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THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AT 20

Interpretation and Guidance in the Digital Age

Draft Agenda

Date: Thursday, 18 June 2026

Venue: Palais des Nations, Concordia 4 (hybrid)

Duration: 9:00 – 12:00

Convened by: Geneva Human Rights Hub, CNAM, OHCHR, HURIDOCS, Diplo Foundation, UPR Info, FNF, ISHR, Article 19, with Permanent Missions of Estonia and Mexico

Draft Agenda

09:00–09:10 | Welcome and opening remarks

- **Felix Kirchmeier**, *Director, Geneva Human Rights Hub*
- **Anwar Mafoudh**, *Chief, Innovation and Analytics Hub, OHCHR*

09:10–10:25 | Segment 1

Interpreting and Applying Human Rights in the Context of New Technologies: the Council's Guidance Role

Over its first twenty years, the Human Rights Council has repeatedly been called upon to clarify how human rights norms apply to new realities. Digitalisation and AI now require the Council to engage with questions that cut across many areas of its work, from privacy, civic space and freedom of expression to equality, public services, accountability and prevention.

This segment will examine the Council's role in translating the application of established human rights norms to digital contexts. It will consider how the Council, special procedures, the Advisory Committee, OHCHR and other parts of the UN human rights system have addressed new and emerging technologies, including through resolutions such as 53/29 on new and emerging digital technologies and human rights. The discussion will also consider where further guidance may be needed to ensure that digital governance remains anchored in existing human rights standards. For instance, platform regulation is one practical area where the Council's interpretive role is increasingly relevant, with the regulation of content moderation as a key example. As different regulatory models emerge across the world, HRC outputs becomes crucial in informing regulatory approaches that protect rights online while avoiding fragmented, overly technical or insufficiently rights-based responses.

Possible discussion points

- How has the Council approached digital technologies and human rights so far? And what lessons can be drawn from the Advisory Committee's work and from HRC resolution 53/29 on new and emerging digital technologies and human rights?
- How can the Council provide guidance that is sufficiently informed by technological developments without becoming quickly outdated?
- Where is further interpretive clarity needed, including in relation to AI,

surveillance, digital public infrastructure, platform regulation, content moderation and algorithmic discrimination?

· What role should civil society, technical experts, NHRIs, academia and affected communities play in shaping this guidance?

Possible speakers

- **Mari-Liis Vähi**, *Attaché (Human Rights), Permanent Mission of Estonia to the UN in Geneva*
- **Nathalie Stadelmann**, *Human Rights Officer, B-Tech Project, OHCHR*
- **Nicoletta Zappile**, *Deputy Director, UPR Info*
- **Chantal Joris**, *Senior Legal Officer, Article 19*

Moderator: **Stefania di Stefano**, *Postdoctoral Researcher, CNAM*

Guiding question for the segment

How can the Human Rights Council strengthen its role in interpreting and guiding the application of human rights law in digital and AI-driven contexts, including as national and regional models of digital regulation continue to evolve?

10:25–10:40 | Coffee break

10:40–11:55 | Segment 2

Future-proofing the Council's Ecosystem: How Data, Digital Tools and AI Can Strengthen Human Rights Promotion, Protection and Implementation

The second segment will move from the Council's guidance role to the question of institutional practice. Digital transformation is not only changing the subjects addressed by the Council, but also how human rights information is collected, organized, analysed and used for implementation.

This segment will explore how data systems, recommendation-tracking tools and knowledge platforms can support the Council and the wider human rights system. It will consider OHCHR initiatives such as the [HRC Mapper](#), the [National Recommendations Tracking Database \(NRTD\)](#) and the [UN Human Rights Knowledge Gateway](#), while also placing them within a broader ecosystem of digital human rights initiatives, including [UPR Info's Database](#) and HURIDOCs' [Global Human Rights Repository](#).

The discussion will also consider the growing integration of AI into this ecosystem. Used responsibly, AI-supported tools may help manage large volumes of human

rights information, identify patterns across mechanisms, support multilingual access and strengthen evidence-based follow-up. At the same time, they raise important questions around accuracy, bias, transparency, data protection, human oversight and institutional responsibility.

Possible discussion points

- How can digital tools improve the use of HRC outputs, UPR recommendations, special procedures communications and treaty body recommendations?
- How can tools such as the HRC Mapper, the NRTD and the Knowledge Gateway support analysis, tracking, learning and implementation?
- What forms of interoperability are needed between human rights data systems, tracking tools and knowledge platforms?
- How can AI support monitoring and follow-up without replacing human judgement and contextual analysis?
- What safeguards are needed to ensure that digital transformation strengthens, rather than weakens, rights protection?

Possible speakers

- **Akhil Abraham**, *Human Rights Council Secretariat, OHCHR*
- **Adriana Jacinto**, *Coordinator, Dynamic Knowledge and Library Team, OHCHR (online)*
- **Artur Iatsevych** and **Montserrat Saavedra**, *Capacity Building Programme, OHCHR*
- **Tereza Horejsova**, *Director of Partnerships, Diplo Foundation*
- **Anjali Mehta**, *Project Coordinator, Global Repository of Human Rights, HURIDOCS (online)*

Moderator: **Domenico Zipoli**, *Head of Programmes, GHRH*

Guiding question for the segment

How can digital tools, data systems and AI-supported approaches strengthen the Council's future work on implementation, follow-up and prevention, while remaining firmly anchored in human rights safeguards?

11:55–12:00 | Closing reflections