa Matias (The Left). — Dear Chair, I would like to ask a few questions on a number of issues which have already been raised but not yet explained in detail. We know that using artificial intelligence technology has many consequences that have been discussed, but we also know that there are unwanted consequences and that research has already allowed us to identify some of these. This necessarily relates to the fact that they are dependent on automated decision-making processes, which often not only replicate – but indeed help to deepen – existing social discrimination. Therefore, mechanisms need to be put in place to be able to anticipate these problems and promote social equality measures in the technical design of artificial intelligence tools.

We know that AI systems derive their intelligence, so to speak, from learning experiences, many of which are supervised, but also others that are not supervised and are linked to the creation of algorithms, etc. And, of course, the issue of data quality is absolutely essential: what are the contacts and the quality of the data used to feed artificial intelligence systems? One of the problems is that they often do not cover the complexity of the problems. This has been visible, for example, in decisions to award credits or in the selection of candidates for jobs, etc. But in any event there are now concerns that these biases will also be transferred to programmes, for example cooperation programmes, including aid programmes, food aid programmes and other types of programme.

For this reason I would like to ask – and I believe it would be better to ask Mr Beridze – what the United Nations is doing to avoid these transfers. I would also like to take the opportunity to ask Mr Almeida if he can explain in a little more detail the mechanisms of ‘gender and racial neutrality’ that he referred to at the start of his presentation.

1-040-0000

Irakli Beridze, Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations. — I think I will answer the question related to the United Nations. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, the UN is running numerous projects and many UN organisations now are examining the potential of AI, both from the benefit to the risk side within their mandates. One of the main elements of the UN is the Secretary-General’s roadmap for digital cooperation, which came as a result of the deliberations related to the high-level panel for digital cooperation. And the roadmap states that AI brings enormous benefits to the digital era, but it can also significantly compromise the safety and agency of users worldwide, and therefore enhancing multi-stakeholder efforts on global AI cooperation is needed to help build global capacity for the development and use of AI in a manner that is trustworthy, human rights-based, sustainable, safe and, of course, promotes peace.

As a matter of principle, what we are developing in our programmes and in our efforts is that we are trying to ensure that all of this is done to adopt the requirements of fairness, accountability, transparency and explainability. Now, in a nutshell, AI is not magic. AI tries to make sense of an enormous amount of data which has been accumulated. On the one hand, human beings have already accumulated around 45 zettabytes of data, which is a lot if we take into comparison that 10 years ago, we only had one zettabyte of data, and it is projected that in five years we’re going to have 175 zettabytes of data, and no agency, no combination of human beings will be able to decipher that much data, whether it’s a law enforcement or any other agencies who are trying to make sense of it and take benefit out of it.

Therefore, we will be forced to use tools like artificial intelligence-related technologies and applications to draw enormous benefits out of it. What is our challenge and goal and objective is to maximise the benefits of it and minimise the risks and fully subscribe to all the risks which have been identified by my colleagues and honourable Members of the Parliament, and therefore we are extending our hand to work hand-in-hand to ensure that all these benefits are there, taken, drawn and that the risks are minimised.

1-041-0000

Agostinho Almeida, *Head of the Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Colombia (C4IR.CO), affiliated to the World Economic Forum.* – This was a project that initially began at the beginning of 2020, and the main challenge we were trying to address is to try and understand: what does gender bias really look like, when you're thinking about AI systems and the data that feed them?

Our initial activities were very much focused on mobilising different actors and stakeholders, to guarantee not just national level but international cooperation and in Latin America. And that's why we developed from the beginning a strong alliance with the IDB, the Inter-American Development Bank.

The initial issue was mobilising the actors. Number two was trying to understand what does it really look like in terms of bias. So it's identifying these cases of bias within the data sets and the use of AI and the different types of algorithms that have been employed here in Latin America. We will be releasing in this first trimester a report regarding that diagnostic. And that will be a key insight to develop what we call an integral system and strategy to reduce these types of bias and really promote gender neutrality.

Now, in terms of racial bias, this was interesting because halfway through the year we started working with our colleagues, the Center in South Africa, which was launched a couple of months after us, and they immediately said, we want to do the same thing with the racial issues. So they're now working, starting to work as observers, and we will be diving into the racial issues, hopefully during the second semester, using the insights and the algorithm development we will have for the gender neutrality part of the project.

The other interesting piece of this is that this is the first project of the hub for the Andean region for the fAIr LAC Initiative, for the IDB. I really recommend diving into that because it is a strong initiative based on different countries in Latin America. We will be working with each one of them to try to develop a local project for the fair and responsible use of artificial intelligence in the region and issues like gender equality, health, education, etc.

1-042-0000

Ivan Štefanec (PPE). – Thank you very much Chair, and thank you all the panellists. I'm sure that artificial intelligence is also about big data and about the protection of this big data. Therefore, I would like to ask a question in terms of big data protection.

I know that there was a lot of discussion in terms of the so-called US Privacy Shield and potential US and EU privacy cooperation. My question was originally addressed to Ms Kelly but, I'm sure that Mr Almeida is also more than capable to answer, and maybe also Mr Beridze as well. So what is the potential for cooperation between the EU and US in terms of big data protection and generally in terms of privacy protection, and where do you see a bottleneck of this protection?

1-043-0000

Chair. – Thank you very much, and since this is a rather transversal question – the balance between the need for big data and how we manage it, and the issue of privacy – and since we have exhausted our list of speakers from the floor (the virtual floor, so to speak), I will actually give the floor to all four panellists to address this question and also to provide their closing observations or remarks. I will start with Mr Beridze. We are fine with time so you can do it in two minutes.

1-044-0000

Irakli Beridze, *Head of the Centre for AI and Robotics, UNICRI, United Nations.* – Obviously, this is a very good question and one of the top and important issues. Reaffirming that the right to privacy is a fundamental human right and recognising the social value of data should be a

harmonised general framework for accountable, adequately-transparent and responsible data handling practices across all UN member states.

We addressed this issue within the United Nations in the context of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals, an agenda which asserts that quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure that no one is left behind. Such data is key to the decision-making.

We believe that the growing digital divide, which is now happening globally, should be addressed within that context as well. Currently, we have over 40-45 countries who have their AI or digital national strategies, which address the issue of data as well as accessibility to it. But at the same time, we have around 140-150 countries which don't have such strategies. At the UN we like to see all countries benefit from technologies like AI, big data, analytics, and related tech for the benefit, for the good to solve problems and to find solutions for all people equitably and to make sure that this benefits all and not a selected few, whether it's countries, groups, companies or corporations.

1-045-0000

Kristin de Peyron, *Director, Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Affairs, EEAS*. – I think, clearly, if we talk about the issues of more ambitious global standards and rules, we're also talking about issues around big data and about privacy, etc. The modern privacy rules that we have in place in the EU, and also the recently-proposed Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act, aim to create a safe online environment for citizens but also to foster innovation, growth and competitiveness. Also, when we take action in multilateral fora, which we've been speaking a lot about here today, we will also need to strike a balance between the need for technological sovereignty and, at the same time, upholding openness of the internet and fundamental rights.

That is why it is so important to engage with international partners on the challenges that we see in digital governance, and that includes data protection and privacy, but it also includes other issues like tackling disinformation, illegal content, cybersecurity, etc.

So there are a number of areas where the current rules are insufficient, but I also align myself very well and recognise very well what was said about equal access to technology and development. I think here there are a number of interesting initiatives that we've heard about, and I was very happy to hear both from the UN and from Latin America about initiatives that are going on, and also some at local level.

1-046-0000

Bruno Sportisse, *Chair and CEO, National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology (INRIA)*. – Thanks a lot, Chair. I think that the hearings illustrate the depth and the wide scope of the issues related to AI, with links to geopolitics, to EU research and innovation policies, to the industrial agenda of the most innovative companies, and to education policies. It also illustrates the importance of topics related to trustworthy AI, whatever that means.

I think that it is very important to bear in mind, first, that huge investment in research and innovation is necessary in order to tackle such challenges; second, that explaining the issues raised by AI to all citizens is really a key issue; and, third, concerning regulation, the fact that we have to be able to establish a good trade-off between, on the one hand, policies in favour of innovation and, on the other hand, the promotion of a trustworthy approach based on an appropriate level of regulation.

1-047-0000

Agostinho Almeida, *Head of the Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Colombia (CAIR.CO), affiliated to the World Economic Forum*. – So actually at the Center, as I mentioned,

we have a much more technical side approach to these types of topics. The issue around privacy and big data, we don't look at it isolated. We do look at it within the scope of all emerging technologies as platforms and a means to an end, as most of my colleagues mentioned today, to face these global challenges.

Having said that, as you saw in the beginning, one of the goals we do have is to help Colombia and Latin America to really move forward in terms of data-based economy. To make that possible, you really need to show that things like cross-border data transaction is possible, based on trust, obviously, and international cooperation agile methods. To do that we actually have a project that involves different types of technology, AI being one of them, but also policies and governance models around the use of data, hopefully at the cross-border data strategy.

We call it, actually, the Moonshot Project. It is a data marketplace we are now building with the national government, and hopefully with the Pacific Alliance to involve different countries and really test and stress these models in terms of that free data flow and trust around creating value from data. Basically, it will involve different layers running from the governance model to commercial strategy transaction, and something that's fascinating for us, which is the need for dynamic economic valuation methods and algorithms for data, and obviously strategic and political and regulatory issues.

So we're now building that as a pilot and a prototype, hopefully for this year. We're looking into things in sectors like energy as use-case domain and sub-verticals in agriculture. And just recently, we're now actually working with our colleagues in Norway, C4IR Oceans, on ocean data and bringing in what Columbia is doing with access to both oceans, Atlantic and Pacific.

So just in a nutshell, a couple of things we've been doing. Thank you very much for having me and I'm more than open for joint projects if you feel you would like to dabble into it. Thank you very much.

1-048-0000

Chair. – That brings us to the end of our hearing today. I would like to thank again our panellists for agreeing to speak today and for bearing with us through our questions. Of course I want to thank the Members from both committees – AFET and AIDA – for their interest, for their questions, and for their contributions to today's discussions.

I have tried to take some notes based on what I've heard today. I didn't put them in any ranking order, but probably the first thing I would like to say is that what I found interesting was that, no matter the perspective that was brought to the conversation, whether from Latin America or from the UN or from the US or, certainly, from here from our Union, I hope you'll agree with me that there's a lot of commonality to how we perceive the opportunities as well as the risks when it comes to the development of frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence. And we certainly seem to be preoccupied by the same issues, whether it's the ethical standards, whether it's the application of AI in certain domains. Again, we seem to be all – no matter where we are in the world – dwelling on the same topics.

This brings me to the next observation, which is that in such a context it is clear that we need to engage in what I think several of you called 'AI diplomacy', which means reaching out to friends, as well as dealing with those that are not necessarily aligned with our values and our understanding of things, and that we need to do that both using the multilateral frameworks in which we are already engaged on this topic of artificial intelligence – the UN was mentioned, the G20 was mentioned, the OSCE, the Global Partnership on AI and so forth – but also there was a very clear consensus, I would dare say, in working on the transatlantic lines to further develop our AI, our digital diplomacy, so to speak. And here, we in AIDA will be approaching

formally the AI Caucus in the US Congress to establish a structured dialogue on AI which I'm hoping is going to provide us the opportunity to further discuss these issues in more depth.

We've heard Congresswoman Kelly; our colleagues in the Congress are advanced, themselves, in their thinking, also in preparing various White Papers that have then led to some concrete regulatory proposals, and clearly I think we have an interest to first of all inform each other and see how many points of convergence we can work on.

On substance, again, we've heard discussions on ethics, on biases – clearly a concern to many of us – and also on the readiness of the EU to actually be competitive on the global stage, an issue that we've heard about from several colleagues, as well as the impact of AI on climate change, climate issues in general, as well as the impact of AI on the labour market. So a lot of topics, which is not a surprise. With every hearing that we organise, we see how vast the impact of AI is on our societies and economies.

With that, I think I can conclude that this was another interesting, informative hearing. I will at the end remind colleagues that on Thursday we will have the second part of this hearing, the one where we are working together with our colleagues in the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE). We will have again a very interesting debate on AI cybersecurity and defence. We will hear from the Deputy Secretary-General of NATO, among other panellists, so do join us for the second leg of this hearing on 4 March at 13.45. With that, I thank you very much again for your presence today and I wish you a very nice evening.

(The meeting closed at 18.43)