



**Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)**

Ref.: Circular BDT/DNE/CYB/092

Geneva, 24 December 2025

- Administrations of ITU Member States
- ITU-D Sector Members
- ITU Academia
- National Regulatory Authorities
- United Nations Funds, Programmes,
Specialized agencies and IAEA

Subject: High-level launch and signing ceremony of the Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child, 19 January 2026, 13:00 – 14:15 CET, ITU Headquarters, Room A & Online, Geneva

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to invite you to join the high-level launch and signing ceremony of the ***Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child***.

The Joint Statement, co-branded by over 60 organizations, reflects a strong, collective commitment by UN entities, international organizations, and partners to ensure that the design, development, and deployment of artificial intelligence systems are firmly grounded in the rights, safety, and well-being of children, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. To this end, it outlines 11 recommended areas within a normative framework.

This open, one-hour-and-fifteen minutes session scheduled for the 19th of January 2026 at 13:00 CET, will be held on-site in ITU Headquarters in Geneva and virtually. It will take place as a side event within the [Twenty-fourth meeting of the Council Working Group on Child Online Protection \(CWG-COP\)](#), convened over the course of the day.

The concept note, including the provisional agenda of the session, is attached as Annex 1. Further details on the session are available on the event website entitled: [Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child](#).

To participate in the session, please kindly [register here](#) from 24 December 2025 or via the following link: [Calendar of Events](#). For any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the ITU Focal Point on Child Online Protection, Ms. Fanny Rotino at fanny.rotino@itu.int.

I would be honoured to have you join this important discussion and share your insights to help shape a safer and more inclusive digital future for children.

Yours faithfully,

(signed)

Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava
Director

Annex-1



19 January 2026
13:00-14:15 (Central European Time)

High-Level Launch and Signing of the Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child

Hybrid Event

Logistics:

Date: 19 January 2026

Time: 13:00–14:15 (Geneva time)

Venue: ITU Headquarters, Geneva, Room A & Online

Format: Hybrid Event

Context: Side Event to the Council Working Group on Child Online Protection (CWG-COP)

Background

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming societies and reshaping children’s lives in profound ways. While AI offers major opportunities to enhance children’s learning, inclusion, safety, health and participation, it also presents significant risks—ranging from algorithmic bias and privacy violations to harmful content, child sexual exploitation and abuse, AI-generated exploitation materials, manipulation, and widening digital divides.

Despite rapid technological change, children’s rights—enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols—remain insufficiently integrated into global and national AI governance frameworks. AI systems, tools, and platforms are often not designed with children in mind, and there remains limited capacity across governments, industry, professionals, parents and other caregivers and children to understand and mitigate AI-related risks.

In response to this urgent need, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and UNICEF jointly led a year-long, multi-stakeholder drafting process to develop the Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child. Over 60 institutions—including UN agencies, governments, civil society, academic institutions, and major technology companies —contributed to the drafting. The voices of numerous children from all five regions of the United Nations were given due weight in the draft.

This Joint Statement represents the first international document dedicated specifically to child rights in the context of AI and establishes a unified global position on how AI must be designed, developed, deployed, and governed to respect, protect, and advance children's rights. It aligns with CRC General Comment No. 25 (2021) on children’s rights in the digital environment and with ITU’s Child Online Protection (COP) mandate under Resolutions 67 and 179.

Purpose of the Event

The side event will serve as the official launch and symbolic signing ceremony of the Joint Statement. It aims to:

- Publicly present the Joint Statement and its key recommendations.
- Showcase global multi-agency commitment to child-rights-based AI governance.
- Strengthen coordination among UN bodies, governments, private sector, civil society, and technical communities.
- Encourage Member States and partners to integrate child rights into AI policies, standards, and regulatory frameworks.

Key Areas covered in the Joint Statement

- Child-rights-based AI governance by States
- Child rights-based AI governance by UN bodies and other international and regional organizations in accordance with international law
- Responsibility, accountability and transparency
- Child safety
- Data protection and privacy
- Best interests of the child
- Non-discrimination and inclusion
- Child participation
- AI and the environment, including climate change
- Capacity building
- Education, science and awareness-raising

Expected Outcomes

The Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child is expected to contribute in:

- Increased global awareness and endorsement of child-rights-based AI governance.
- Stronger alignment among UN agencies, governments, industry, and civil society.
- Commitment to implement recommendations at national and institutional levels.
- Momentum for future collaboration, standards development, and practical support to Member States.
- Enhanced protection and empowerment of children in AI-driven digital environments.

Event website

For more information, visit the event page at:

[Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child.](#)

Registration

Please, [register here](#).

Provisional agenda

13:00 – 13:15 CET	<u>Opening Segment</u> High-level remarks
13:15 – 13:25 CET	<u>Formal Signing Ceremony</u> Symbolic signing by co-signing organizations Group photo of signatories
13:25 – 14:00 CET	<u>Moderated Panel</u> <u>Theme:</u> <i>From principles to action: implementing child-rights-based AI governance</i>
14:00 – 14:15 CET	<u>Closing</u> Reflections from a child Group photo

Event Coordinator

Contact ITU Focal Point on Child Online Protection: Ms. Fanny Rotino at fanny.rotino@itu.int