

Hyderabad Declaration on Internet for Social Good (I4SG)

Preamble

The Hyderabad Declaration is adopted by the participants of Two-Day Online International Conference on “Internet for Social Good: A Multi-Stakeholder Understanding (I4SG)”, 24-25 May 2023. Participants were policy makers, Government officials, industry representatives, civil society activists, academics and international experts. They stemmed from India, Indonesia, Brazil, Germany, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Russian Federation, South Africa, Thailand and Zimbabwe.

The themes of the International Conference have been deliberated in the context of UNESCO Conference “Internet for Trust” held during 21-23 February, 2023.

Under the Hyderabad Declaration on I4SG:

We acknowledge that government guidelines and other mechanisms to regulate the use of Internet, including the digital platforms, have implications for citizens, content creators, developers and the media. This imposes new urgency with respect to digital and media information literacy.

We, the participants of this conference and the signatories to the HYDERABAD DECLARATION on I4SG, affirm the following:

I: Digital Platforms and Data Sovereignty

- Recommendations on principles made by many studies for trustworthy AI have non-binding character leading to their unclear enforcement and implementation
- Since AI is associated with human rights, risks and harm, there is a need to fix the responsibility through consultation with stakeholders by the governments
- Need to have a mechanism for anticipatory risk assessment in place
- Regulation of AI use is necessary, not to be left to self-binding obligations on practitioners
- Data Sovereignty and Data Privacy are important for Digital Transformation and Apps through robust data handling practices
- Compliance and Ethics are essential for maintaining trust, reputation and responsible data stewardship through data encryption and third-party vendor management
- Mandatory display of OTT rules, grievance redressal and appellant mechanisms through scrolls and in-app notifications are needed

- Annual audit of existence and efficacy of access control and age verification mechanisms by each OTT publisher may be undertaken by an independent body.
- Statutory, convergent regulator for all media, including OTT, by the Government is required.
- The “Inter-Departmental Committee” may be made more broad-based and representative to include persons of eminence from different fields and with security of tenure.
- Inclusion of financial penalties on erring OTT publishers are needed
- Consumer advocacy groups, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), Parents’ Associations may be made part of consultations during revision of Rules.
- Provision for disclosure or publication of apology/warning/censure by the OTT publishers on their platforms or websites is essential so that the public at large are made aware of the same.
- Alignment of TV channels with Cinematograph Act and Rules and Programme Code is required
- Proactive censorship at all levels has to be minimal for OTT channels by the regulatory agencies

II: Content Management/Regulations and Ethics

- Governments has to craft and curate mechanisms to leverage benefits of Big Data for delivering public services
- Slowing down technological progress for LLMs is necessary for social good.
- Balancing free-market ambition and regulatory principles is crucial.
- AI ethics considerations should keep pace with economic development for inclusive growth.
- As far as national AI Ethics policies are concerned there is a gap in identifying and accommodating local, less dominant and non-Western value systems that need to be addressed
- Promoting technology that improves as well as better protects social institutions is the need of the hour

III. Internet and Socio-Cultural Issues

- There is a need for education and awareness regarding internet and its consequences.

- Strengthen social services support for internet users.
- Address the social and cultural effects of the internet.
- Need to develop policies that protect workers against harmful effects of work-related internet use, such as information overload, and the blurring of lines between public and private life.
- Regular educational sessions on the use of digital payments methods and other digital interventions in supply chain management to smoothen work processes are required.

IV. Multilingualism and Internet

- The e-learning content should be dubbed into multiple languages and a student can learn in the language of his/her choice.
- To promote learning of languages, other than one's mother tongue, the digital device can provide courses and videos teaching in various languages. Availability of content in this way can preserve and promote linguistic diversity.

V. Access to Information on Digital Platform

- Need to view media and information literacy (MIL) as part of formal education and teacher professional development curricula.
- For the citizens to access information there is a need to expand digital infrastructure and affordable quality internet.
- Further, there is a need to promote digital literacy for building awareness on ethical use of internet resources.
- There is a need to address the concern about well-being impacts and risks across generation and cultures
- In order to support sustainability of individual well-being and community mental health there is a need to consider the ethical issues and values of AI application.

Conclusion

The signatories of the Hyderabad Declaration on I4SG will therefore make an effort to promote usage of Internet for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth.

This document was drafted and agreed by the participants of the conference.
