

**Forum:** General Assembly Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)

**Issue:** Establishing frameworks on the use of AI-created content in political campaigns to uphold democratic values

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## Introduction

Artificial Intelligence automatically considers and objectifies all elements of any platform, IP development fields, and industry options for the applications through which technical implementations start. Such technology generally allowed through technical innovations in generative AI to produce materials that might be confronting and/or possibly for democracy if brought into political campaigns. The fears center on the manipulation of information through artificially created content, with deepfakes being a particular concern, electoral integrity, and manipulation of voters-the erosion of trust in democratic institutions. This requires the international community to establish frameworks that focus on the balance between technological innovation and various democratic values-building blocks of transparency, fairness, and informed citizen participation. The flaw lies in creating viable governance that settles conflicting interests in regulating AI-created content in political campaigns, particularly to cultivate freedom of expression and encourage beneficial use of these technologies.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence is the technology by which we enable computers to do tasks that normally require human intelligence. The tasks under this label are understanding speech, image recognition, decision making, and learning from experience. In simpler terms, whenever your phone recognizes your face to unlock, or a site suggests products to you, then that's AI in action. In political campaigns, big data sets gone through by AI give indications on which voters to target



and what message might convince these voters. Campaign speeches might be AI-generated; marketers can create campaign videos with it; chatbots use AI to answer voters' questions automatically.

## Generative AI

Generative AI replicates AI systems that can create human-like content. This technology first learns the patterns from the existing content and then generates something similar but completely new. For example, a generative AI can write essays, create realistic images of people who do not exist, I guess compose music, or generate videos from given text descriptions. In political campaigns, generative AI can create campaign ads, write personalized emails to voters, generate images of candidates appearing to do things or being at places, really and unreal pictures, and fake videos of political events that never happened. To name a few, ChatGPT is the text-based competitor of DALL-E for the image. There are voice cloning tools by which you can clone the voice of somebody after just listening to a few seconds of that person's speech.

## Deepfakes

Deepfakes refer to artificial videos, images, or audio recordings wherein the face or voice of a person is substituted with that of another individual to make it seem as if that individual said or did something that he or she never actually did. Applying the most advanced AI techniques, deepfakes analyze existing videos and images of two persons, learning how their faces move and what their voices sound like. For instance: Deepfakes could show a political candidate appearing to make an offensive statement he or she never made. Deepfakes pose a dangerous threat to political campaigns. Once released, these videos can propagate very fast on social media, attacking candidates' reputation before anyone can prove the videos fake. The better the technology gets, the harder it gets for laymen to discern what is genuine versus what is fake.

## Electrical Integrity

Electoral integrity refers to the fairness, accuracy, and transparency of the entire election process, from voter registration to vote counting and result reporting. When an election has integrity, it truly represents what the voters wanted, free from



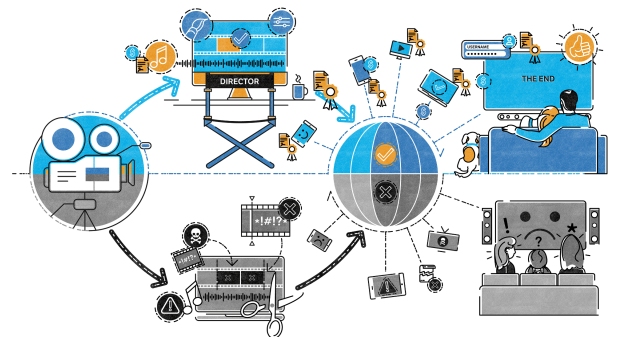
manipulation, fraud, or undue influence. For example, electoral integrity means that all eligible citizens can vote without intimidation, that votes are counted accurately, and that the results reflect the genuine will of the voters. AI-generated content can threaten electoral integrity by spreading false information about candidates, creating confusion about when and where to vote, or undermining trust in the electoral system itself. In recent elections worldwide, false information spread through AI tools has led to voter confusion and diminished trust in democratic institutions.

### Digital Disinformation

Digital disinformation is false information that is deliberately created and shared to deceive people, often for political advantage or financial gain. Unlike misinformation, which may be spread by mistake, disinformation is intentionally misleading. For example, a fabricated news story claiming a candidate has committed a crime, fake statistics about government performance, or manipulated videos showing events that never occurred are all forms of disinformation. In the digital age, AI tools can create disinformation that is extremely convincing and can produce it at massive scale, targeting specific groups of voters with customized misleading content. This makes disinformation campaigns more powerful and harder to combat than ever before, as they can be tailored to exploit the specific fears and concerns of different voter groups.

### Content Provenance

According to content-provenance systems, producers verify origin and creation, possibly its changes. Therefore, it is considered a digital passport that accompanies the content from creation to distribution, documenting the route and the modifications. Content-provenance technology could reveal whether a campaign video has been created using AI, if an image has



been edited, or whether contextual manipulations have been made with an audio clip. Powerful content-provenance systems will grant voters the opportunity to check if a controversial video of a candidate is legitimate or manipulative AI-generated. Such systems will work by creating a verifiable record of the origin and history of content through mechanisms such as digital watermarking, cryptographic signatures, or blockchain technology, thereby helping people determine genuine verses manipulated political content.

## Background Information

### The emergence of AI in political campaigns

The use of technology in political campaigns has never been new, but AI, in particular, has considerably increased and transformed the relationship between technology and politics. The first interfacing of AI and politics came through data analytics to target voters more accurately. But with the incredibly fast advances in AI since about 2020-2022-especially generative AI-the scale and speed with which campaigns could start churning out persuasive and personalized content almost for free went through the roof. By 2023, generative AI could have realistic video of someone saying something, voice-cloning the same, or writing content that went from hard to easier to hard to distinguish from human-made content. That leap in technology served as opportunities to engage voters and, simultaneously, posed serious challenges to information integrity in the democratic process.



### The dual nature of AI in political campaigns

AI technologies can really benefit political campaigns, including improving voter engagement through personalized communication, efficient resource allocation, and providing access for poor candidates. AI technology may allow candidates to interact with voters in their preferred languages and format, thereby making politics more inclusive.



These technologies, on the other hand, can be used to mass-produce deceptive content, including deepfakes or falsified images, thereby eroding trust in electoral systems and democratic institutions themselves. This dual nature drives the need for frameworks that can foster beneficial applications while curbing harmful uses.

### Rising concerns about AI-generated misinformation

With ever-advancing AI-generated content, the world began to worry whether it could belittle democratic discourse. Unlike usual misinformation or disinformation, AI-generated content seems able to develop at scale and put on a personalized presentation-mainly persuasive and convincing. During the 2023-24 election cycles, elections having occurred in more than 70 countries and including 43 democracies, more than one instance of widespread AI-generated fake content ranged from fabricated voice-recordings of candidates, through manipulated images and videos falsely showing candidates performing inappropriate conduct or making inappropriate statements. Such incidents brought into focus the inability of the current regulatory frameworks to meet the challenges brought by AI in political communication.

### Current regulatory landscape

The international response to AI-generated content on political campaigns has been quite scattered and uneven. While certain nations and continents have started making regulations for this purpose, plenty of countries still have no serious policy framework in place to deal with this matter. The role of governance was best played by Europe with the passing of their seminal AI Act in 2023, making a provision for transparency in political advertising using AI. A few democratic countries, too, have made it mandatory to disclose the AI in content for political communication. That said, the governance void is huge all across the world because, as stipulated by the UN High-level Advisory Body on AI, by 2024, 118 members of the UN have chosen to abstain from international governance initiatives relating to AI.

## Major Countries and Organizations Involved

### European Union

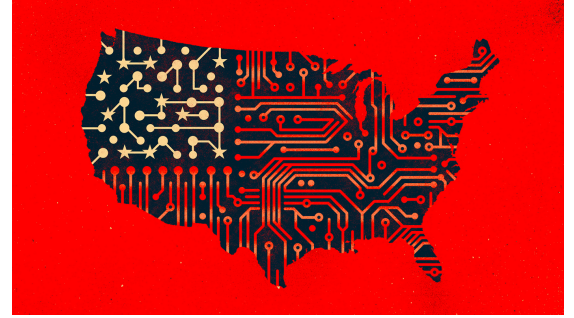
Through the enactment of the AI Act in 2024, the European Union has positioned itself as a global leader in AI regulation. To be more specific, the EU has dealt with political campaigns



by requiring transparency and clear disclosures for AI-generated political communication, while strictly regulating manipulative techniques. The Digital Services Act, in a complementary manner, requires online platforms to take action against disinformation, which also includes AI-generated content.

## United States

The regime and governance of artificial intelligence in political campaigns have met a fragmented administration, combining initiatives at the federal and state levels. As of early 2024, a handful of states requiring the disclosure of AI-generated material in ads for the political arena have come into being, while federal agencies such as the Federal Election Commission issued guidance on how the existing law applies to new AI technologies. The United States has also been at the forefront of supporting international diplomatic initiatives, including the sponsorship of the UN resolution on AI adopted in March 2024.



## China

China has established a comprehensive regulatory framework for AI emphasizing security and social stability, including specific provisions against political content generated by AI. The Chinese approach to AI governance is more political, placing a focus on content regulation and platform accountability, which requires that tech companies implement stringent requirements to detect and tag any political content generated through AI.

## UNESCO

UNESCO has been an important player in creating ethical principles for AI, as it adopted the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in 2021, the first-ever global standard on the ethics of AI. The framework lays emphasis on human rights, transparency, and fairness and acts as a guide for its member states in developing policy. UNESCO has also issued policy materials on the use of AI with elections and thus considers it very important to maintain democratic integrity when confronted by technological change.

## International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance)



As an intergovernmental organization in support of democratic processes worldwide, International IDEA has put forward guidelines and technical assistance programs to assist electoral management bodies in responding to challenges posed by AI-generated content. Their work is in building capacities to detect and respond to manipulated political content and strengthening public resilience against AI-driven disinformation.

### ITU (International Telecommunication Union)

The ITU, a specialized agency of the United Nations, has been a platform for international discussions on technical standards to mark AI-generated content. On the AI for Good platform, ITU has organized the participation of experts in efforts to develop technical solutions relating to content authentication and watermarking at the digital level, which could, for instance, apply to political campaigns.

### Timeline of Events

<b>November 2019</b>	<b>First documented case of an AI-generated deepfake used in a national election campaign (in Asia), raising international awareness of the potential threat</b>
<b>November 2021</b>	<b>UNESCO adopts the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, the first global standard on AI ethics applicable to all 194 member states</b>
<b>February 2022</b>	<b>International IDEA publishes its first comprehensive guidelines on addressing AI-generated misinformation in electoral processes</b>





<b>May 2023</b>	<b>Council of Europe adopts guidelines on the use of AI in political campaigns, emphasizing transparency requirements</b>
<b>July 2023</b>	<b>UN Security Council holds its first-ever high-level briefing dedicated to artificial intelligence and its implications for international peace and security</b>
<b>December 2023</b>	<b>G20 nations issue joint declaration acknowledging the need for international cooperation on AI governance in political processes</b>
<b>February 2024</b>	<b>UN Secretary-General establishes High-level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence to develop recommendations for global AI governance</b>
<b>March 2024</b>	<b>UN General Assembly adopts first resolution on AI, emphasizing "safe, secure, and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems"</b>
<b>May 2024</b>	<b>European Union's AI Act is approved, including specific provisions on political advertising and campaign content</b>





<b>July 2024</b>	<b>Coalition of 50+ countries endorse principles for responsible use of AI in democratic processes at Global Democracy Summit</b>
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## Relevant UN Resolutions and Other Documents

- UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021) - Establishes fundamental principles for ethical AI development and use, including transparency, accountability, and privacy protection that directly apply to political contexts. (Link: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/recommendation-ethics-artificial-intelligence>)
- UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/78/277 "Promotion of inclusive and effective international cooperation on artificial intelligence" (March 2024) - First UN resolution specifically addressing AI, emphasizing the importance of governing AI systems in accordance with human rights standards. (Link: <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/78/277>)
- Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, "Governing AI for Humanity" (2023) - Provides a comprehensive assessment of AI governance gaps and recommends a framework for international cooperation on AI governance. (Link: [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/governing\\_ai\\_for\\_humanity\\_final\\_report\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/governing_ai_for_humanity_final_report_en.pdf))
- United Nations System White Paper on AI Governance (2024) - Analyzes institutional models, functions, and existing international frameworks applicable to global AI governance, including applications in political contexts. (Link: <https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/United%20Nations%20System%20White%20Paper%20on%20AI%20Governance.pdf>)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) - While predating AI technologies, this foundational human rights instrument establishes principles for free and fair elections and access to information that remain relevant to AI regulation. (Link: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>)



- Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Articles 19 and 21 establish rights to freedom of expression and participation in government, which must be balanced in any framework for AI in political campaigns. (Link: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>)

## Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

- Technical approaches to content verification

Several initiatives have focused on developing technical mechanisms for labeling and identifying AI-generated content. The Content Authenticity Initiative started in 2019, and has since worked on developing open technical standards for certifying the origin and history of media content. The Coalition for Content Provenance and Authenticity (C2PA) also maintains technical specifications for content provenance that could assist in the identification of manipulated political content. These initiatives have given rise to the technical frameworks of digital watermarking and content authentication, yet face significant hurdles in growing adoption and standardization.

- Industry self-regulation

Due to the voluntary nature of working policies about AI-generated political content, some major firms involving AI and others involving social media, chose to keep policies voluntary. In 2023, major AI developers agreed to a voluntary commitment to work on safeguards against deceptive AI-generated content, including tools to detect and label AI-created political materials. Social media platforms have kept a policy that requirements for disclosure of synthetic content be implemented and further established special monitoring programs during election periods. However, this self-regulatory approach is nonuniform and lacks enforcement mechanisms, failing to ensure incorporation.

- National legislative efforts

There have been several laws with AI applications banned in political campaigns. For example, in the United States, several state legislations were passed requiring the



advertisement of any political advertisement that was AI-generated. Another example was when Brazil updated its electoral laws in 2023 to deal with deepfakes in political campaigns that would require clear labeling of any synthetic content. While these national approaches demonstrate the growing recognition of the problems, they also dramatize the inability of a fragmented regulatory approach to deal with an issue of global technological stature.

- Regional frameworks

The European Union has spearheaded regional efforts with its AI Act and Code of Practice on Disinformation to create a comprehensive regulatory framework addressing AI in political contexts. The Council of Europe has also created guidelines for using AI in the electoral process, emphasizing transparency and accountability. These regional approaches can be considered models for international frameworks, yet they face enforcement challenges across borders and harmonization at the global level.

- Educational and awareness campaigns

Media literacy programs have been implemented by various organizations to assist voters in distinguishing AI-generated content; UNESCO's own Media and Information Literacy initiatives have been expanded to include specific components on synthetic media, while the International Foundation for Electoral Systems has developed training programs for electoral management bodies on how to deal with AI-driven disinformation. These measures, while providing long-term resilience, do need heavy investments and often lack accessibility to the most vulnerable.

## Possible Solutions

### International framework for content transparency

An international framework setting forth clear, standardized disclosure requirements for AI-generated content in political campaigns would serve transparency without unduly restricting freedom of expression. This might comprise labeling requirements for synthetic content, standardized formats for disclosure, and definitions that are agreed upon specifying what constitutes AI-generated political material. Such a framework would benefit from a



multi-stakeholder approach with governments, tech companies, civil society, and international organizations to guarantee effectiveness and adaptability.

### Technical standards for content authentication

Development and implementation of universal technical standards for content authentication would help stakeholders authenticate sources and records of modification of political content. These may include digital watermarking, cryptographic signatures, or distributed ledger technologies for irreversible records of content provenance. Bodies such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) might develop these standards, while governments may require implementation for political communications.

### Strengthened platform accountability

Clearer responsibilities for digital platforms concerning AI-created political content would address a key point of intervention. These may, among others, require digital platforms to apply strong content provenance systems, establish transparent algorithms for synthetic content identification, create special monitoring mechanisms during election periods, and cooperate with election management bodies. A balanced approach would respect innovation while ensuring that platforms share some responsibility in the distribution of content.

### Enhanced international cooperation on enforcement

International cooperation mechanisms for enforcement would aid in addressing the cross-border nature of digital political campaigns. Such mechanisms may set up communication channels between national regulatory authorities; devise protocols for cross-border investigations; incubate joint databases of known manipulated content; and develop coordinated responses to transnational disinformation campaigns. Such cooperation could be promoted by regional organizations or specialized UN agencies.

### Capacity building for electoral management bodies

Developing comprehensive capacity-building programs for institutions of electoral management would enhance their responses towards AI-generated content. This could involve train-the-trainers sessions on tools for detecting such content; development of



protocols for response; establishment of units dedicated to monitoring digital content; and implementing systems for collaboration with technical expertise. International organizations such as UNDP and International IDEA could provide targeted assistance to support such efforts.

### Comprehensive approach to media literacy

Disseminating media literacy programs are built around identification of AI-generated content as a resilience-building factor against manipulation. This could be working on curricula, public awareness campaigns, outreach to vulnerable segments, and creation of easy access verification tools. Existing frameworks by UNESCO for media literacy could be extended to cover synthetic political content.

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