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XXV INFOPOVERTY WORLD CONFERENCE



WARFARE OR WELFARE: THE AI DILEMMA

April 17th 2026, UNHQ - CR5, New York
Live-streamed on UN WebTV | Liaison with Milan HQ

We thank for the support



FINAL DECLARATION

The participants to the 25th Infopoverty World Conference, entitled: “**Warfare or Welfare: the AI dilemma**”, held on April 17th, 2026, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and live-streamed worldwide on UNWebTV,

H.E. Alberto Barachini – *Undersecretary of State, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy*; Mr. Filippo Pierozzi - *Policy Officer, United Nations Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET)*; Mr. Enrico Massa - *First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations in New York*; Arch. Pierpaolo Saporito – *President, OCCAM & Infopoverty Programme*; Andrea Alessandro Giacomini - *President, Fondazione Alberto Giacomini*; Franco D’Alfonso – *President, Circolo Caldara in Milan*; Mr. Luca Stanzione – *Secretary General, CGIL, Milano*; Mr. Patrizio Civili, *Special Advisor to the Director-General, IDLO, Former UN Assistant Secretary General, Italy*; Hon. Haruna Sani Sani, *Director General NASITDEA, Nasarawa State Government, Nigeria*; Dr. Abdul Husaini, *Permanent Secretary, Niger State Ministry, Niger*; Mr. Claudio Azzolini MD, *Founder, Eumeda Telemedicine Platform, Advisory Council of e-Health and Telemedicine, Insubria University, Varese-Como, Italy*; Antonio Capone MD, Jr MD FACS, *Associated Retinal Consultants, Royal Oak, MI, USA*; Mr. Andrea Falco, *CEO, Alfa Design Studio, Milano, Italy*; Mr. Ghazal Hassan MD. *President of the Moroccan Society for Telemedicine and e-Health; Board Member at the International Society for Telemedicine and e-Health, Morocco*; Mr. Kyle Kovacs MD, *Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA ITS*; Dr. Francesco Oggionni, *Advisory Board Member, CDAOS.cat non-profit Data & Digital Health innovation, Sanofi Global Data AI Platform, Application Services Lines Manager, Barcelona, Spain*; Mr. Paolo Asoni, *Chief Executive Officer at Surge-X, London, UK*; Mr. Valter Santarossa *Attorney, Pordenone, Former Regional Council Member dealing with Healthcare and President of INSIEL, ICT company for Healthcare IT Management, Trieste, Italy*; Mr. Simone Donati MD, *Associate Professor, Department of Medicine and Surgery, Insubria University, Varese-Como, Italy*; Dr. Alye Celik, *Chair, CSU*; Ms. Giovanna Seddaiu, *Professor, UNISS, Former EWA-BELT Project Coordinator*; Professor Quirico Migheli, *Director, Desertification Research Center, UNISS, EWA-BELT*; Professor Sheila Okoth, *University of Nairobi (UoN), Kenya, Former EWA-BELT Representative*; Dr. Joseph Adjebeng-Danquah, *CSIR-SARI, Ghana, Former EWA-BELT Representative*; Mr. Niccolò Rinaldi, *Head of Unit for Asia, Australia and New Zealand, European Parliament, Bruxelles, Belgium*; Dr. Jude Elie, *President and CEO, Jude Elie Foundation, Haiti*; Ms. Gloria Starr Kins, *Editor in Chief & Publisher, Society Diplomatic Review, USA*; Ms. Jasmina Bojic, *Founder and Executive Director, UNAFF & UNAFF Traveling Film Festival, Stanford University, USA*.

Thanking

the *United Nations* for hosting, the *Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations* for supporting, the *Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy* and the *Department of Digital Transformation of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy*, for the Patronage, and *OCCAM, the Observatory on Digital Communication*, for organizing the 25th Infopoverty World Conference.

Thanking

Fondazione Andrea Alessandro Giacomini, TM96, The Diplomatic Society Review, SurgeX,

Recalling

the important contributions presented during the preparatory meeting for the conference:

- *The EWA-BELT Project Final Conference, 15-17 July 2025, African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*
- *Art & Tech for a Sustainable Future (STSF) Program, August 28th, 2025 - Expo Osaka, Japan*

- 37th CICT-ICFT UNESCO “Enrico Fulchignoni” Award, September 4th, 2025, 82° Venice International Film Festival, Venice
- International Dialogue on Urban-Rural Linkages (IDURL) 2025 co-hosted by UN-Habitat, 3-6 November, 2025, Songyang County, China

Considering

the results achieved during previous editions of the Infopoverty World Conference, held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York since 2001, have demonstrated how ICTs can be successfully endorsed and implemented as large-scale best practices through the contribution of all participants and the support of the United Nations system.

Appreciating

the commitment of Italy in implementing Artificial Intelligence in remote communities within the African Region, through the AI Hub for Sustainable Development, promoted by the G7 Italian Presidency in collaboration with UNDP, and reinforcing the Italian-African partnership through the Mattei Plan.

the establishment of the independent Scientific Panel on AI, approved by the members of the General Assembly last February to have a science-based assessment of the risks and opportunities of AI, with the hope that their findings can help shape policies at the national and international level

Expressing full support for:

the United Nations General Assembly Resolution:

- Resolution (A/RES/79/1), adopted on September 22nd, 2024, UN Pact for the Future, with the related Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations;

REPORT

The participants converge in valorizing:

The projects endorsed in the 25th Infopoverty World Conference, presenting the result emerged from the strong engagement of all stakeholders in elaborating a strategy to create new AI paradigms, able to empower the public institution to generate social benefit, promoting adequate smart services to the people in need solving the AI dilemma “Warfare or Welfare?”.

With a unanimous consensus to redirect priorities from the actual trend of military applications toward a human-centric approach, all socially oriented applications were strongly encouraged, in particular those that AI could foster within the framework solutions presented in various projects and best practices by institutions, governments and participants, prefiguring a new road map for AI mission, oriented to generate a new trend “**e-Welfare for All.**”

The further development of the core mission of this task - summarizing all acting initiatives to combat poverty, which is the very mission of the conference - was enriched by numerous substantive and practical contributions.

- **Promoting Artificial Intelligence and a Human-centered approach towards e-welfare4all.**

Defining that in this reality, a new approach to welfare is needed, one that responds to changing social conditions. At the same time, we need a new approach in a world where AI skills are a condition of access to the job market. Schools must play a role here in providing a strong foundation in the subject, guaranteeing welfare services and responding to disruptive changes in the job market that require the government to show vision and flexibility, while at the same time the government must remain inflexible in relation to the protection of privacy, transparency and fundamental human rights. – By **H.E. Alberto Barachini**, Undersecretary of State, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy

Calling all the stakeholders present, united by the common goal of finding solutions to harness communication technologies to advance sustainable development while addressing the risk of conflict and division, to work accordingly to the same principles that guide our multilateral action. In this spirit, we

welcome this initiative as a further step to advance international cooperation in the field of AI through the involvement of stakeholders.

– By **Mr. Enrico Massa**, *First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations, New York.*

Inviting all stakeholders to play an active role, bringing the experience of OCCAM and Infopoverty in the conversation that is happening at the United Nations this July in Geneva, on the occasion of the AI Global Dialogue. The involvement of all partner institutions, private stakeholders and civil society which are dealing with these very issues, is essential to foster a participatory approach especially involving vulnerable people collaborating with offices such as the Commissioner for human rights, the Office of Commissioner for refugees, World food program, FAO – contributing with a very important sectoral perspective It's not a dilemma, it's a gap, it is a welfare gap that we are seeing both in developed and in developing countries. – By **Mr. Filippo Pierozzi**, *Policy Officer, United Nations Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET).*

Special attention is devoted to the development prospects of the African region and to maximizing the benefits that the development policies can draw from technical advances. In this context, the upgrade of the internet protocol IPv6 was highlighted as means to overcome the constraints and the structural bottleneck that characterized previous versions, enabling virtually unlimited scalability and providing essential support sustaining the growth of internet-based services access. The present stakeholders call upon involvement of the Ministries of communication and the network of institutions and private stakeholders to promote awareness, capacity building and policy coordination towards a sustainable digital transition – By **Mr. Patrizio Civili**, *Special Advisor to the Director-General, IDLO, former UN Assistant Secretary-General, Italy*

- **Bridging the Digital Divide**

Consisting of the creation of strong urban knowledge hubs able to deliver AI-supported e-services directly to communities in need. These services include telemedicine, food security, e-learning, digital training, and access to public services. Through locally installed community hubs, every citizen — even in remote areas — could benefit from AI in a practical and inclusive way. – By **Dr. Remy Sietchiping**, *Deputy Director, UN-Habitat Liaison Office in New York, in collaboration with UN-Habitat, PLSG and Dr. Abdul Husaini, Permanent Secretary Niger State Ministry of Lands and Survey (Nigeria)*

The transition from **Smart Cities to Intelligent Cities** — cities that share their knowledge assets with the surrounding territory — is both technically achievable and urgently necessary. AI can map the hierarchy of needs in each community with precision, enabling targeted and cost-effective public service delivery. – By **Arch. Pierpaolo Saporito**, *President of OCCAM & Infopoverty Programme, Italy*

The Conference endorses the expansion of **IPv6-based infrastructure networks** as a foundation for scalable digital inclusion across rural Africa and other underserved regions, as demonstrated by Nigeria's leadership in this field. - Proposed by **Hon. Haruna Sani Sani**, *Director-General, Nasarawa State Information Technology & Digital Economy Agency (NASITDEA), Nasarawa State Government, Nigeria*

- **Telemedicine and Digital Health, privacy and AI implementation**

Telemedicine is now an operational reality. Platform such as EUMEDA, already active in many fields and in Madagascar with a in a Vision+ project, demonstrate that remote diagnostic services, second-opinion networks, and AI-assisted ophthalmological support is essential to foster basic access to health (*in line with SDG n.3*). The Conference recommends the systematic scaling of **telemedicine hubs** as centers of excellence, ensuring that quality healthcare is accessible in the Global South, through a three-layer governance model: AI-assisted knowledge retrieval, large-language-model reasoning, and — always — the final clinical judgment of a qualified physician. All telemedicine projects must, from their inception, address patient informed consent, data protection, liability frameworks, and cross-border legal accountability, as these are prerequisites for trust and long-term sustainability. - By **Prof. Claudio Azzolini**, *founder of the*

EUMEDA Telemedicine Platform, Advisory Council of E-Health and Telemedicine at Insubria University, Varese-Como, Italy and the participants to the Telemedicine and digital Medicine Roundtable

Food Security and Agricultural ICTs Among the ICT tools, implemented within the EWA-BELT Project, the Planthead Platform demonstrates how digital technologies can support farmers by enabling them to consult tele-diagnostic systems for crop protection and receive rapid solutions from experts all over the world. This system highlights the growing role of innovation and artificial intelligence in strengthening food systems, particularly in underserved and remote areas where access to agriculture expertise is limited. By connecting local communities with urban areas, sharing scientific knowledge, ICT-based platforms contribute to improved productivity and the promotion of food-security through digital best-practices. - **By Dr. Aliye Celik, Chair, CSU, New York**

The **EWA-BELT Project (GA #862848)**, elaborated by 20 Partner institutions across six Sub-Saharan African countries over five years, has demonstrated that participatory research, indigenous knowledge, and ICT innovation can be combined to significantly increase crop yields, reduce post-harvest losses, and strengthen food security at the smallholder scale. The endorsement and long-term adoption of the **Planthead platform** — a tele-diagnostic network for plant health, co-designed with farming communities in Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, and Ethiopia — represents a replicable and scalable model. It confirms the transformative power of accessible digital tools in agriculture. – *Presented by the University of Sassari, the University of Nairobi (UoN), Kenya and CSIR-SARI, Ghana and OCCAM, on behalf of the EWA-BELT Consortium*

- **AI Capacity Building and the 2030 Agenda**

Within the framework “A new vision for the future of Haiti” AI-driven medical platforms are already delivering care to remote communities in Haiti without government support, sustained instead by civil society and international solidarity. This example highlights both the urgent need for inclusive access to AI and the fragility of progress when it relies entirely on private initiative. The Conference, therefore calls for stronger international support for Haiti’s digital and institutional recovery. - **By Dr. Jude Elie, Founder Jude Elie Foundation, Haiti**

- **Education, Languages, and AI Literacy**

Across sessions, education emerged as the foundational enabler. Teaching AI literacy in medical schools, integrating digital competencies into mandatory curricula, and fostering multilingual engagement with AI governance processes were all presented as prerequisites for democratic participation in the technology's development. The role of cinema and visual storytelling as tools for public engagement with AI ethics was also underscored. **Especially documentary cinema and visual media** capable of transmitting the values of the United Nations and fostering critical awareness of AI's promises and dangers. The centenary of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute, created at the League of Nations in 1926, will be celebrated by CICT-ICFT, which acquired its legacy at UNESCO in 1956. - *Presented by CICT-ICFT and Ms. Jasmina Bojic, Professor at Stanford University and founder of the UNAFF Film Festival (USA)*

In the light of these considerations, the participants:

1. **Recommend** a clear resolution to the current dilemma of “*Warfare or Welfare*”: the development and application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) must be directed primarily toward welfare and human-centered social development within a bridging framework, through the creation of an **Urban HUB Model** conceived as a replicable structure capable of delivering welfare services on a large scale. Such a model would enable AI systems to identify social needs (*cf. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs*), support decision-making processes, and contribute to the development of effective and accessible solutions for communities worldwide.

2. **Suggest** to facilitate the implementation of the endorsed projects, proposing a follow-up meeting shortly to define the executive Road Map, also with regard to the best dissemination of this Declaration, in order to strengthen the role of Artificial Intelligence.
3. **Propose** the request for the management of the follow-up process, activating the Forum to provide links for effective and long-term collaboration.
4. **Calls upon the United Nations**, to formally take in charge the AIWelfare4all project, providing an institutional impulse to shift the AI paradigm towards a human-centered approach, mobilizing public institutions to seize the opportunities that AI offers in amplifying basic access to services, to be accessible and universal.
5. **Invites governments and decision-makers**, to implement within their existing models the AIWelfare4all process, ensuring that digital welfare is embedded in public policy and that beneficiaries are themselves empowered and activated through AI.
6. **Proposes to the private sector**, to invest in the development of specific AI services and capabilities that enhance the AIWelfare4all model, recognizing the enormous market represented by the underserved population and contributing to a new era of inclusive prosperity.
7. **Encourages the Scientific community**, to engage the new digital generations alongside established researchers in co-creating the knowledge frameworks, tools and methodologies that will allow the transformation through cross-sector collaboration.
8. **Invites civil society**, to stand alongside the United Nations efforts, bridging the digital divide and taking forward the available proposals, best practices and solutions to make concrete action, ensuring no one is left behind.
9. **Calls for a broad convergence** among governments, universities, private sector, international organizations and civil society to orchestrate scalable applications of artificial intelligence to serve humanity, expand global economy and fulfill the goals of the Agenda 2030.

To reach this final aim, a strategic Forum for the development of projects to promote optimal, responsible and socially oriented use of Artificial Intelligence was established. Therefore, it is proposed that the Conference assumes a permanent Forum open to the collaboration of all able to facilitate the implementation of the endorsed projects, to define the executive Road Map, also with regard to the best dissemination of this Declaration to public and private institutions, operating with the same purposes, in order to strengthen the role of AI in the fight against poverty with the concrete initiatives outlined;

FINAL RESOLUTION

The XXV Infopoverty World Conference, aware of this dilemma and having observed the growing trend of AI being directed towards more profitable military applications, shed light on possible balances, wherein the profit requirement may be converted into social benefit, reinforcing the tendency of markets to offer increasingly high-performance services, which now, thanks to connectivity and planetary multilinguism, can be extended to all, identifying their needs and providing adequate community and individual solutions to improve their conditions, thus enormously expanding the user base, in light of the pyramid of needs.

- 1- The question addressed in the conference has focused on: “How to perform Welfare with AI, able to ensure e-services development within underserved communities, delivering basic access to food-security, telemedicine and e-learning for job creation?”

The lesson learned, based on 25 years of experience, was developed through the ICT Village Model, launched by OCCAM, together with UNESCO, ITU UNGAID, and other United Nations partners since the WSIS held in Tunisia in 2005.

The model was later validated in Madagascar, proclaiming “UN Millenium Village” the community of Sambaina in 2006. The initiative was further expanded through the years, through the World Food-Security e-center, presented on the occasion of the Milan Expo in 2015 and later in 2020 with the European Horizon project EWA-BELT (GA #862848), implemented in 60 villages across six Sub-Saharan African countries with the collaboration of 20 Partner Universities.

Today, this work continues with initiatives developed in collaboration with UN-Habitat to bridge the rural-urban divide.

From these experiences, a shared proposal emerges: **AIWelfare4all**.

Consisting in the creation of strong urban knowledge hubs able to deliver AI-supported e-services directly to communities in need. These services include telemedicine, food security, e-learning, digital training, and access to public services. Through locally installed community hubs, every citizen — even in remote areas — could benefit from AI in a practical and inclusive way.

But this transformation cannot happen alone. It requires a new great convergence between governments, universities, the private sector, international organizations, and civil society. To orchestrate new real applications of AI, able to move from poverty quite half of the global population, increasing the markets and opening a new era of prosperity.

We are fully confident that the United Nations family could take in charge this AIWelfare4all vision, giving a decisive impulse to change the paradigm of AI into a human-centered approach.

Convened by the participants on April 17th, 2026, United Nations Headquarters, New York, NY