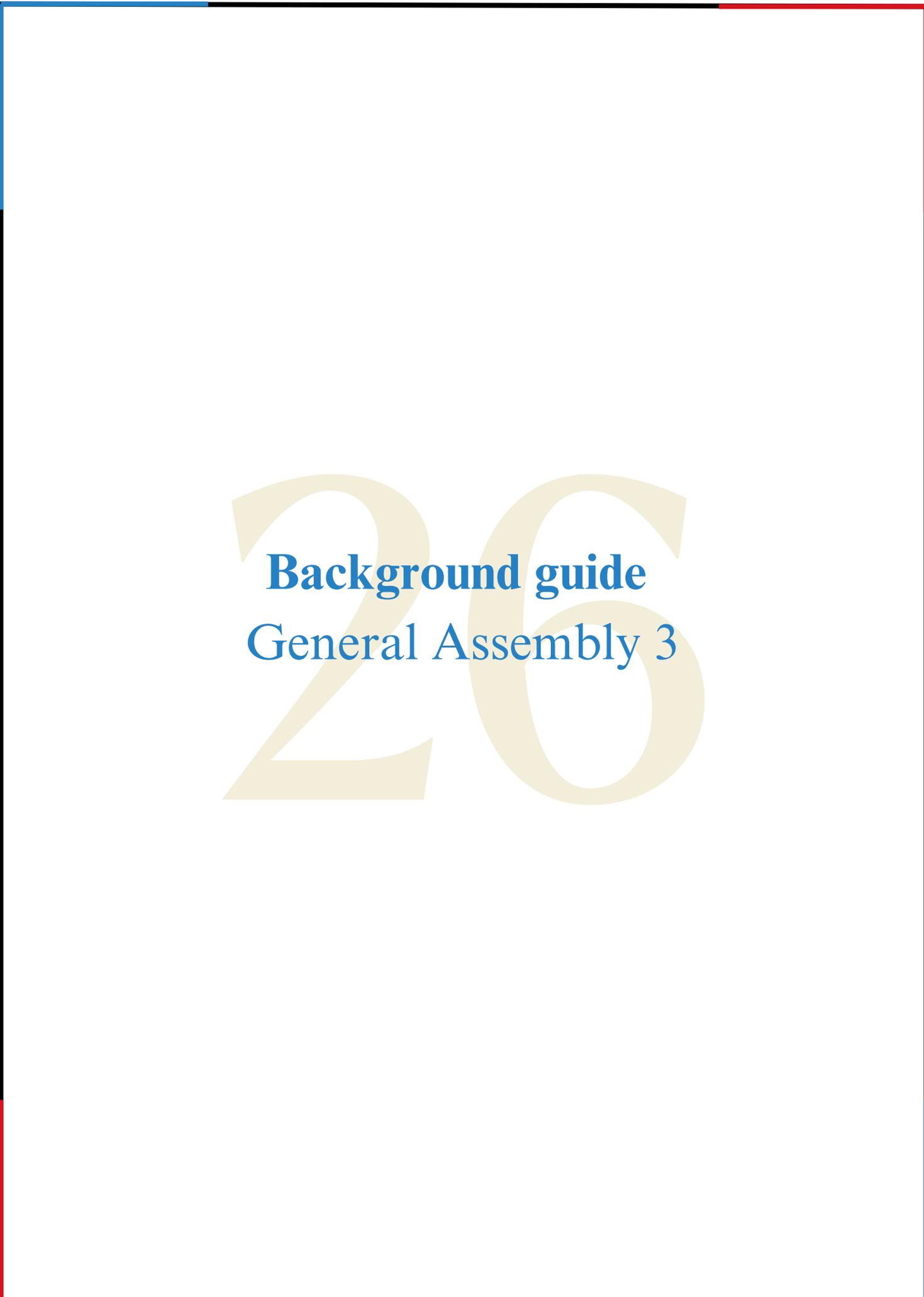




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Background guide
General Assembly 3

Table of Contents

Welcome Letter	1
Committee Introduction	2
Introduction	3
History	4
Analysis	5
Questions for the Resolution	6
Starter resources	7
Bibliography	8

Welcome Letter

Distinguished delegates,

It is with great honor that we extend the warmest welcome to you all to the 2nd Edition of the University of Birmingham Model United Nations (UOBDMUN). It is more than our pleasure to meet all of you truly, and we are looking forward to making it the best committee as chairs of the General Assembly Three (GA3); we hope to make your experience in UOBDMUN memorable. In drawing on the experiences that we have accumulated, we are therefore eager to ensure that you are exposed to a set of perspectives and a different way of thinking that come from our accumulated experiences over the past three days of this conference. It is our collective responsibility to assist you as best as we can, so that the purpose of this council is clearly brought into your perspective.

In your role as a delegate, it is necessary that you are actively involved in discussions, which may encompass debating humanitarian issues, responding to human rights violations, exploring the position of international cooperation, and formulating plans to promote and protect human rights in line with the ideals supported by the United Nations.

Being a delegate at the GA3 has its own set of challenges, but the skills that you acquire are simply unbeatable. Always keep it in mind that your future is so bright if you manage it the right way, so go ahead with your head high. We look forward to a very amazing conference and wish you the best of luck at the GA3 committee.

If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time. We are here to support you in any way possible.

All the best,
Sara Kasem & Manav Gupta

Committee Introduction

The United Nations general assembly is the organization that all 193 member states participate. It discusses the wide range of international issues in various aspects covered by the Charter of the United Nations. The General Assembly can express world opinion, making recommendations to the security council and elect the council's non-permanent members. There are six committees in the General Assembly, and they deal with each of the related agendas such as development, peace and security and international laws.

The United Nations General Assembly Third Committee (GA3) is one of the six main committees at the General Assembly. It is also known as the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee, and they deal with the agenda related to social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues.

The main agendas and issues that the Third Committee discusses are the advancement of women, the protection of children and the treatment of refugees with related issues. In addition, the committee addresses important social development agendas such as justice, international drug trade, and self-determination.

The previous session was focused on the examination of human rights questions, including the issues related to international peace and security, promotion of human rights, crime prevention, and sustainable development. The Third Committee hosts an interactive meeting with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and The High Commissioner for Refugees each year. Recently, the committee has focused on three issues, which were sustainable development, international peace, and security.

Topic Introduction

Upholding Social Stability and Human Rights Amid the Political Impacts of Artificial Intelligence.

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming societies, economies, and governance systems around the world. While AI offers significant opportunities for innovation, efficiency, and development, it also introduces complex political and social challenges that governments and international organizations must address. As AI systems increasingly influence decision-making, information flows, security operations, and public administration, the international community faces a critical task: ensuring that technological progress strengthens social stability while safeguarding fundamental human rights. AI technologies are already shaping political landscapes in multiple ways. E. (2018)

Algorithms influence what information people see online, affecting public opinion, democratic participation, and political discourse. Automated surveillance tools are being adopted by governments to improve security and law enforcement, but they also raise serious concerns about privacy, civil liberties, and the potential for misuse. Additionally, AI-driven misinformation campaigns and deepfake technologies can undermine trust in institutions, destabilize societies, and interfere with democratic processes.

These developments highlight the urgent need for responsible governance of AI. E. (2018) Without appropriate regulations and ethical standards, AI could deepen existing inequalities, enable discrimination through biased algorithms, and expand state or corporate power in ways that threaten individual freedoms.

At the same time, overly restrictive policies could hinder innovation and limit the potential benefits of AI for economic development, healthcare, education, and public services. The challenge for policymakers is therefore to strike a careful balance between innovation, security, and rights protection. Governments must work collaboratively with international organizations, private technology companies, and civil society to establish transparent regulatory frameworks that promote accountability, fairness, and human-centered AI development. Principles such as transparency, non-discrimination, data protection, and public oversight should guide the design and deployment of AI systems.

Overall, the international community must consider how to harness the transformative potential of AI while preventing its misuse in ways that threaten political stability and fundamental human rights. By promoting ethical governance and inclusive policymaking, states can work together to ensure that artificial intelligence becomes a tool for social progress rather than a source of division or instability. Freedom on the Net 2024

Topic History

The intersection of artificial intelligence and human rights is not a recent phenomenon, with its foundations tracing back to the mid-twentieth century. During that period, individuals such as Alan Turing were thinking about how machines could think and what that would mean for society. It was not until the 1990s that people wondered about how artificial intelligence could improve the way governments function, how citizens are treated and how societies are organized.

The 2000s marked a pivotal turning point. In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, governments worldwide, most notably the United States, significantly expanded their use of artificial intelligence for surveillance purposes, ostensibly in the interest of national security. It also raised major questions about privacy and human rights. The USA PATRIOT Act was passed in 2001. Later Edward Snowden informed the world about how governments were using artificial intelligence to collect data on its citizens. This prompted widespread public deliberation regarding whether artificial intelligence was being deployed as a tool of societal benefit or as an instrument of state control.

Concurrently, major social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter began employing artificial intelligence algorithms to curate and determine the content presented to users on their feeds. This had a notable effect on politics. In some cases it allowed citizens to come together and protest against their governments. Simultaneously, these developments significantly lowered the barrier to the dissemination of misinformation and the manipulation of public opinion. The Cambridge Analytica scandal in 2018 revealed how artificial intelligence could be used to influence elections. This raised profound concerns regarding the integrity and vitality of democratic processes. (2022)

By the 2010s, certain governments had begun deploying artificial intelligence not merely for surveillance purposes, but also for predictive modelling of citizen behaviour and the active regulation of social conduct. China's Social Credit System is an example of this. It uses intelligence to collect data on its citizens and assigns them scores based on their behaviour. This system has been criticized by human rights groups around the world. Other countries are adopting similar systems. (2014)

The United Nations has been endeavouring to formulate a coherent multilateral response to these challenges. (2014) In 2016 the Human Rights Council stated that human rights apply both online and offline. UNESCO also introduced a recommendation on the ethics of intelligence in 2021 and the Secretary-General of the United Nations made a roadmap for digital cooperation in 2020. These are all steps towards ensuring that artificial intelligence is used in ways that respect rights

Topic Analysis

Artificial intelligence is affecting politics in three ways: it is being used by governments to watch people and control them, it is being used to spread false information and manipulate elections and it is being used to decide what people can and cannot say online. All of these factors are challenges to rights and all are connected by the fact that artificial intelligence is largely controlled by governments and corporations that operate with limited accountability.

Governments are now able to monitor citizens in ways that were never possible before. Governments can deploy facial recognition technology to identify and monitor individuals, while big data analytics enable them to anticipate and predict citizen behaviour. This is occurring across both democratic and authoritarian states, raising serious concerns about privacy, civil liberties, and the erosion of individual freedoms. (2023)

The use of intelligence to spread false information and manipulate elections is a major challenge. Artificial intelligence can be used to make videos and audio recordings that are so convincing they are virtually indistinguishable from authentic content. This can be used to manipulate people's opinions and influence the outcome of elections. The 2024 global election cycle, in which billions of citizens across dozens of countries were eligible to vote, witnessed a significant surge in this kind of activity, raising serious concerns about the long-term viability of democratic governance. (2024)

Artificial intelligence is being used to decide what citizens can and cannot say online. Social media platforms are using intelligence to moderate content but this can sometimes lead to censorship and the suppression of dissenting voices. At the same time these platforms are also using artificial intelligence to amplify extremist and divisive content, which can be harmful to society. (2023)

For those committed to upholding human rights, the central challenge lies in addressing these issues in a manner that is both equitable and effective. The United States and European Union attempt to regulate intelligence in ways that protect human rights but China and Russia have different ideas about how artificial intelligence should be used. The Global South is also facing its set of challenges as it tries to balance the need for technological development with the need to protect human rights.

Questions for the Resolution

1. What binding or voluntary international frameworks should govern state use of artificial intelligence for surveillance, and what enforcement mechanisms should ensure compliance?
2. How should the international community regulate AI-generated misinformation and electoral interference while preserving freedom of expression and political speech?
3. To what extent should private technology corporations be held accountable under international law for the societal consequences of their AI systems, and through what mechanisms?
4. How can the United Nations ensure equitable representation of all Member States — particularly developing nations — in the governance and regulation of artificial intelligence?
5. What new multilateral institutions or regulatory frameworks, if any, are necessary to provide ongoing oversight of artificial intelligence, and how should they be structured to ensure legitimacy and effectiveness?

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