



New South Wales
Aboriginal Land Council



Intervention by the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (Consultative Status with ECOSOC)

Speaker: Councillor Anne Dennis

Item 8: Panel Discussion on Indigenous Peoples and Artificial Intelligence

Thank you Madam Chair.

My name is Anne Dennis, I am a Councillor for the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council and I am a proud Gamilaraay woman.

I speak on behalf of the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council. The New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council welcomes this important discussion.

Artificial intelligence is already shaping our communities, our economies and our societies. The question before us is not whether AI will shape our future. The question is whether Indigenous Peoples will shape AI, or whether AI will continue to shape us without our participation.

The challenge is not whether the rights contained in the UNDRIP apply to artificial intelligence. They clearly do. The challenge is implementation.

For Indigenous Peoples, there is a real risk that artificial intelligence becomes a new form of digital colonialism, where our languages, knowledge systems and cultural heritage are extracted, commercialised and utilised without our consent or benefit.

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For Aboriginal Peoples, data is not simply information. It reflects our histories, our cultures, our connection to Country and our collective identities. Indigenous data sovereignty must therefore sit at the centre of these discussions.

At the same time, AI presents extraordinary opportunities. It can support language revitalisation, preserve oral histories, strengthen environmental management, assist communities to protect and monitor Country, and help transmit Indigenous knowledge to future generations.

The challenge before us is one of governance.

Indigenous Peoples must not simply be consulted after AI systems have been designed. We must participate in their design, governance and oversight from the outset. Meaningful participation also requires investment in digital infrastructure, technical expertise and Indigenous-led innovation.

AI also raises concerns regarding surveillance, profiling and algorithmic bias, which can reinforce existing inequalities and disproportionately impact Indigenous Peoples if left unaddressed.

At a time of increasing challenges to human rights and growing pressure on Indigenous rights globally, we cannot assume that technological change will automatically benefit Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples have experienced previous waves of colonisation, dispossession and extraction. We should not now experience a new form of extraction in the digital environment.

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Indigenous Peoples should not simply become the raw material for technologies developed by others. We must also be designers, owners, innovators and beneficiaries of the technologies that will shape our future.

The UNDRIP provides the answer. The development and governance of artificial intelligence must be grounded in self-determination, meaningful participation, free, prior and informed consent and respect for Indigenous data sovereignty.

Artificial intelligence must not become another chapter in the history of dispossession or a new form of digital colonialism. It should become a tool that advances Indigenous self-determination, strengthens our cultures and languages, and supports future generations.

Thank you.

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