

# **IT for Change's Input at the Virtual Consultation on the Pact for the Future**

**IT for Change**

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## Virtual Consultation on the Pact for the Future

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Good day! My name is Merrin and I represent IT for Change, an India-based NGO that works at the intersections of digital technologies and social justice.

We commend the Rev 1 of the Pact for the Future for firming up the commitment on financing for SDGs particularly the call to fulfil the ODA commitments. This is very crucial to bridge the gaping digital infrastructure and data divide in the world. We also welcome the commitment to conclude a legally binding instrument to prohibit autonomous weapons systems.

However, we would like to flag three critical areas where Rev 1 needs to intensify concrete commitments to ensure that the Pact is effective:

- (i) One, the Pact must call for enacting legislation that enforces a binding duty of care on transnational corporations to protect human rights across the entirety of their value chains, including virtualized business operations.
- (ii) Two, the Pact must explicitly recognize the linkages between the ongoing digital transformation and the exacerbation of the climate crisis, to ensure our adaptation and mitigation strategies are adequate to achieve a sustainable digital transition.
- (ii) Three, the flexibilities in the international intellectual property rights regime should be applied to amplify access to knowledge, benefits of science and innovation, and participation in co-creation of technological innovation ecosystems to further the right to science and innovation and the right to development for all, particularly citizens of developing countries.
- (iv) Four, the Pact must call for evolving regulatory frameworks for AI development, particularly generative AI, to protect knowledge sovereignty of communities— especially indigenous peoples and prevent the erosion of their lifeworlds.

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<sup>1</sup> IT for Change's Research Assistant, Merrin Muhammed Ashraf, made this input at a virtual meeting convened by the co-facilitators of the Summit of the Future—Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN and Permanent Mission of the Republic of Namibia to the UN—on 30 May 2024