

End UN Partnership with Genocide-Enabling Tech in “AI for Good” Conference and Regulate AI and Cloud as Dual-Use Technology

Background

1. By contracting, platforming and whitewashing tech companies’ complicity through events such as the “AI for Good” summit while these corporations’ AI is enabling Israel’s genocidal war on Palestinians in Gaza raises urgent questions about the United Nations’ complicity in corporate sponsored systematic degradation and annihilation of the Palestinian people.
2. The UN owes a great debt to the Palestinian people. Just as the Berlin Conference carved up Africa in 1884, the UN carved up the land of historic Palestine in 1947, which played a fundamental role in enabling the Zionist settler-colonial ethnic cleansing of most of the Indigenous Palestinian people. Historians [agree](#) that [UN General Assembly Resolution 181](#), which illegally and unethically partitioned historic Palestine and helped dispossess and forcibly displaced most of its people, was the [genesis of Israeli apartheid](#).
3. As AI ethics scholars warn, the digital arms being sold to the Israeli military used to commit egregious war crimes will be exported globally after being tested on Palestinians. The militarization of AI and cloud technologies has already begun and major tech companies including Google have [rolled back](#) their human rights and non-militarization commitments in total disregard of international law.
4. AI, in particular target acquisition systems, remote biometric surveillance systems, and the cloud services that enable them, should be classified as dual-use items because of their military applications violating human rights in Israel’s Gaza genocide and its illegal military occupation and apartheid regime. Unregulated AI and cloud with the capacity to be used as weapons, as demonstrated in the Gaza genocide, pose an urgent threat to international peace and security. It is the UN’s responsibility to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace, including through ending its partnerships, contracts, and relationship with complicit companies that pose a serious threat to world peace and human rights.
5. This call not only comes from Palestinian civil society and other concerned organizations worldwide, but also from Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Cisco, Intel and Oracle workers of conscience. Tech workers are [speaking out](#) against the unregulated militarization of their respective companies’ technologies. The UN should heed workers’ warnings and calls from civil society to protect human rights globally by regulating AI and cloud as dual-use technologies and suspending all relationships with companies complicit in serious violations of the UN [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) and [the UNDP Guide on Heightened Human Rights Due Diligence for Business in Conflict-Affected Contexts](#), while exacerbating violations of International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law, and, the [UN supplier code of conduct](#), and enabling the forfeiture of state [obligations](#) under international law.

6. In 2021, the Israeli military openly called its 11-day bombardment of Gaza [the first “AI war.”](#) but the world has now witnessed a full blown [AI-assisted genocide](#) targeting 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza since October 2023. As Israel’s Colonel Racheli Dembinsky [admitted](#) at the IT for IDF conference in July 2024, “the cloud has many advantages...and [must be treated] as a weapon for all intents and purposes.” Alarmed experts on the emerging field of AI military applications urge due diligence and emphasize the need for robust ethical standards, international cooperation, and stringent control measures to prevent misuse.
7. Israel’s use of automation in perpetrating its genocide in Gaza is one of the most egregious abuses of technology in modern warfare. Israel has adopted the use of several AI programs in military and administrative operations. These AI programs are used for a range of purposes violating Palestinian rights in the occupied territory: to target and bomb Palestinians in Gaza, to automate military checkpoints restricting Palestinian freedom of movement in the West Bank, and to implement “Smart City” surveillance projects in [East Jerusalem and Hebron](#). These AI programs, mostly supplied by US tech companies (including, but not limited to [Google](#), [Amazon](#), [Palantir](#), and [Microsoft](#)), are enabled by cloud technologies supplied by many of the same Silicon Valley giants.

Some of the hardware enabling these programmes have also been supplied by [Dutch](#) and [Chinese](#) surveillance manufacturers, such as TKH Group and Hikvision, respectively. The deadliest of these AI programs being reported in Israel’s military operations include Habsora (“The Gospel”), Lavender, and Where’s Daddy¹. These AI programs are deliberately employed by the Israeli military to radically increase the scale of destruction and death in Gaza through probabilistic target acquisition systems that generate “kill lists” based on arbitrary and unlawful mass surveillance data on Palestinians. But The Gospel, Lavender² and Where’s Daddy are only parts of a sprawling network of weaponized surveillance and repression that dominates the lives of Palestinians under Israel’s military occupation. The web of surveillance that bolsters military checkpoints in Palestinian residential areas and collects photos and other biometric data, including any information they capture about Palestinians living under apartheid, is unlawful and contributes to the ongoing expansion of Israel’s system of military occupation and apartheid which the International Court of Justice in July 2024 ruled must be dismantled.

8. As stated even in the deficient UN Supplier Code of Conduct, “the UN expects its suppliers to support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and to ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.” Several major tech companies contracted by the UN have

¹ Where’s Daddy is designed to target the civilian families of alleged combatants, amounting to collective punishment. This program cannot run without the extensive cloud services provided by Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Palantir, Cisco, as [reported](#) by the Associated Press.

² The [European Union’s AI Act](#) bans social scoring systems that work like Lavender. By adjusting the target threshold arbitrarily to meet genocidal objectives, Israel subjects even more Palestinian civilians into an indiscriminate killing machine.

been exposed for their complicity in Israel's crimes (see Annex) and therefore fail to meet the human rights requirements in this Code.

9. The UN must intervene through regulations and take meaningful action to prevent further harm by not allowing companies complicit in genocide and apartheid to speak at or sponsor the AI for Good summit. This would be in keeping with clause 20(b) of A/RES/78/213 of the UN Human Rights Committee, which states: “To prevent harm to individuals caused by artificial intelligence systems and to *refrain from or cease the use of artificial intelligence applications that are impossible to operate in compliance with international human rights law or that pose undue risks to the enjoyment of human rights*, unless and until the adequate safeguards to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms are in place.”
10. Microsoft is perhaps the most complicit tech company in Israel's illegal occupation, apartheid , and ongoing genocide in Gaza and therefore should the UN should not work with Microsoft's UN Affairs offices in Geneva and New York given that Microsoft knowingly provides Israel with customized technology, including AI, that enables its atrocity crimes. The international community, including UN leaders and member States, should be concerned about the risk of corporate capture.³ Microsoft's complicity in Israel's apartheid and genocide is well documented (see Annex).
11. Under the Genocide Convention, Third States have an obligation to ensure that they take all measures possible to prevent genocide or genocidal acts, including through ensuring that companies domiciled within their jurisdictions do not contribute with economic activity that could enable genocide. As such, the host countries of the tech companies in question are also failing to meet their obligations under international law. For the UN to partner with such companies defies the very logic of the Genocide Convention.

³ [Corporate capture](#) refers to the process by which corporations exert undue influence over government institutions and policies to advance their own interests.