

**Global Digital Justice Forum & IT for
Change's Statement — Feedback on
the Zero Draft of the Pact for the
Future with MGoS & Civil Society
Representatives**

IT for Change

February 2024



**Global Digital Justice Forum & IT for Change’s Statement —
Feedback on the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future
with MGoS & Civil Society Representatives**

IT for Change’s Shreeja Sen’s Input

Thank you for the opportunity to present our inputs today. I am Shreeja, here on behalf of the Global Digital Justice Forum and IT for Change, a network of development organizations, digital rights groups, trade unions, feminist groups, corporate watchdogs, and communication rights campaigners led by a digital justice vision.

A global governance framework which accounts for the digital world is more important than ever. In the age of text-to-video AI models like Open AI’s Sora, the last bastion of human cognition — our imagination — is being datafied. The Pact for the Future must engage digitality at every step to ensure that civilizational liberties of thought and expression can be safeguarded.

At the outset, we emphasize that digital considerations permeate every chapter of the Pact and are not housed only within the Science and Tech chapter and the Global Digital Compact, which will be annexed to it. The Summit of the Future, that the UN Secretary General proposed in his report titled “Our Common Agenda”, which is to develop a new global consensus on our future, must account for the prevalence of digitalization in all sectors and aspects of our lives — right from misinformation and gendered violence online, to impact on labor because of increased precarity and gig-ification, or the appropriation of indigenous peoples’ knowledge for AI training, or the large scale data collection that agritech businesses are engaging in from farmers.

So, we believe that the Chapeau of the Pact must call out the significance of digitalization for its impact on the three UN pillars of development, peace and security, and human rights. The Zero draft, as a first step for a common consensus, must do the following:

- It should, under para 14, call out the role of digital transnational companies in digital development and commit to creating frameworks for corporate accountability and liability.
- In para 45, it is important that we recognise and address data power consolidation among select countries and corporations. Data equity and justice call for new policy and legal frameworks, as well as changes to existing ones related to trade, IP, taxation, and international development.
- It is important to note under para 93 the digital and data divide, which makes developing countries mere providers of raw data to global digital platforms, while having to pay for the

digital intelligence obtained from their data. Equitable benefit sharing with providers, especially from the Global South, must be integral to the outcome document.

- Finally, we should look to urgently updating the current human rights framework to accommodate a new class of rights that reflect the new digital paradigm under para 130, which includes the right to the internet, the right to be forgotten, the right to be represented (or not) in digital systems, new labor rights for algorithmic work environments among others.

Thank you.