Change the World MUN
Paris 2026

Powered by
Associazione Diplomatici

BACKGROUND GUIDE

GA

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CHANGE THE WORLD ACADEMY

The Biggest Model United Nations in the World

Distinguished Delegates,

Welcome to the 2026 Change the World Model United Nations (CWMUN).

As your committee Dais, we are looking forward to meeting you and hearing your ideas about how to solve international problems.

The United Nations (UN) depends on the cooperation and goodwill of its 193 member States. Because each State has unique interests and concerns, it is challenging to write, negotiate and pass resolutions. Every stage of the process demands creativity and diplomacy.

By reading this Background Guide, you are taking the first step in a journey that goes far beyond preparing for a conference. Over the coming weeks, you will analyse one of the most pressing global challenges of our time, understand how governments and international organisations respond to it, and learn how diplomats transform ideas into international action.
This guide is not meant to provide all the answers. Its purpose is to help you ask better questions, because diplomacy is not about knowing everything. It is about making responsible decisions with the best information available.

Remember: every solution begins with informed leadership.

You will be discussing this topic:

Is "Digital Censorship" Justified to Prevent Misinformation in Education, or Is It a New Form of Authoritarian Control?"

While we may all lead different lives and face different struggles, we have to bear in mind that we all share the same world and the same resources. Whether it is environmental problems or political unrest, what is happening in the world concerns all of us. Only through mutual understanding, unity, and collaboration can we lay the foundations of a worthier world.

As your committee Dais, we will work to keep the committees running smoothly. We will do our best to help you understand the procedures and to ensure that the perspectives of all delegates are heard and respected.

Sincerely,

The CWMUN Staff Board



What is this activity about?

The Change the World Model United Nations is a role-playing game. Your task is to impersonate a diplomat of the assigned Country and present the perspective of this Country's current government.

What should you do now?

Before the Simulation, you should:

☐ Create your handbook, a collection of relevant UN resolutions, reports, academic studies, and news from reliable media.

☐ Write the Position Paper, describing the position of your country on the topic you have been assigned to.

☐ Prepare some topics for Moderated Caucus debates, i.e. short formal debates which cover narrow aspects of each topic. For example, within the topic "Violence against women"; delegates can hold a caucus with the subtopic "Ways of preventing genital mutilation".

☐ Think about some ideas for the Resolution, at least two or three clauses that your State would like to include in the main body of the Resolution.

☐ Learn and practice the Rules of Procedure.

Why does this Background Guide Matters?

The strongest delegates are not those who memorise the greatest number of facts, but those who understand the issue from different perspectives.

As you read this guide, challenge yourself to think critically: ask why different countries defend different positions, identify competing priorities, question assumptions, and begin developing your own strategic understanding of the topic.

Remember: You are not preparing to pass an exam; you are preparing to participate in an international negotiation.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this experience, you should be able to:

- Understand the international context surrounding the topic
- Explain your country's official position
- Develop evidence-based policy proposals
- Negotiate with other delegations
- Build consensus
- Translate ideas into diplomatic action
- Think like an analyst, not just a reader.

Tips (!)

Before attending the simulation, go beyond this Background Guide. Explore official UN documents, government statements, reports by international organisations, academic research, reliable news sources. Ask yourself: has the situation changed since this guide was written? Real diplomacy requires continuous learning. Learn about your Country from the official website of your State's permanent mission to the United Nations, and from other government websites (for example, the website and social media profiles of the Royal Family or President, Prime Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs...). Make sure to know as much as possible about the foreign relations of your Country! Consider that at the United Nations, Countries generally lean towards their own geopolitical blocs: Western, Former Soviet, African, Middle Eastern, Asian, Latin American... Consider also organisations such as the European Union (EU), the African Union, the Arab League, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Union of South American Nations (USAN)...

REMEMBER!

Your task is to present the official position of your assigned Country. Misrepresenting this position and/or representing your private views is against the rules, even if you do not agree with your Country's position. In any case, you must not hyperbolize nor satirise the position of your Country. Humour, and especially sarcasm, is generally not typical for formal writing nor formal debates. Although MUN welcomes wit and smart puns, please always be extremely considerate when using humour.

Think Like a Diplomat

As you prepare for the conference, do not ask only: “What does my country think?”, but also ask: “Why does my country think this?”. And even more importantly: “How can different countries move from disagreement to cooperation?”.

Because diplomacy is not about defending positions. It is about building solutions.

General Assembly

Historical Background and Establishment of the GA:

The establishment of the United Nations General Assembly was the result of the international community's desire to prevent another global conflict after the Second World War and demonstrated the need for a strong international organisation.

During the preparatory negotiations held at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference (1944) and later at the Yalta Conference (1945)[1], the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China designed the framework of the future United Nations, while France joined as one of the sponsoring powers before the San Francisco Conference.[2] At the United Nations Conference on International Organization, held in San Francisco between April and June 1945, representatives of 50 states negotiated and adopted the Charter of the United Nations.[3] The General Assembly was established as one of the six principal organs of the Organization, embodying the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States by granting each state one vote.[4]

One of the main challenges during its creation concerned the balance of power between the General Assembly and the Security Council. While smaller states advocated for a stronger and more democratic Assembly, the major Allied powers insisted on assigning primary responsibility for international peace and security to the Security Council, including the veto power of its five permanent members.

---

[1] United Nations. (n.d.). Preparatory Years: UN Charter History. United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un/preparatory-years

[2] United Nations. (n.d.). The San Francisco Conference. United Nations; United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un/san-francisco-conference

[3] United Nations. (1945). UN charter. United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter

[4] United Nations. (2025). History of the United Nations. United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un

The General Assembly is now composed of all 193 Member States of the United Nations, and it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion on the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter. It also plays a central role in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law.

The Assembly regularly meets from September to December each year (main part), and thereafter, from January to September (resumed part) as required in order to take up outstanding reports from the Fourth and Fifth Committees. During the resumed part of the session, the Assembly also considers current issues in high-level thematic debates organised by the President of the General Assembly. During that period, the Assembly traditionally also conducts informal consultations on a wide range of substantive topics towards the adoption of new resolutions[5].

As hinted before, the UN GA has six Standing Committees, which all discuss specific topics:

I. Disarmament and Security
II. Economic and Financial
III. Social, Humanitarian and Cultural
IV. Special Political and Decolonisation
V. Administrative and Budgetary
VI. Legal

Each of the 193 Member States in the Assembly has one vote. Votes taken on designated important issues – such as recommendations on peace and security, the election of Security Council and Economic and Social Council members, and budgetary questions – require a two-thirds majority of Member States, but other questions are decided by a simple majority. That said, following informal consultations among Member States during which proposals are negotiated, the majority of resolutions are adopted without a vote (i.e., by consensus).

[5] Functions and powers of the General Assembly

Mandate, Structure and Core functions:

The Assembly makes recommendations to States on international issues within its competence. It has also taken actions across all pillars of the United Nations, including concerning political, economic, humanitarian, social, and legal matters. In September 2015, the Assembly agreed on a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals[6], contained in the outcome document of the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1 entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development). In 2022, the Assembly held a series of meetings to discuss the recommendations put forward by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "Our Common Agenda"[7], an agenda of action, designed to strengthen and accelerate multilateral agreements – particularly the 2030 Agenda – and make a tangible difference in people's lives.[8]

According to the Charter of the United Nations[9], the General Assembly may:

- Consider and approve the United Nations budget and establish the financial assessments of Member States.
- Elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council and the members of other United Nations councils and organs and, on the recommendation of the Security Council, appoint the Secretary-General
- Consider and make recommendations on the general principles of cooperation to maintain international peace and security, including disarmament
- Discuss any question related to international peace and security and, except where a dispute or situation is currently being discussed by the Security Council, make recommendations on it
- Discuss, with the same exception, and make recommendations on any questions within the scope of the Charter or affecting the powers and functions of any organs of the United Nations

[6] United Nations. (2015). The 17 sustainable development goals. United Nations. https://sdgs.un.org/goals
[7] Our Common Agenda | United Nations
[8] Letter from the President of the General Assembly – Final OCA Summary | General Assembly of the United Nations
[9] United Nations. (1945). UN charter. United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter

- ➢ Initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and international collaboration in the economic, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational and health fields
- ➢ Make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation that might impair friendly relations among countries
- ➢ Consider reports from the Security Council and other United Nations organs[10]

Although the General Assembly plays a central role in global governance, its powers are subject to legal and political limitations. Unlike the Security Council, the Assembly generally cannot adopt legally binding decisions for Member States on matters of peace and security and it cannot impose sanctions or authorize the use of force. Its resolutions are mostly recommendatory and derive their effectiveness from the political support and voluntary implementation of Member States. However, the Assembly exercises significant influence by adopting resolutions and declarations, promoting the development and codification of international law, establishing subsidiary bodies, approving the United Nations budget and serving as the most representative forum for international dialogue and consensus-building. These instruments enable the Assembly to shape international norms and coordinate global action, even when it lacks direct enforcement powers.[11]

Major Actions and Historical Impact:

The General Assembly has been passing several resolutions since its foundation in 1946. To pass, GA resolutions need to be voted by a simple majority (e.g. 50 percent of all votes plus one). Some of the most remarkable are:

- Resolution 1 (1946): Established the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (UNAEC)[12] "to deal with the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy" and tasked it to "make specific proposals...for the elimination from national armaments of atomic

[10] United Nations. (2015). Functions and powers of the General Assembly. United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml

[11] United Nations. (2024). General Assembly of the United Nations. United Nations; United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/ga/

[12] Atomic Energy | United Nations

weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction", among other issues regarding nuclear technology.[13]

- Resolution 96 (1946): issuing the crime of Genocide[14]
- Resolution 100 (1946): establishing the Headquarters of the UN
- Resolution 177 (1947): The International Law Commission was directed to "formulate the principles of international law recognised in the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal and in the judgment of the Tribunal". This resulted in the creation of the Nuremberg Principles.[15]
- Resolution 217 (1947): Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[16]
- Resolution 498 (1951): calling on the People's Republic of China to cease all hostilities on the Korean peninsula... its armed forces continue their invasion of Korea and their large-scale attacks upon United Nations forces there...has itself engaged in aggression in Korea.[17]
- Resolution 1962 (1963): One of the earliest resolutions governing Outer space.[18]
- Resolution 3010 (1972): Adopted to make the year 1975 International Women's Year.[19]
- Resolution 60/7 (2005): designated the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.
- Resolution ES-11/4 (2022): Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.[20]

Moreover throughout its history, the General Assembly has significantly contributed to the development of international law, the promotion of human rights and the establishment of global political norms. Among its greatest achievements are the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948[21], which became the foundation of the international human rights system, the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[22], and its role in supporting

---

[13] Resolution 1 (1946) / (un.org)
[14] The Crime of Genocide. (un.org)
[15] Affirmation of the Principles of International Law recognized by the Charter of the Nürnberg Tribunal General Assembly resolution 95 (I)
[16] A/RES/3/217 A - Universal Declaration of Human Rights - UN Documents: Gathering a body of global agreements (un-documents.net)
[17] Uniting for Peace General Assembly resolution 377 (V)
[18] RES 1962 (XVIII) (unoosa.org)
[19] A/RES/27/3010 - International Women's Year - UN Documents: Gathering a body of global agreements (un-documents.net)
[20] N2263066.pdf (un.org)
[21] United Nations. (1948, December 10). Universal Declaration of Human Rights. United Nations. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights
[22] United Nations. (2015). The 17 sustainable development goals. United Nations. https://sdgs.un.org/goals

decolonisation and the fight against apartheid. The Assembly has also demonstrated its capacity to respond to major international crises through Emergency Special Sessions under the "Uniting for Peace" resolution, including those concerning Hungary (1956), the Suez Crisis (1956), Afghanistan (1980), and more recently Ukraine (2022).[23]

However, the General Assembly also faces important limitations. Since most of its resolutions are not legally binding, their implementation depends largely on the political will of Member States. This has often reduced its effectiveness in preventing or ending armed conflicts, particularly when major powers have conflicting interests.

Despite these constraints, the General Assembly remains the most representative forum of the United Nations and continues to play a fundamental role in building international consensus, promoting dialogue and influencing the evolution of international law.

Current Relevance and Ongoing Challenges:

There has been a sustained effort to make the work of the General Assembly more focused and relevant. This was first identified as a priority during the 58th session, and efforts continued at subsequent sessions to streamline the agenda, improve the practices and working methods of the Main Committees, enhance the role of the General Committee, strengthen the role and authority of the President and examine the Assembly's role in the process of selecting the Secretary-General.

During recent sessions, the Assembly adopted landmark resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/RES/70/305[24], A/RES/71/323, A/RES/72/313[25], A/RES/73/341[26], A/RES/74/303[27]) and A/RES/75/325[28]), which, amongst other, established an oath of office and a

[23] United Nations. (n.d.). General Assembly of the United Nations. Www.Un.Org. https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/emergency.shtml
[24] ts (F) (un.org)
[25] N1828962.pdf (un.org)
[26] N1927990.pdf (un.org)
[27] N2023117.pdf (un.org)
[28] N2125062.pdf (un.org)

code of ethics for the Presidents of the General Assembly and provided for informal interactive dialogues with candidates for the position of President of the General Assembly.

The practice of convening high-level thematic debates is also a direct outcome of the revitalisation process.[29]It has become an established practice for the Secretary-General to brief Member States periodically, in informal meetings of the General Assembly, on his recent activities and travels. These briefings have provided a well-received opportunity for exchange between the Secretary-General and Member States.

Today, the General Assembly addresses some of the most pressing global challenges, including armed conflicts, climate change, sustainable development, global health, human rights, migration and the regulation of emerging technologies. However, its effectiveness is often constrained by increasing political polarisation among Member States. Diverging positions between countries frequently make it difficult to achieve broad consensus on sensitive issues such as international sanctions, Security Council reform and the interpretation of international law. These geopolitical tensions have intensified diplomatic negotiations within the Assembly, making consensus-building more complex while reinforcing the importance of the General Assembly as the only universal forum where all Member States can participate on an equal basis. For these reasons, the General Assembly remains highly relevant in addressing contemporary global challenges and promoting cooperation among States.[30]

Future Outlook and Questions for Delegates:

As the United Nations General Assembly continues to address the growing impact of digital technologies on education and access to information, it will need to adapt to an increasingly complex global landscape. The rapid evolution of Artificial Intelligence, social media platforms, and online information ecosystems raises difficult challenges about how to safeguard fundamental

[29] Revitalization of the General Assembly of the United Nations

[30] Kandt, K. (2017, February 6). UN General Assembly Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform. General Assembly of the United Nations. https://www.un.org/pga/71/2017/02/06/un-general-assembly-intergovernmental-negotiations-on-security-council-reform/

rights, including freedom of expression, access to information, privacy, and the right to education, while harnessing the benefits of emerging technologies.

The United Nations General Assembly work on digital governance will increasingly be shaped by two major reform agendas: the Pact for the Future[31], adopted in 2024, and the UN80 Initiative[32], launched to mark the United Nations' eightieth anniversary. Through the Pact for the Future, Member States committed to building a more effective, inclusive, and future-oriented multilateral system, recognizing that emerging technologies, artificial intelligence, and the integrity of the global information space have become central issues for international peace, sustainable development, and human rights. Its annexes, the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations, establish a long-term framework for international cooperation on digital governance in order to leave a lasting and tangible legacy for the generations to come.[33] Building upon these political commitments, the UN80 Initiative represents the implementation phase of this broader vision. The initiative is intended to reinforce the United Nations' capacity to respond to emerging global challenges by promoting a more effective, agile, and results-oriented Organization. As digital technologies continue to reshape societies worldwide, the General Assembly will be called upon to translate political commitments into concrete measures, monitor progress in their implementation, and ensure that the UN's institutional framework evolves in line with new technological realities.[34]

Against this background, delegates should consider whether the current international framework is sufficient to address the growing tension between combating misinformation and protecting fundamental freedoms.

- Should the General Assembly encourage the adoption of common international principles on digital content moderation in educational settings, or should these decisions remain primarily within the jurisdiction of individual States?

[31] "Home | Pact for the Future," n.d., https://www.un.org/pact-for-the-future/en.
[32] "Home | UN80 Initiative," n.d., https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/en.
[33] United Nations Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations. (2024). https://www.un.org/pact-for-the-future/en
[34] United Nations UN80 Initiative. (2025). https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/en

- Where should the international community draw the line between legitimate measures to protect students from harmful misinformation and policies that risk becoming instruments of censorship or authoritarian control?
- How can governments, technology companies, educators, and civil society cooperate to promote information integrity without creating mechanisms that could be used for censorship or political control?

Is “Digital Censorship” Justified to Prevent Misinformation in Education, or Is It a New Form of Authoritarian Control?"

Introduction and Context of the topic

Misinformation and disinformation have become one of the most significant public challenges of the 21st century, affecting both online and offline networks. To truly understand the relevance of this issue and its impact on childhood and education, it is fundamental to clarify the meaning of the terms we use according to the frame of the United Nation. Misinformation refers to incorrect or misleading information shared without the intention to deceive, while disinformation is false information intentionally created and distributed to manipulate or cause harm to individuals and groups.[35] The practices described by these definitions cover a wide spectrum, as do their effects. While satire and parody are relatively harmless or at most irritating, other forms of mis/disinformation can have serious real-world consequences, including inciting violence against minorities and contributing to the displacement of children. Manipulated or entirely fabricated contents have been identified as the most dangerous, mainly because they can produce distrust towards science or public institutions, and can be used to influence politics or generate an economic profit from lies.[36]

Since children are growing up in a highly connected digital environment, they are regularly exposed to mis/disinformation, making it an important issue in their daily lives.

[35] S. VOSLOO. *Digital misinformation/disinformation and children*. (2021). UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/stories/digital-misinformationdisinformation-and-children

[36] *Digital misinformation/disinformation and children*. (2021). UNICEF Office of Global Insight and Policy. https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/856/file/UNICEF-Global-Insight-Digital-Mis-Disinformation-and-Children-2021.pdf

The exposure of this vulnerable category to deceptive and misleading information, may have serious consequences on their development, well-being and rights.[37] The risks are multiple and potentially harmful, considering that being continuously in contact with an uninterrupted flow of fake news may undermine the capacity to distinguish between reality and fiction and may threaten the trust in journalism and even in democracy.[38] When fake news threatens to be included and shape the educational paths of entire generations of human beings, the matter needs to be urgently discussed on an international scale.

That's why a new form of digital censorship has been evoked as a solution to this crucial issue. The term "digital censorship", also referred to as "internet censorship", is used to describe the intentional restriction or blocking of access to online resources and digital services, apparently in contrast with the principles of an open internet and with the right of access to information.[39] The most common internet censorship technologies, such as DNS Tampering, IP Blocking or Keyword filtering are designed to prevent users from reaching specific websites by making them become invisible or by dropping the connection when someone tries to reach online contents placed on a blacklist.[40] Although such practices are fundamentally at odds with the human rights principles upheld by the United Nations, an entirely unregulated digital space can also facilitate the spread of harmful content, misinformation, and violent or abusive language, potentially silencing the voices of the most vulnerable members of society.[41]

The United Nations has called for an updated body of regulations able to bring together different actors in a multilateral cooperation that aims to protect children from the perils of mis/disinformation.[42] Leveraging the combination between human and robotic fact-checking could

---

[37] UNICEF youth poll: Misinformation is the leading cause of stress for youth on social media, followed by bullying and harmful content. (2025).https://bangladesh.un.org/en/289086-unicef-youth-poll-misinformation-leading-cause-stress-youth-social-media-followed-bullying

[38] *Online Misinformation and Disinformation*. (2025). Children and Screens. Institute of Digital Media and Child Development. https://www.childrenandscreens.org/learn-explore/research/online-misinformation-and-disinformation/

[39] G. ACETO, A. PESCAPÈ. *Internet Censorship detection: A survey*. (2015). ScienceDirect. https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/computer-science/internet-censorship

[40] R. TERMAN. *Internet Censorship (Part 2): The Technology of Information Control*. Townsend Center for the Humanities. University of California, Berkeley. https://townsendcenter.berkeley.edu/blog/internet-censorship-part-2-technology-information-control

[41] *It's not censorship to stop hateful online content, insists UN rights chief.* (2025). UN. https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/01/1158886

[42] Report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee. (2026). *Impact of disinformation on the enjoyment and realization of human rights*. HRC. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4103198?ln=en&v=pdf

let governments and technology companies face the diffusion of dangerous misleading contents that alter the perception of the world we live in. However, in order to create a fair system of policies that prevent the spread of misinformation in accordance with the principles of the UN, the right to freedom of expression and access to information in children has to be respected. The line, between a governance that protects all the children's rights by widely affecting the spread of misleading information and an over-zealous digital censorship that limits freedom, is dramatically thin.

Even well intentioned regulations designed to address misinformation and disinformation can, unintentionally, pave the way for new forms of authoritarian control. The key challenge is to establish a legislative framework that strikes a careful balance between protecting users from online harms and preserving the fundamental right to freedom of expression.

Root causes and Historical development

The existence of so called fake news is something that humanity has always had to deal with. Dating back to the first century BCE, misinformation became a powerful political tool in the struggle for power between Octavian and Mark Antony in ancient Rome, while in the 17th century disinformation highly influenced the management of the black plague in Italy.[43] However, the pervasive use of the internet and social media combined with the constant technological development have enabled the mass dissemination of misleading information. The advent of the internet and social media as distributors of information brought mis/disinformation to a completely new level, unwittingly giving false contents a chance to act from a stage that can reach an incredibly large audience. While digital platforms have greatly improved access to information, they have also created opportunities for misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech to spread at an unprecedented pace and scale.[44] As a result, the integrity of the information ecosystem has become much more vulnerable to the creation of false or harmful content. Nowadays, everyone has to deal with a deteriorated and polluted infosphere that is the potential cause of concrete negative consequences. As the professor Luciano Floridi has masterfully demonstrated in an article for The Guardian, even if people's interest in gossip, reassuring falsehoods and misleading narratives has

[43] Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Irene Khan. (2021). *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression*. HRC. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3925306?ln=en&v=pdf

[44] *How's Life for Children in the Digital Age?*. (2025). OECD Publishing. OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/0854b900-en

always existed, the internet provided them the possibility to access an almost endless stream of low-quality information, amplifying its circulation and influence.[45]

Technology has emerged as the major enabler for fake news creation and dissemination, as digital platforms are largely exploited for developing and spreading more complex and sophisticated types of deceptive information. The rapid advancement and widespread availability of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools have dramatically reduced the cost of producing highly realistic disinformation. AI has been used for unlawful purposes in order to create highly advanced social bots that are able to produce and distribute misleading content on a large scale without human assistance.[46] For this reason, the development of artificial intelligence should always be accompanied by continuous ethical oversight to minimize the risks of misuse, misinformation, and the dissemination of harmful content. The strategic use of manipulated media in contexts such as cyber operations and hybrid warfare, highlights the growing geopolitical significance of disinformation. Recent events, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia–Ukraine conflict, have demonstrated how quickly false information can spread and how difficult it is to contain it[47].

However, beyond political or ideological objectives, misinformation has become a profitable business model, driven by advertising revenue, online engagement, and fraudulent activities. This has contributed to the emergence of increasingly complex forms of deception, including fake advertisements, sponsored misleading content, and AI-generated deepfakes, which are often difficult to detect using traditional verification methods. In response to the historical development and growing impact of fake news, particularly on younger generations, the international community must develop effective strategies to address this major challenge of the twenty-first century. These efforts should include appropriate content moderation measures, school-based filtering systems, and other safety-oriented technologies, while ensuring that all interventions remain consistent with children's rights and fundamental freedoms.

---

[45] L. FLORIDI, *Fake news and a 400-year-old problem: we need to resolve the 'post-truth' crisis*. (2016). The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/nov/29/fake-news-echo-chamber-ethics-infosphere-internet-digital

[46] M. SELAKOVIĆ, A. TARABASZ, N. LJEPAVA. *The evolution of disinformation: a study of digital transformation of fake news*. (2025). https://ojs.srce.hr/index.php/medijske-studije/article/view/28547

[47] Letter dated 14 June 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General. (2024). GA. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4052507?ln=en&v=pdf

Current Situation and Actors

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Office of Global Insight and Policy, there are different actors who are involved in the creation and manipulation of online contents for a wide range of different purposes, from poor journalism to political influence and profit.[48] During the 21st century, extremist groups, such as white supremacists, have been caught spreading outright lies and mistruths to confuse the broader public and diffuse conspiracy theories.[49] The aim of this type of disinformation campaign is to affect minorities on a racist criteria, denying their right to live and encouraging violent behaviors driven by hatred. Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw how extremist anti-vaxx groups managed to generate profits by distributing incorrect information that exacerbated the public health crisis.[50] These fanatic groups organize and conduct their disinformation campaigns around controversial and highly topical issues that attract significant public attention, such as immigration, gender politics and equality, and vaccination.

Furthermore, a considerable amount of misinformation is unintentionally disseminated by social media users who share content without checking its reliability. Also journalists face increasing pressure to report on rapidly evolving events, which can lead to the amplification of unverified information circulating on social media.[51] In any case, the diffusion of deceptive information through digital platforms could not be so fast and pervasive without the use of cyber troops, composed of bots (automated social accounts), human-operated accounts and hacked or stolen social media profiles.[52] These accounts take advantage of the way social media algorithms are designed to maximize the visibility of misleading contents and to target users with false information based on their personal characteristics and preferences. Cyber troops are usually adopted in

---

[48] *Digital misinformation/disinformation and children*. (2021). UNICEF Office of Global Insight and Policy. https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/856/file/UNICEF-Global-Insight-Digital-Mis-Disinformation-and-Children-2021.pdf

[49] J. FJ. INWOOD, D. H. ALDERMAN. *The struggle against post-truth politics has always been about white supremacy: Lessons from the informational praxis of SNCC*. (2024). Sage Journals. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/23996544241286631

[50] *Pandemic Profiteers, The business of anti-vaxx*. (2021). CCDH. https://counterhate.com/research/pandemic-profiteers/

[51] C. WARDLE, *Fake news. It's complicated.* (2017). First Draft. https://firstdraftnews.org/articles/fake-news-complicated/

[52] S. BRADSHAW, H. BAILEY, P. N. HOWARD. *Industrialized Disinformation: 2020 Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation*. (2021). Programme on Democracy & Technology. https://demtech.oii.ox.ac.uk/research/posts/industrialized-disinformation/

pro-party propaganda to silence political dissent and polarise citizens, undermining democratic values by prioritizing user engagement over their protection.

In this complex panorama children have multiple roles. Although children actively engage with online resources, they may lack the cognitive and emotional maturity required to critically evaluate the credibility of the information they encounter. For this reason they are not only harmed by misleading contents, but they may also diffuse them becoming more or less conscious spreaders of mis/disinformation. In the absence of effective media literacy education, children may be more inclined to trust the information shared by influencers without critically evaluating its credibility. Furthermore, a limited understanding of the harmful consequences of producing and disseminating mis/disinformation may encourage them to prioritize contents that are more likely to go viral over accurate and trustworthy information.[53]

Alongside being both targets and spreaders of false and deceptive contents, children are actively involved in the fight against mis/disinformation. In 2018 UNICEF launched a media literacy campaign in Montenegro called *Let's Choose What We Watch*, in order to make children protagonists in the choice of educational online contents.[54] During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the Government of Nepal, launched an initiative that included young people in the detection of false information about vaccines.[55] Moreover, the United Nations have supported young media professionals and truthful journalism with the *Youth 4 Inclusion, Equality & Trust* (Y4IET) project[56], and have contributed to the drop of 70% of hate speech and disinformation in Central Africa with a youth-led initiative supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.[57] All these programmes demonstrate that we cannot build

---

[53] *Digital misinformation/disinformation and children*. (2021). UNICEF Office of Global Insight and Policy. https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/856/file/UNICEF-Global-Insight-Digital-Mis-Disinformation-and-Children-2021.pdf

[54] *"Let's choose what we watch" campaign launching*. (2018). UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/stories/lets-choose-what-we-watch-campaign-launching

[55] *V4Action in Nepal: Volunteers curb misinformation about COVID-19*. (2021). UNV. https://www.unv.org/Success-stories/v4action-nepal-volunteers-curb-misinformation-about-covid-19

[56] *Empowering Young Voices: Building a New Generation of Journalists for Dialogue and Trust*. (2024). UN. https://kosovoteam.un.org/en/281502-empowering-young-voices-building-new-generation-journalists-dialogue-and-trust

[57] *800 young Central Africans combat misinformation, monitor the peace agreement and take up leadership positions*. (2025). UN. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/800-young-central-africans-combat-misinformation-monitor-peace-agreement-and-take-leadership

a safe and trustworthy information ecosystem without the participation of younger generations, who are among the most active and engaged users of digital environments.

International Response and Committee Action

The entrance in the post-truth era, in which people's opinions are influenced more by emotions and personal beliefs than by objective facts, has placed on the international community the responsibility to protect individuals, especially those at greater risk, from the far-reaching impact of disinformation. Ever since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, the United Nations has affirmed children's right to access information alongside their right to be protected from harmful content, laying the foundation for the protection of children's rights in the digital environment.[58] From that moment, the international community has continued to promote the recognition of children's rights within an increasingly pervasive digital environment, while seeking to develop regulatory frameworks capable of addressing the spread of disinformation. The General Comment No. 25 on Children's Rights in Relation to the Digital Environment (2021) reaffirms the principles set out in the Convention in light of the new challenges arising from children's interaction with an increasingly complex infosphere, that may include discriminatory contents and false narratives, likely to encourage children to engage in unlawful behaviors.[59]

The growing concern surrounding this issue has not been limited to the United Nations, but it has also been shared by other international organizations. In 2018 the European Commission drafted the Code of Practice on Disinformation, the first initiative of its kind to make relevant players in the industry agree on self-regulatory standards. The Code was strengthened in 2022 in order to expand fact-checking activities across all European Union (EU) Member States and in every official EU language, while encouraging online platforms to integrate fact-checking more consistently into their services.

The Secretary General of the United Nations has recognised the urgency to take a concrete action against the enormous impact of disinformation on children's well-being, highlighting the results

[58] Convention on the Rights of the Child. (1989). UN. https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child
[59] Code of Practice on Disinformation. (2018). European Commission. https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/2018-code-practice-disinformation

obtained with the multiple initiatives promoted by the organisation.[60] In particular, he points to a collaborative TikTok initiative set up in August 2021 by the African Union, UNICEF, and the ONE Campaign, which aimed to reduce the spread of misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines across social media.[61] In 2024 the UN launched the Global Principles for Information Integrity, a framework to promote coordinated international efforts to make information spaces safer, more inclusive, and more respectful of human rights.[62] The document proposes a range of measures aimed at safeguarding children's well-being and protecting their rights in the digital environment, emphasizing the need for greater stakeholders' transparency and accountability in the management of online information. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of promoting digital and media literacy among young people so that they can develop the critical skills needed to identify false or misleading information and navigate the online environment safely and responsibly. Builded upon the Global Principles, the Global Digital Compact represents a further step towards strengthening international cooperation in digital governance.[63] Negotiated by all 193 United Nations Member States, the Compact aims to make digital technologies more accessible and to foster a multilateral framework that brings together governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society in the creation of an open digital environment that fully respects human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Future challenges and possible approaches

Over the past few years, the international community has tried to deeply study the mis/disinformation phenomenon in order to find efficient countermeasures and innovative approaches. The development of AI powered digital tools and their use in deceptive campaigns revealed the insufficiency of the most common content moderation techniques, such as filtering, automated removal and human deletion. These types of moderation struggle to stem the immense flow of fake news online that takes advantage of the opaque inner workings of digital platforms'

[60] Report of the Secretary-General. (2021). *Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms*. GA. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3987886?ln=en&v=pdf

[61] Joint press release by UNICEF, ONE, African Union and TikTok. (2021). *ONE, UNICEF and African Union join forces with TikTok to strengthen vaccine confidence in Africa*. UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/press-releases/one-unicef-and-african-union-join-forces-tiktok-strengthen-vaccine-confidence-africa

[62] United Nations Global Principles For Information Integrity. (2024). UN. https://www.un.org/en/information-integrity/global-principles

[63] Global Digital Compact. (2024). UN. https://www.un.org/digital-emerging-technologies/global-digital-compact

algorithms. Some providers have adopted the pre-moderation mechanism to avoid showing inappropriate content to people belonging to a particular age group. However, beyond the fact that pre-moderation cannot completely eradicate misinformation, it also risks limiting children's right of access to information by arbitrarily determining which content is suitable for children and which is not. Even parental control, introduced to give parents the possibility to control the contents shown to their children, can undermine open communication in the family environment and discourage the curiosity that motivates children to learn independently online. An open dialogue between children, parents, caregivers and educators is essential to fostering an educational approach that enables children to develop critical thinking and cognitive skills as natural and long-term defences against misinformation and disinformation. Children have to be equipped with a set of personal skills and competencies that enable them to know how to find trusted sources of information and how to recognise biased contents. Pre-bunking has emerged as an efficient and preventive strategy that aims to provide people to identify and resist information-related risks. While fact-checking intervenes after misleading information has already entered the digital information ecosystem, prebunking seeks to build users' cognitive resilience by providing them with the "mental antibodies" needed to resist disinformation before they are exposed to it.[64]

After having identified many different approaches that contribute to the broader objective of creating a safer and more trustworthy digital environment, the toughest challenge remains to shape a framework able to include them while preserving children's rights. As established in the (HRC) General Comment No. 34 of the Human Rights Committee, limitations on the dissemination of information may be imposed only where they are compatible with the fundamental right to freedom of expression.[65] When rigorously designed to protect and promote human rights, certain forms of digital content regulation not only are legitimate, but become necessary. As the current United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk said: "carefully regulating online hate speech and moderating content to avoid real harm is not censorship. It is an essential plank of information integrity in the digital age – and the responsibility of social media platforms".[66]

---

[64] *Digital misinformation/disinformation and children*. (2021). UNICEF Office of Global Insight and Policy. https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/856/file/UNICEF-Global-Insight-Digital-Mis-Disinformation-and-Children-2021.pdf

[65] General Comment No. 34. (2011). International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. HRC. https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/docs/gc34.pdf

[66] United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk. (2025). https://unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/topics/opeds/2025/freedex.html

Annotated Bibliography

Hereafter you can find some links that we think could be helpful to deepen your knowledge on both the committee and the topic you will be discussing.

- The more inspiring and complete website when talking about the UN is their own: https://www.un.org/. Especially useful is their Official Document System (ODS) https://documents.un.org/prod/ods.nsf/home.xsp.

- More specifically for the GA, visiting the assembly's official site will prepare you for the conference. https://www.un.org/en/ga/

- This website collects the schedule of the Summit of the Future: https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future

- Report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee. (2026). *Impact of disinformation on the enjoyment and realization of human rights*. HRC. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4103198?ln=en&v=pdf

- The most recent and specific documents related to children and misinformation are: United Nations Global Principles For Information Integrity. (2024). UN. https://www.un.org/en/information-integrity/global-principles and Global Digital Compact. (2024). UN. https://www.un.org/digital-emerging-technologies/global-digital-compact

- As regards the history of fake news: https://www.cjr.org/special_report/fake_news_history.php?link, https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-42724320 and https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/A%20Short%20Guide%20to%20History%20of%20Fake%20News%20and%20Disinformation_ICFJ%20Final.pdf

- *Digital misinformation/disinformation and children*. (2021). UNICEF Office of Global Insight and Policy.

https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/856/file/UNICEF-Global-Insight-Digital-Mis-Disinformation-and-Children-2021.pdf

- "Home | Pact for the Future," n.d. https://www.un.org/pact-for-the-future/en.
- "Home | UN80 Initiative," n.d. https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/en.