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PRESS REMARKS LAUNCHING HIGH-LEVEL ADVISORY BODY ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

New York, 26 October 2023, 12:30 p.m.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,

Today I am launching my High-Level Multistakeholder Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence.

The last year has seen an extraordinary advance in the capabilities and use of artificial intelligence, through chatbots, voice cloning, image generators, video apps and more.

Thanks to one such app, I had the surreal experience of watching myself deliver a speech in flawless Chinese – despite the fact that I do not speak Chinese.

This is just one example of the incredible possibilities – and the potential dangers – of AI.

In our challenging times, AI could power extraordinary progress for humanity.

From predicting and addressing crises, to rolling out public health programmes and education services, AI could scale up and amplify the work of governments, civil society and the United Nations across the board.

For developing economies, AI offers the possibility of leapfrogging outdated technologies and bringing services directly to people who need them most.

The transformative potential of AI for good is difficult even to grasp.

And we are in urgent need of this enabler and accelerator. Many countries are already reeling from the impact of the climate crisis. The 2030 Agenda – our global blueprint for peace and prosperity on a healthy planet – is in deep trouble.

AI could help to turn that around. It could supercharge climate action and efforts to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

But all this depends on AI technologies being harnessed responsibly, and made accessible to all – including the developing countries that need them most.

As things stand, AI expertise is concentrated in a handful of companies and countries. This could deepen global inequalities and turn digital divides into chasms.

The potential harms of AI extend to serious concerns over misinformation and disinformation; the entrenching of bias and discrimination; surveillance and invasion of privacy; fraud, and other violations of human rights.

Without entering into a host of doomsday scenarios, it is already clear that the malicious use of AI could undermine trust in institutions, weaken social cohesion, and threaten democracy itself.

For all these reasons, I have called for a global, multidisciplinary, multistakeholder conversation on the governance of AI so that its benefits to humanity – all of humanity – are maximized, and the risks contained and diminished.

This Advisory Body is the starting point.

This group will work independently, guided by some basic principles.

The Advisory Body's efforts will be inclusive and based on the universal values enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

It will consider how we can link various AI governance initiatives that are already underway.

And it will work fast, because we are against the clock. It will make preliminary recommendations in three areas by the end of this year:

- The international governance of artificial intelligence;
- A shared understanding of risks and challenges;
- And key opportunities and enablers, to leverage AI to accelerate the delivery of the SDGs.

The Advisory Body's recommendations will feed into preparations for the Summit of the Future next September, and specifically into negotiations around the proposed Global Digital Compact.

This High-Level Advisory Body is gender-balanced, geographically diverse, and spans generations. Members have deep experience across government, business, the technology community, civil society and academia. They bring a broad range of perspectives to the task.

I am grateful and delighted that this outstanding group have agreed to put their knowledge and expertise at the service of the United Nations.

They will serve in their personal capacity, and I ask them to consult widely, extensively, and transparently to hear the views of all stakeholders.

I thank the members in advance for their commitment and contribution to make AI work for all of humanity.

Thank you.