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**Remarks**

**by**

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**at**

**The 6th Annual Leaders on Purpose CEO Summit (Day 2)**

**Salesforce Tower, 1095, 6th Ave, NY 10036**

**[21 September 2023]**

## **Keynote address**

### **Leveraging Generative AI for Good**

Good morning,  
Excellencies,  
Leaders of industry from across the world and across the sectors  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The topic for our discussion, Leveraging AI for Good, could not be more timely, and I would like to congratulate the Leaders on Purpose for hosting this important discussion. Thank you for inviting me to help set the stage for our session that will hopefully trigger creative, insightful and ultimately impactful exchanges.

#### **Discussions at the United Nations**

At the opening of the High level Debate of the 78<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly yesterday, the Secretary-General launched an urgent call for action on the many challenges before the world community. Artificial Intelligence was among the issues that he singled out, observing that “Generative artificial intelligence holds much promise – but it may also lead us across a Rubicon and into more danger than we can control.”

The list of potential threats to human rights is long, and worrisome if left unattended:

- Growing inequalities due to the digital divide.
- Hate speech, disinformation and conspiracy theories on social media platforms that are spread and amplified by AI, undermining democracy and fueling violence and conflict in real life.

- Online surveillance and data harvesting are enabling human rights abuses on a mass scale.

Therefore, **we need regulation** – a call that was voiced loud and clear, both by the Secretary-General and by many of the world’s leaders.

The United Nations has put forward a number of proposals. We need new and innovative forms of governance – with input from experts building this technology and from those monitoring its abuses.

We call this a **Global Digital Compact -- between governments, regional organizations, the private sector and civil society -- to mitigate the risks of digital technologies, and identify ways to harness their benefits for the good of humanity.**

We still have to find the right format for the suitable governance solution. To this end, the Secretary-General will be appointing a **High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence** later this month, which will provide recommendations by the end of this year.

### **AI in the normative work of UNECE**

AI is also a prominent feature in the work of the organization that I head, the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE, for short). It is focusing on normative and standard setting work in different sectors.

We are a convening platform that brings together 56 member states for intergovernmental discussions that are underpinned by the work of some 200 expert bodies that elaborate normative guidance and legal instruments.

We speak of our outputs as “global public goods” – knowledge and good practices that are available to our member States and industry experts to shape sectoral policy and standards that serve as regulatory framework.

The examples are many and very diverse – let me just pick three:

- As the leading UN organization on **inland transport**, UNECE is a pioneer in regulating sustainable and digital mobility, and specifically related to autonomous vehicles. This spans from issues such as cybersecurity, software updates, and data storage, and of course all aspects related to intelligent transport systems, autonomous vehicles and digitalization. We aim to improve traffic safety, environmental performance, energy efficiency, security and efficient service provision in an evolving operational environment.
- In the area of **trade**, we are looking at artificial intelligence from a **product conformity perspective**. Products with integrated can inherently change over time. Thus, we must rethink current compliance models to ensure that our safety regimes remain relevant throughout a product life cycle.
- Another dimension of our work that is dear to my heart is our focus on AI from a perspective of inclusiveness, in this case through the lense of **gender-responsive standards**. AI reflects the society in which it is created and may contain inherent gender biases in its hard coding. Even if the programmers make efforts to ensure that the product treats men and women equally, it may become biased when it learns form other available material.

### Regulatory foresight/private sector engagement

Regardless of the sector or the specific issue, **regulatory foresight** is key to success, as is the **entrepreneurial creativity** and **innovative power** that underpins transformational change. Some forward looking governments in our membership have embraced this approach already, and experiment with foresight exercises, dedicated strategic agendas, and disruptive innovation processes.

But this is a field that needs many and determined contributors. **As Leaders on a Purpose know particularly well - the private sector can be a force for positive change, and we need you at the table.**

In fact, the **private sector needs to take a leading role in ensuring that the transformations we are faced with are actually doing good – and no harm. By harnessing purpose-driven technology and AI, they can catalyze a just transition.** This transition is aligned with the aspirations of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Paris Agreement. We need to embrace AI and technology as instruments that bridge the gap between competitiveness, economic growth, and sustainability, thus championing green and digital shifts that usher societal evolution.

In UNECE, we are forged many effective partnerships with the private sector, including on sustainable and circular practices and innovative funding models.

- We advocate for **Transition Finance**, championing financial flows that bolster high-carbon activities towards a net-zero ambition. This is evident in sustainability-linked bonds and loans, all poised to align

with the Paris Agreement's aspirations.

- Our '**Sustainability Pledge**' offers a tangible toolkit to foster sustainability in the garment and footwear sector, inviting stakeholders to commit and elevate the sector's ethical and environmental benchmarks.
- We work with regulators, miners and circular economy players to create a transparent framework for managing our natural resource endowments, especially **critical raw materials**, fundamental for clean energy, mobility transitions, and digital transformation.
- UNECE is tirelessly working to amplify **sustainable innovative energy solutions**. I'll delve deeper into UNECE's initiatives for just transitions in our upcoming panel.

I invite all of you to bring your creative and innovative potential also to the questions related to Artificial Intelligence.

I am sure today's discussion will be an inspiring springboard to take the conversation forward - together.

I look forward to your ideas.

Thank you.

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