United Nations A/HRC/63/NGO/11

General Assembly

Distr.: General
25 August 2026

English only

Human Rights Council
Sixty-third session
7 September–9 October 2026
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement submitted by China International Association of Promotion of Science and Technology, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status*

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[4 August 2026]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.

Inclusive Science, Technology and Innovation for the Equal Enjoyment of Human Rights and the Realization of the Right to Development

Inclusive access to science and technology is essential to reducing inequalities, advancing economic, social and cultural rights and realizing the right to development. Drawing on its work in scientific and technological exchange, standardization, innovation cooperation and capacity-building, China International Association for Promotion of Science and Technology (CIAPST) calls for science, technology and innovation to be governed as practical means of enabling everyone to participate in, contribute to and benefit from scientific progress.

The right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications is recognized in article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Today, digital technologies, artificial intelligence, health technologies and environmental innovation can widen access to education, healthcare, public services, decent work and a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. They can also help communities respond to climate risks and resource constraints. Yet access to these benefits remains unequal, and innovation can create or deepen harm when human rights safeguards are absent.

The barriers are interconnected. They include inadequate connectivity and infrastructure; unaffordable devices and services; inaccessible design; gaps in digital and scientific literacy; insufficient local-language content; limited participation in research and standard-setting; and unequal access to finance, data, testing facilities and technical expertise. Persons with disabilities, women and girls, children, older persons, rural and remote communities, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, low-income groups and small and medium-sized enterprises may face distinct or overlapping obstacles. Algorithmic discrimination, intrusive surveillance, unsafe data practices, environmental costs and weak remedies may further undermine equality, privacy, participation and trust.

The Council's consideration under agenda item 3 of economic, social and cultural rights in the context of inequalities, together with its continuing work on the right to development, provides an important opportunity to connect human rights commitments with the governance of innovation. CIAPST therefore recommends a rights-based innovation cycle that connects needs assessment, research, design, standardization, deployment, evaluation and remedy. Inclusion should be built into every stage rather than added after a technology has been developed. The following actions can make this approach operational.

First, governments and other stakeholders should establish inclusive participation mechanisms for technology policy, research priorities and standards development. Participation should be early, meaningful, accessible and adequately supported. Public authorities, research institutions, enterprises and standards bodies should publish understandable information, consult affected communities, reduce language and accessibility barriers, and explain how stakeholder input influenced decisions. Community organizations and users should be enabled to help define the problem, test solutions and identify unintended impacts.

Second, technical standards and conformity-assessment practices should translate human rights principles into verifiable requirements. Depending on the technology, these requirements should address universal design and accessibility, affordability, interoperability, safety, cybersecurity, privacy and data protection, transparency, non-discrimination, environmental sustainability and effective human oversight. Standards should be adaptable to different levels of infrastructure and institutional capacity. Their development should include balanced stakeholder representation, transparent procedures, conflict-of-interest safeguards, periodic review and accessible channels for complaints and correction.

Third, human rights due diligence should accompany the full life cycle of high-impact technologies. Public and private actors should identify actual and potential impacts, pay particular attention to groups at heightened risk, take preventive and mitigating measures, monitor outcomes and communicate findings in accessible forms. Procurement and public funding can create strong incentives by requiring accessibility, impact assessment,

auditability, security and remedy. Where serious harms cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated, deployment should not proceed.

Fourth, international cooperation should strengthen local capability, reduce technological inequalities and support the realization of the right to development instead of creating technological dependency. Cooperation should support shared research, open and interoperable tools where appropriate, voluntary knowledge exchange, training, testing capacity and participation by developing countries in standards-setting. Technology transfer and capacity-building should respond to locally identified priorities and respect applicable international law, including human rights obligations. Pilot projects should include plans for long-term maintenance, local skills, affordability and independent evaluation.

CIAPST has participated in the establishment of the International Alliance for Regional Innovation and Standardization (IARIS), a cross-border cooperation platform bringing together research institutions, universities, industry associations and enterprises. Its fields of activity include regional technology exchange, resource sharing, standards cooperation and innovation capacity-building. By connecting regional needs with technical expertise and standards cooperation, such a platform can serve as a practical mechanism for reducing capacity gaps and advancing the right to development, provided that its work remains transparent, participatory and rights-centred.

CIAPST proposes that IARIS and comparable regional mechanisms support voluntary pilot cooperation in three areas: inclusive standards for accessible digital public services; interoperability and responsible data practices in cross-border health and environmental applications; and participation safeguards for multi-stakeholder standards development. Each pilot should begin with a human rights and accessibility needs assessment; include affected communities and independent experts; publish non-confidential methods and findings; provide a feedback and grievance channel; and report results using disaggregated data while protecting privacy.

Fifth, progress should be measured by distributional outcomes, not only by investment, patents, technical performance or market growth. Useful indicators include affordability, accessibility conformance, rural and gender connectivity gaps, participation of underrepresented groups, availability in local languages, energy and resource efficiency, the number and resolution of complaints, and whether benefits reach those facing the greatest barriers. Evaluations should be independent where appropriate, proportionate to risk, and publicly available in accessible formats.

CIAPST invites the Human Rights Council, relevant United Nations mechanisms, States, national human rights institutions, standards bodies, research organizations, enterprises and civil society to encourage rights-based and inclusive approaches to technology governance and international cooperation. The Global Digital Compact, the 2030 Agenda and the Declaration on the Right to Development provide important frameworks for aligning digital transformation with human rights and sustainable development; implementation should now be supported by practical standards, capabilities and accountability.

Science and technology should expand human agency and opportunity, not reproduce exclusion. CIAPST stands ready, within its mandate, to contribute expertise in science and technology cooperation, standardization, capacity-building and multi-stakeholder dialogue, including through regional cooperation mechanisms, to advance the equal enjoyment of human rights for all and the realization of the right to development.