



## Global Forum on Fundamental Rights in AI & Digital Societies Highlights Central Role of United Nations Centennial Initiative

### *Former President of Latvia, Leading Figures from Greece, Viet Nam, International Organizations Call Attention to Growing Need for Rights Accord*

**Boston-Madrid, September 7, 2021** -- During this week's high-level [online Policy Lab](#) to explore ideas and strategies to arrive at an International Accord on Digital Rights, sponsored by the Club de Madrid and Boston Global Forum, the Plenary V session will focus on the upcoming **United Nations' Centennial Initiative** and its role in helping to develop such an Accord. The session begins at 9 A.M. EST on Thursday September 9, as part of the three-day Policy Lab.

The UN Centennial Initiative was launched in 2019 by the *United Nations Academic Impact* in partnership with The Boston Global Forum. The Initiative hosts roundtable discussions, conferences, new concepts, solutions, think pieces, and reflections as we look ahead to the global landscape in 2045—the United Nations Centennial year. It's mission is: Remaking the World: The Age of Global Enlightenment.

The core concepts of the UN Centennial Initiative include the idea of a social contract for the Artificial Intelligence (AI) age, a framework for an AI international accord, an ecosystem for the "AI World Society" (AIWS) and a community innovation economy.

Some of these ideas have already begun to be put into practice, including the evolution of an AIWS City being developed by NovaWorld in Phan Thiet, Viet Nam as a pilot project. AIWS City is a virtual digital city dedicated to promoting the values associated with AIWS. It looks to bring together a global enlightenment community of scholars, innovators, leaders, and citizens dedicated to fostering thought, creativity, and ethical behavior.

Mr. Tran Dinh Thien, Senior advisor to the Vietnamese Prime Minister, expressed his excitement to build NovaWorld Phan Thiet City into a leading healthcare and wellness tourism destination:

"Nova World Phan Thiet and AIWS City will become a model, representative of the standards and ambitions of the United Nations Centennial Initiative and the World Leadership Alliance-Club de Madrid.

Vietnam invites world leaders, ideologists, and innovators to Phan Thiet, to support the plan to build NovaWorld Phan Thiet City... We look forward to receiving unique ideas and suggestions to help Phan Thiet develop and become a leading ecosystem for a new economy, one for those looking to pioneer in the Age of Global Enlightenment, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the United Nations."

Ramu Damodaran, Co-Chair of the United Nations Centennial Initiative, will be the lead speaker at the Plenary V session, scheduled for 9 AM EST. The panel will also feature:

- Former President of Latvia, Vaira Vike-Freiberga, a member of Club de Madrid;
- Kyriakos Pierrakakis, Minister of State and Digital Governance of Greece, Chair of the Global Strategy Group, OECD
- Thomas Patterson, Research Director of The Michael Dukakis Institute for Leadership and Innovation, Professor of Government and the Press of Harvard Kennedy School
- Sean Cleary, Advisor of Club de Madrid, Executive vice-chair of the FutureWorld Foundation, Member of the Carnegie Council's Artificial Intelligence & Equality Initiative's Board of Advisors
- Tran Dinh Thien, Professor, Senior Advisor to Vietnamese Prime Minister

The Facilitator for the session will be David Silbersweig, Chairman, Department of Psychiatry and Co-Director for Institute for the Neurosciences, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard University Professor.

The policymakers, including former presidents and prime ministers, will convene September 7-9 for a virtual "Policy Lab" co-sponsored by the Club de Madrid and Boston Global Forum. In advance of the gathering, the Boston Global Forum has teamed up with United Nations Academic Impact to release *Remaking the World: Toward an Age of Global Enlightenment*.

Together with the upcoming Policy Lab, *Remaking the World* takes a major step toward creating a "rights-based agenda for the global governance of AI and digital societies," says Nguyen Anh Tuan, who edited the book and serves as CEO of the Boston Global Forum (BGF). "We're moving toward a framework, an ecosystem, a social contract for the AI age." Tuan also directs the Michael Dukakis Institute for Leadership and Innovation.

The 256-page book is made up of white papers, speeches, remarks, and other presentations at events held during the pandemic and sponsored or co-sponsored by BGF. Among the contributors are well known policy makers and innovators such as Ashton Carter, former U.S. Secretary of Defense; Vint Cerf, "the father of the Internet" and Chief Internet Evangelist for Google; former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; and former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis.

The opening chapter, authored by leading scholars and policy makers affiliated with the Boston-based group, proposes a "social contract," or an agreement among members of global society to cooperate in the interests of social wellbeing. Just as TCP / IP is the platform for communication among internet users, the Social Contract for AI Age is a platform for connection among governments, stakeholders, and private and public institutions. One of many principles enunciated is that individuals have a right to both privacy and "access and control over their own data."

Elsewhere in the book, political scientist Nazli Choucri of MIT articulates a framework for artificial intelligence international accords, including "the precautionary principle," which aims not to impede innovation but to "explore the unknown with care and caution." Likewise, Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, discusses the need for an AI "ecosystem of

trust.” This would include regulation not “for regulation’s sake,” but for the purpose of protecting basic rights, encouraging innovation, and spurring technological leadership. They are among 25 prominent contributors to the book.

Tuan added that *Remaking the World*, along with the Policy Lab, represents the first time that prominent international leaders are coming together to lay the groundwork for global AI accords. The book is currently in an electronic edition and will be available in print soon.

For more information, or to register to attend the Policy Lab September 7-9, please visit: [aidigitalrights.com](http://aidigitalrights.com)

### **About the Boston Global Forum**

The [Boston Global Forum](#) (BGF), in collaboration with the United Nations Centennial Initiative, released a major work entitled *Remaking the World – Toward an Age of Global Enlightenment*.

More than twenty distinguished leaders, scholars, analysts, and thinkers put forth unprecedented approaches to the challenges before us. These include President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, Governor Michael Dukakis, Father of Internet Vint Cerf, Former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, Harvard University Professors Joseph Nye and Thomas Patterson, MIT Professors Nazli Choucri and Alex ‘Sandy’ Pentland, and European Parliament Member Eva Kaili.

The BGF introduced core concepts shaping path breaking international initiatives, notably, the Social Contract for the AI Age, an AI International Accord, the Global Alliance for Digital Governance, the AI World Society (AIWS) Ecosystem, and AIWS City.

### **About the Club de Madrid**

[Club de Madrid](#) is the world’s largest forum of democratic former Presidents and Prime Ministers, who leverage their individual and collective leadership experience and global reach to strengthen inclusive democratic practice and improve the well-being of people around the world.

As a non-partisan and international non-profit organisation, it counts on the hands-on governance experience of more than 100 Members from over 70 countries, along with a global network of advisers and partners across all sectors of society.

This unique alliance stimulates dialogue, builds bridges and engages in advocacy efforts to strengthen public policies and effective leadership through recommendations that tackle challenges such as, inclusion, sustainable development and peace at the national and multilateral level.

Links and Attachment:

- [Media kit for Policy Lab](#)
- [Registration for Policy Lab](#)
- [About the Boston Global Forum](#)
- Cover of *Remaking the World – Toward an Age of Global Enlightenment*

Contact:

Nguyen Anh Tuan. Email: [Tuan\\_Nguyen@bostonglobalforum.org](mailto:Tuan_Nguyen@bostonglobalforum.org), 617-286-6589 or  
Jim McManus: [jim@sloweymcmanus.com](mailto:jim@sloweymcmanus.com), 617-413-9232