**Embedding Human Rights in AI Standards: From Principles to Practice**

**Freedom Online Coalition (FOC), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**

**Thursday, 10 July 2025 | 16:00–16:45 | Room E**

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Session/179

**Key Issues discussed: Looking Beyond 2025**

* The growing importance of embedding human rights into the lifecycle of AI systems through inclusive, transparent, and accountable standardization processes.
* Technical standards as both guardrails and enablers of human rights, shaping access to services, freedom from discrimination, and privacy protection.
* Concrete frameworks emerging from organizations like ITU, OHCHR, IEEE, and Women at the Table for aligning AI governance with international human rights law.
* Challenges in translating abstract human rights principles into technical specifications across global standardization bodies.
* New initiatives such as the Human Rights AI Benchmark and training modules on human rights in standardization.
* Evidence of consensus among Member States, including adoption of recent Human Rights Council resolutions and collaboration across SDOs.
* Strong momentum for multi-stakeholder and Global South participation in standard-setting processes.
* The urgent need for early-stage engagement with AI developers, particularly those working in the private sector.

**Tangible Outcomes of the session**

* Strengthened collaboration between the ITU and OHCHR with a joint work plan on standards and human rights.
* Announcement of a Human Rights AI Benchmark project led by Women at the Table, aiming to guide procurement and regulatory decisions.
* IEEE reaffirmed its commitment to expanding the 7000-series standards addressing ethical and social impacts of technology.
* Consensus on embedding human rights training modules into standardization committee processes (e.g., ITU human rights courses).
* Shared learning from diverse initiatives, including inclusive data standards and city-level digital humanism frameworks.

**Key Recommendations and Forward-Looking Action Plan for the WSIS+20 Review and Beyond**

* Promote inclusive participation of civil society and Global South stakeholders in AI standard-setting bodies.
* Encourage standardization bodies to adopt and scale human rights due diligence frameworks throughout the AI lifecycle.
* Prioritize capacity-building and shared vocabulary efforts to bridge gaps between human rights experts and technical communities.
* Support the operationalization of the Global Digital Compact's recommendations, including the creation of an AI Standards Exchange.
* Facilitate early engagement with AI developers and model creators to address risks before products reach the market.