

**High-Level Discussion on AI and the Future of Sustainable
Development: Innovation, Inclusion and Resilience
at the Margins of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable
Development Goals**

**Organized by Permanent Mission of Pakistan, the Prime
Minister's Youth Programme of Pakistan and Permanent
Mission of Tajikistan**

Concept Note

Date: 15 July 2026

Time: 13:15-14:30 hrs

Venue: United Nations Headquarters, Conference Room 11

Background

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming how societies plan, produce, innovate and deliver services. From smart infrastructure and industrial automation to climate resilience, digital public services, education, health care and entrepreneurship, AI has the potential to accelerate progress across the Sustainable Development Goals. Its relevance is particularly significant for SDG 9, which calls for building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation.

2. For developing countries, AI presents both a major opportunity and a critical policy challenge. If supported by adequate investment, capacity-building, digital infrastructure, financing and inclusive governance, AI can help economies overcome traditional barriers to growth, enhance productivity, strengthen public service delivery and expand opportunities for youth, women and entrepreneurs. However, without equitable access to technology, skills, data capabilities and digital infrastructure, AI could also deepen existing digital, technological and development divides.

3. Pakistan and Tajikistan with their significant youth population and growing technology ecosystem, recognize the importance of preparing young people for the future of work, innovation and entrepreneurship. These efforts aim to enable young people to participate meaningfully in emerging technology sectors and contribute to sustainable economic transformation.

4. The side event will also take place in the broader context of ongoing international discussions on AI governance, including the Global Dialogue on AI Governance and the work of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI. These processes provide an important opportunity to reflect on the social and economic implications of AI, the need to bridge AI capacity gaps, and the importance of ensuring that developing countries are not left behind in shaping and benefiting from emerging technologies. At the same time, the rapid expansion of AI raises important governance, ethical and security considerations. Cybersecurity threats, disinformation, algorithmic bias, data privacy concerns, job displacement and the misuse of emerging technologies by malicious actors require careful deliberation. The central challenge is to ensure that AI is developed and deployed in a manner that is inclusive, transparent, secure, human-centered and aligned with sustainable development priorities.

Objectives

5. The side event will aim to:
- i. Highlight the role of AI in advancing SDG 9, particularly in inclusive industrialization, innovation, resilient infrastructure and sustainable economic growth;
 - ii. Showcase how developing countries can leverage AI and digital technologies to support youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, skills development and innovation ecosystems;

- iii. Provide a platform for deliberation on the policy, ethical, governance and security dimensions of AI, including cybersecurity, disinformation, data protection, algorithmic bias, job displacement and the digital divide;
- iv. Reflect on relevant international discussions on AI governance, including the Global Dialogue on AI Governance and the findings of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI, particularly in relation to bridging the AI divide and addressing the social and economic implications of AI;
- v. Explore ways to strengthen international cooperation, public-private partnerships and knowledge exchange for equitable access to AI technologies, digital infrastructure, financing and capacity-building.

Guiding Questions

- (a) How can AI contribute to the implementation of SDG 9, particularly in promoting inclusive industrialization, resilient infrastructure and innovation in developing countries?
- (b) What policy measures are required to ensure that AI supports sustainable development while reducing, rather than widening, the digital and technological divide?
- (c) How can AI be used to strengthen public service delivery, climate resilience, industrial productivity and social inclusion without leaving vulnerable groups behind?
- (d) How can young people be better equipped with the skills, resources, financing and platforms needed to participate in and lead the AI-driven economy?
- (e) What role can national youth programmes, innovation funds and entrepreneurship platforms play in promoting AI-based solutions for development challenges?
- (f) How can Member States translate the findings of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and discussions under the Global Dialogue on AI Governance into practical measures that address the

social and economic impacts of AI and bridge AI capacity gaps in developing countries?

- (g) What safeguards and partnerships are needed to promote responsible, ethical and inclusive AI governance while addressing cybersecurity threats, disinformation, data privacy concerns, algorithmic bias and the misuse of AI by malicious actors?

Participation

6. The event will bring together Member States, youth representatives, policymakers, government officials, technology experts, private sector actors, academia, civil society and development partners to deliberate on the opportunities and challenges presented by AI for sustainable development.

7. The discussion will focus on innovation, inclusion, resilience, responsible governance and the role of youth in shaping an AI-enabled future for all. By placing young people at the center of AI-driven development, the side event will seek to advance a forward-looking conversation on how emerging technologies can create opportunity, reduce inequalities and support sustainable development in developing countries.