The 12th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda
Implementation of the Mandate and Programme of Work –
Focused Thematic Discussions and Interactive Dialogues
Palais des Nations, Room XVI, Geneva

The impact of AI on creative industries, cultural rights, and the right to development

Tuesday 28 October 2025, 15:00–16:30

Introductory Remarks
Presented by Klentiana Mahmutaj

Please check against delivery

Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues and Friends,

Creativity, cultural rights and development are deeply interlinked. Creativity is at the core of human development. From the early beginnings of our existence, we have told stories through art, music, and language. Whether through cave drawings, verse, or song, we have shared our experiences. We have drawn life lessons and left legacies for future generations, our unique individual expressions becoming part of our collective perception of the world. Humanity has never ceased to create. The right to create in all fields of human life is enshrined in Article 15.3 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Today we have sophisticated creative industries such as publishing, film, music, fashion, design and the arts, which serve as powerful vehicles for self-expression, unfolding identities, languages, beliefs, and values. They are a means of preserving and sharing cultural heritage, fostering innovation, and shaping cultural narratives. Creative industries therefore enable the enjoyment of cultural rights, which are central to development. When creative industries flourish, they can enhance access to culture, support diversity, and make culture rights tangible and accessible.

Cultural rights are also fundamental to sustainable development and social inclusion. Every human being and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy cultural development in which all human rights are realized. This is particularly important for indigenous people, minority groups, women, people with disabilities, and migrant communities. Supporting creative industries in these communities helps preserve endangered languages, share diverse worldviews, and strengthen social cohesion.

The integration of AI into creative industries is rapidly reshaping the ways in which art is created, disseminated, and consumed. AI can amplify creativity by assisting creators and promoting their work, as well as by expanding public access to cultural life. However, it can also undermine creators' work, for example, by using their output to generate new content, copies or imitations that are presented for public consumption. This may erode the economic rights of creators and narrow the diversity of cultural expressions in digital spaces, among other risks.

Currently, the regulatory landscape is fragmented, and the enforceability of existing safeguards is an increasing question. Non-binding undertakings and international pledges often appear toothless in the face of the rapid evolution and growing power of the AI industry. Today, we will seek to explore the risks and opportunities posed by AI in the cultural and creative sectors and to identify specific impacts on artists and creators and in turn, on cultural rights and the right to development. We'll also try and

discuss how these risks can be mitigated in a manner that upholds cultural rights and promotes the equitable realization of the right to development. These are some of the guiding questions.

How is AI currently shaping creative industries?

Do AI systems currently pose an existential threat to creative industries? If so, how?

How does AI change the creativity landscape and with it the enjoyment of cultural rights?

What risks does AI pose to cultural diversity, freedom of artistic expression, and the economic and moral rights of creators, particularly in the context where legal and policy protections are limited?

Are creators in the Global South at higher risk than those in the Global North?

How much power should AI systems and those who control them have?

Are the current regulatory and policy tools at national and international level adequate? If not, what else can be done?

Thank you.

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