

CCPCJ

The Surveillance State:
Government Use of AI
Technologies



**39th Annual Model United Nations
Conference at St. John's High School**

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Table of Contents

<i>Letters From the Chairs:</i>	2
<i>History of the Problem</i>	4
<i>Statement of the Problem</i>	6
<i>Possible Solutions</i>	9
<i>Bloc Positions</i>	11
<i>Bloc 1: Major AI and Technology Powers:</i>	11
<i>Bloc 2: European Regulatory and Human Rights-Focused States:</i>	11
<i>Bloc 3: Developing and Emerging States</i>	11
<i>Bloc 4: Sovereignty and National-Security Focused States</i>	11
<i>Bibliography</i>	14

Letters From the Chairs:

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Farzaad Hussain, and alongside co-chair Sid Jain, I am excited to chair this committee. I joined Model UN during my freshman year, and since then, I have attended several conferences and co-chaired a committee at SJMUNC 38. Outside of school, I enjoy playing baseball, going to the gym, and reading.

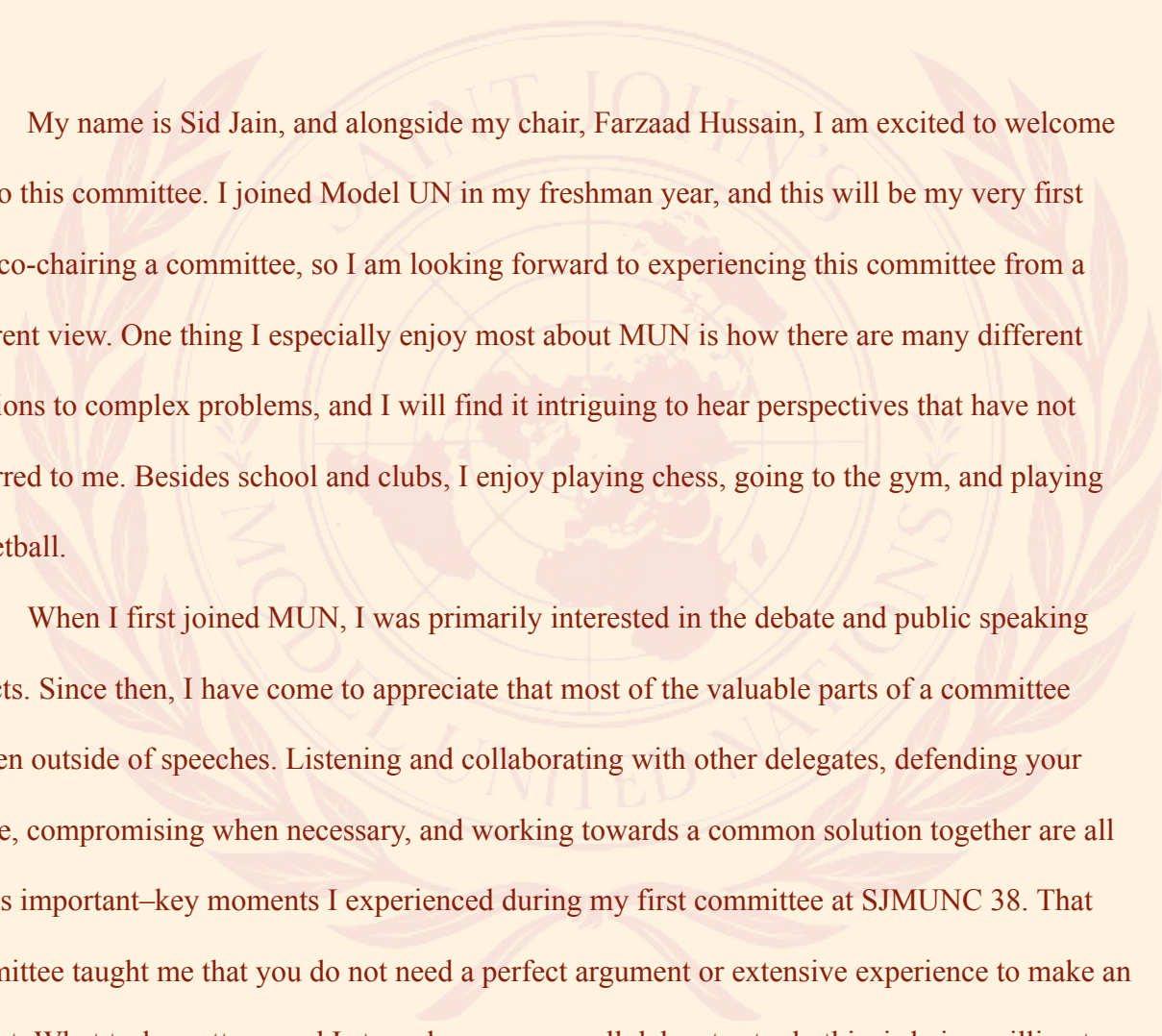
I initially joined MUN to gain confidence and become a better public speaker, and while I do think I have made progress on both those fronts, they are far from the most important takeaways I have made. While it might sound cliché, the best thing about MUN truly is the friends you make along the way. I encourage everyone participating in this committee to keep an open mind and truly believe that everyone has something valuable to contribute to the discussion. Doing so will guarantee you earn the respect of your fellow delegates and that everyone has a great committee experience.

I know that artificial intelligence can be a pretty overused topic at Model UN conferences, but I hope that narrowing it down to surveillance technologies specifically will make the committee more focused. Concerns about a surveillance state have never been more prevalent, and I think it is important that we all understand the consequences that such surveillance would have on our everyday lives. I cannot wait to see what creative and unique ideas you all will bring to solve this problem. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at hussak28@stjohnshigh.org

Sincerely,

Farzaad Hussain '28

Dear Delegates,



My name is Sid Jain, and alongside my chair, Farzaad Hussain, I am excited to welcome you to this committee. I joined Model UN in my freshman year, and this will be my very first time co-chairing a committee, so I am looking forward to experiencing this committee from a different view. One thing I especially enjoy most about MUN is how there are many different solutions to complex problems, and I will find it intriguing to hear perspectives that have not occurred to me. Besides school and clubs, I enjoy playing chess, going to the gym, and playing basketball.

When I first joined MUN, I was primarily interested in the debate and public speaking aspects. Since then, I have come to appreciate that most of the valuable parts of a committee happen outside of speeches. Listening and collaborating with other delegates, defending your stance, compromising when necessary, and working towards a common solution together are all just as important—key moments I experienced during my first committee at SJMUNC 38. That committee taught me that you do not need a perfect argument or extensive experience to make an impact. What truly matters, and I strongly encourage all delegates to do this, is being willing to contribute, adapt, and work with the people around you. Come into the committee ready to challenge your ideas as much as those of other delegates, for some of the best solutions emerge when neither side has everything figured out.

I am especially excited about our topic at hand because AI surveillance presents a difficult balance between human rights and public safety. These technologies have great potential to help governments prevent crime and improve criminal justice, but they also impose serious concerns for society regarding algorithmic bias, human oversight, privacy, and responsibility. I hope our committee will move beyond simply debating whether AI surveillance should exist and

instead consider how governments can use these technologies responsibly while protecting the people they are meant to serve. I am eager to see the creative solutions and perspectives that everyone brings to the committee.

I look forward to meeting everyone and having a great committee experience. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at jains29@stjohnshigh.org

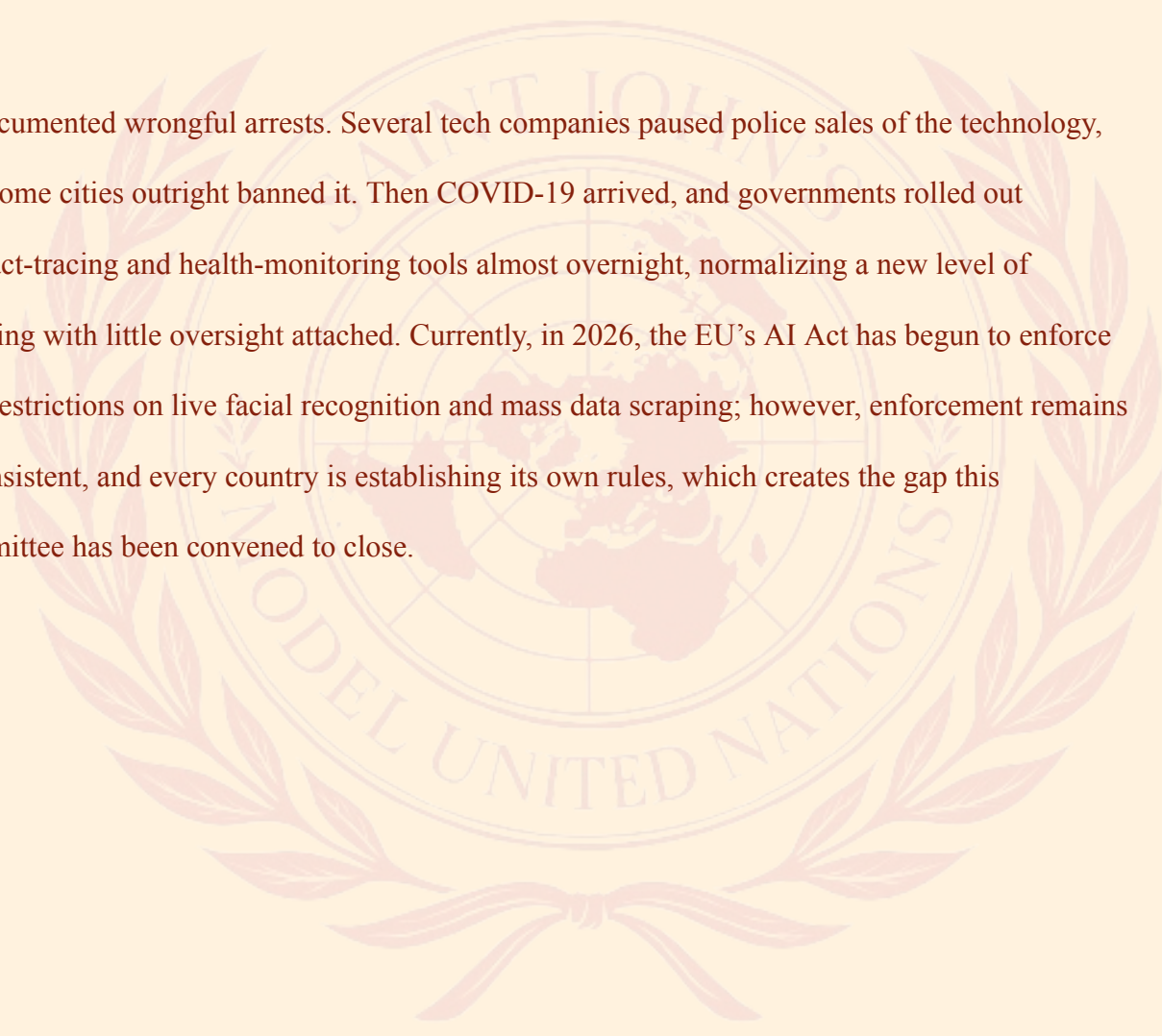
Respectfully,

Sid Jain '29

History of the Problem:

Government surveillance itself isn't new. Its scale, on the other hand, is new. History proves a continuity in the notion of government surveillance, but can hardly account for its unprecedented growth in scope. Government oversight was very prominent during the Cold War, as many agencies, such as the FBI and East Germany's Stasi, ran extensive surveillance operations built entirely on human intelligence and paperwork. In such examples, the government aimed to minimize privacy for a self-serving purpose: to fuel its own authoritarian tyranny and suppress the free movement of its citizens. However, this changed after 9/11, when the Patriot Act and similar laws in other countries granted agencies far more authority to collect information, just as facial recognition and predictive policing software were becoming advanced enough for real-world applications. Contrary to its earlier appearance within the Soviet Union, the role of government surveillance became to protect its citizens from terrorist threats. In 2013, Edward Snowden's leaks revealed the extent of NSA data collection and sparked the first major global debate regarding digital privacy. Around the same time, China started building its social credit system and installing AI-powered cameras across several major cities, most notably Xinjiang, where the technology was used to track and detain Uyghur Muslims, making it the main example of what unregulated AI surveillance can become.

The last few years have only brought about further escalation of the situation. In 2020, a New York Times investigation exposed Clearview AI for scraping billions of photos without consent and for selling access to facial recognition to private companies and law enforcement agencies, triggering ongoing lawsuits and fines across the US and Europe. The very same year, George Floyd's murder and the protests that followed drew attention to algorithmic bias, since facial recognition consistently performed worse on women and people with darker skin, leading



to documented wrongful arrests. Several tech companies paused police sales of the technology, and some cities outright banned it. Then COVID-19 arrived, and governments rolled out contact-tracing and health-monitoring tools almost overnight, normalizing a new level of tracking with little oversight attached. Currently, in 2026, the EU's AI Act has begun to enforce real restrictions on live facial recognition and mass data scraping; however, enforcement remains inconsistent, and every country is establishing its own rules, which creates the gap this committee has been convened to close.

Statement of the Problem:

This committee's problem is not simply that governments are using AI to conduct surveillance. Instead, it is that AI-enabled surveillance is being used by law enforcement and criminal justice systems more quickly than the protections those systems are supposed to ensure, which include due process, concrete evidence, and responsibility for state action. That major distinction is what differentiates this from a regular AI ethics debate and makes it a CCPCJ issue. The committee is being asked to address what happens when predictive and biometric systems are incorporated into policing, investigations, arrests, and other stages of criminal proceedings without the checks typically required by criminal justice systems, rather than simply regulating AI in general.

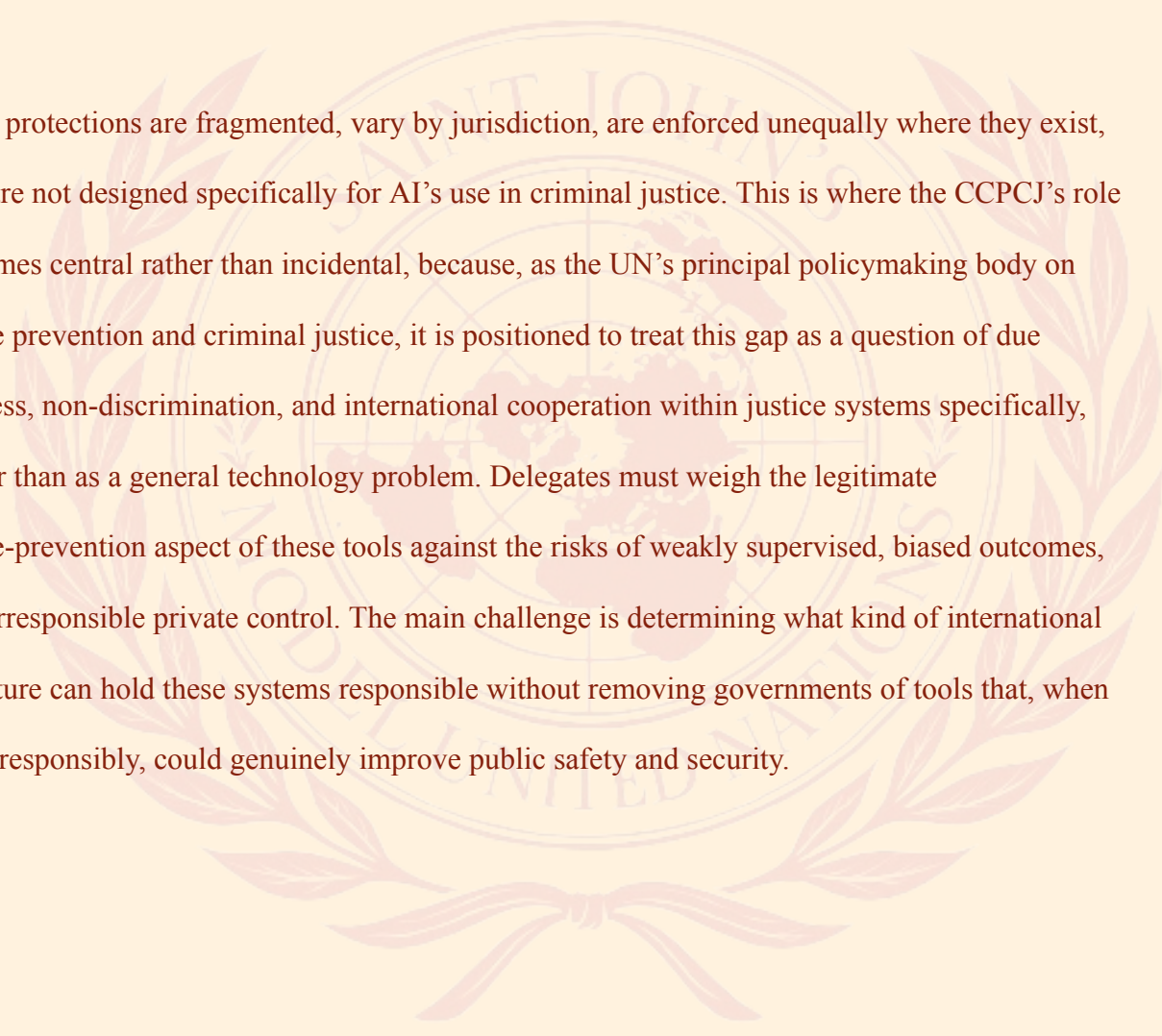
The first concern is human supervision. Several AI surveillance tools are usually described as decision support systems, essentially meaning a human is technically supposed to review and approve whatever the algorithm suggests. In reality, that review is often procedural rather than substantive. Personnel often lack the technical skills to logically evaluate a system's reasoning, and many of these tools are privately and exclusively owned, meaning their internal logic isn't disclosed even to the agencies that use them. When investigative decisions are effectively assigned to systems that can't be meaningfully reviewed, it can be difficult to determine who is responsible when those decisions go wrong, which is precisely the kind of due process question the CCPCJ exists to address.

The second concern is algorithmic bias. Predictive policing tools are based on historical crime data, and that reflects years of policing that was not applied equally across communities. As a result, these systems risk replicating existing patterns of discriminatory enforcement while presenting their outputs as neutral and evidence-based. Additionally, facial recognition raises a

related issue that the widely cited Gender Shades study conducted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found significantly higher error rates for darker-skinned women when commercial facial-analysis systems attempted to classify gender. These kinds of misidentifications have already been connected to wrongful arrests, like a 2020 documented case in Detroit in which a Black man was wrongfully arrested after being identified through a false facial recognition match. Fair and equal treatment under the law is something the body is concerned with; the reliability of the tools used to initiate criminal proceedings is a direct concern instead of a regular side issue.

The third concern is the expanding role private companies play in building and controlling surveillance infrastructure that governments depend on. This is clearly illustrated by Clearview AI, which compiled a facial recognition database by collecting billions of images from the internet without permission, and subsequently became the subject of lawsuits and regulatory enforcement actions in many countries. Because this infrastructure is often proprietary, the agencies using it may have limited insight into how it reaches its conclusions, and the companies building these systems are generally subject to different oversight mechanisms than the government agencies that initiate and deploy them. When central criminal justice functions depend on tools that neither the state nor any elected body, for that matter, fully controls, responsibility and accountability become much harder to trace.

These concerns are worsened by an inconsistent international response. Existing human rights instruments establish protections for privacy and due process, and some regional frameworks, specifically the European Union's AI Act, have begun to impose binding restrictions on certain uses of biological identification and predictive technologies. However,



these protections are fragmented, vary by jurisdiction, are enforced unequally where they exist, and are not designed specifically for AI's use in criminal justice. This is where the CCPCJ's role becomes central rather than incidental, because, as the UN's principal policymaking body on crime prevention and criminal justice, it is positioned to treat this gap as a question of due process, non-discrimination, and international cooperation within justice systems specifically, rather than as a general technology problem. Delegates must weigh the legitimate crime-prevention aspect of these tools against the risks of weakly supervised, biased outcomes, and irresponsible private control. The main challenge is determining what kind of international structure can hold these systems responsible without removing governments of tools that, when used responsibly, could genuinely improve public safety and security.

Possible Solutions:

A solution to this complex problem requires a multifaceted approach that balances regulation with state sovereignty. Delegates must understand that not every country has the same level of technological or monetary resources. A good solution will keep all countries in mind, especially the less wealthy, developing countries.

One possible solution is to restrict government use of AI surveillance technologies to zero. Proponents of this solution believe that this completely removes the threat to individual privacy. They argue that society has functioned for millennia without these technologies and that such surveillance only serves to threaten individual liberties. Opponents argue that since crime has pervaded society for millennia, these AI surveillance technologies are necessary to make life safer for everyone. They believe that, despite the potential threat to individual privacy and liberty, surveillance is an overall net positive for society because it helps prevent crime. This solution can be particularly effective for countries that lack resources, as AI-powered technologies can be expensive. However, the costs of alternatives to these technologies must be considered to ensure that all countries can still keep their citizens safe.

Another possible solution is to require human oversight in AI systems. Rather than the current systems, in which humans simply check the box on an AI decision or have no say at all, an individual would need to fully understand how and why the AI made its decision before approving it. This requirement would blunt one of the main benefits of AI surveillance systems, that being their increased speed and efficiency, but could increase accuracy and ensure that individuals are not wrongfully accused of crimes due to the decisions of AI.

Delegates should also consider a solution that incorporates testing of AI systems before implementation. AI-powered surveillance technologies would be tested for accuracy and bias

before they are deployed by countries. The systems would need to meet a CCPCJ-recognized standard to be legally used and would be reinspected periodically to ensure the standard is still met. Opponents of this idea are generally corporations and large, wealthy nations that profit from selling these systems to smaller, less wealthy nations. Requiring anyone who uses AI-powered surveillance systems to meet the same standard across the board would ensure consistency and transparency, preventing those in control of the systems from abusing their power.

A comprehensive solution should include the ability for individuals to fix mistakes when they are made. A straightforward appeals process could be created so that people who believe they have been wronged by the AI system can seek redress, ensuring that justice remains the ultimate goal of these surveillance technologies. Opponents of this solution argue that it adds unnecessary steps to legal systems that are arguably already too complex, while proponents argue that it is necessary to ensure that the surveillance systems benefit the people they are designed to protect.

Finally, delegates should ensure that private corporations that create these systems cannot hide behind trade secrecy and are held accountable when their systems make mistakes. Companies could be required to provide some form of transparency into how their AI technologies are trained and make decisions, and a framework should be established to ensure companies face consequences if their systems make mistakes. While the corporations themselves might not be in favor of such transparency, it is essential to ensure that it is the citizens of the world who benefit from these new technologies, not the pockets of corporations.

Bloc Positions:

- **Bloc 1: Major AI and Technology Powers**

- United States
- China
- Japan
- South Korea
- India
- United Kingdom
- Canada
- Australia

These nations have strong technological industries and develop, purchase, or use AI-integrated systems. The main goal for this bloc is to preserve the application of AI to assist the police force, criminal investigations, and public security, while concurrently establishing robust regulatory safeguards against potential misuse.

- **Bloc 2: European Regulatory and Human Rights-Focused States**

- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Spain
- Netherlands
- Sweden
- Norway
- Switzerland

These countries generally place strong emphasis on security, data safety, human rights, and government accountability. Their main goals likely concern responsible human oversight, protections against discrimination in algorithmic systems, transparency requirements, and stronger safeguards for individuals affected by AI-enhanced criminal justice decisions. European states may also look to currently existing regional ordinances, specifically the EU AI Act, when considering potential international benchmarks.

- **Bloc 3: Developing and Emerging States**

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- Brazil
 - Mexico
 - Argentina
 - South Africa
 - Nigeria
 - Kenya
 - Egypt
 - Indonesia
 - Malaysia
 - Thailand
 - Philippines
 - Türkiye

These delegations are usually likely to focus on the difficulty of enforcing sophisticated AI regulations without the financial and technical resources available to wealthier countries. Their goals typically include international funding, technical assistance and training, and technology sharing, alongside protections against wrongful uses of AI supervision. They may also seek to ensure that international regulations do not create benchmarks that are prohibitively expensive for developing countries to implement.

● **Bloc 4: Sovereignty and National Security-Focused States**

- Russia
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates
- Iran
- Pakistan
- Iraq
- Qatar
- Israel
- Vietnam
- Ethiopia
- Colombia
- Chile

These delegations may place great emphasis on national sovereignty and on the authority of independent governments to determine how criminal justice and national security systems operate. Their goals may include preserving the use of AI against terrorism, organized crime, and other security threats while supporting international cooperation to prevent the misuse of these

technologies. Some may be cautious about binding international regulations or external oversight of domestic law enforcement.



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