

GNI Policy Brief on Government Interventions in AI: ONE PAGER (COMPANIES)



The Global Network Initiative (GNI) is a multistakeholder initiative focused on safeguarding freedom of expression and privacy in tech. In October 2025, GNI and its multistakeholder AI Working Group (AIWG) launched a Policy Brief to aid understanding of the human rights implications of government interventions in artificial intelligence AI (“Brief”). The Brief presents a taxonomy of five types of government interventions—hard and soft governance, investment, procurement, and informal influence—across the AI value chain of infrastructure, development, and deployment, with illustrative examples from diverse regions.

The Brief highlights how government interventions in AI can both advance and undermine the rights to freedom of expression, privacy, and non-discrimination. Positive measures—such as mandatory human rights assessments, risk-based regulation, privacy laws, inclusive investments, and rights-focused procurement—can strengthen protections, while overbroad censorship, discriminatory surveillance, restrictive export controls, and weak legal safeguards risk violating rights and deepening inequality.

The Brief concludes with recommendations for governments, companies, and civil society, encouraging all sectors to use international human rights law as a basis for developing and analyzing interventions that impact human rights. The recommendations made to **companies** include:



Embedding Corporate Human Rights Responsibility: All companies involved in the AI value chain must respect users’ human rights, including but not limited to the right to freedom of expression, privacy, and non-discrimination. They should make a best effort to uphold international human rights standards, even if national regulations fall short, and demonstrate their adherence through frameworks like the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the GNI framework.



Conducting Responsible Policy Advocacy: Companies should actively advocate for laws and regulations that align with international human rights norms and avoid supporting those that do not. They are encouraged to collaborate with civil society, international organizations, and multistakeholder groups to advance coherent, rights-respecting public policy in all jurisdictions where they operate.



Managing Government Demands: Companies must assess and respond to government demands or restrictions based on international human rights criteria—legality, legitimacy, necessity, and proportionality. When such actions fail to meet these standards, firms should seek to challenge, limit, or mitigate compliance through advocacy, dialogue, and engagement in multilateral or multistakeholder forums.



Conducting Ongoing Human Rights Due Diligence: Companies should conduct ongoing human rights due diligence (HRDD), including engaging with affected stakeholders, to identify, prevent, and mitigate potential human rights impacts from AI systems. In high-risk scenarios, such as launching new products or operating in sensitive regions, companies should also perform detailed Human Rights Impact Assessments (HRIAs). For identified AI-related risks to rights, examples of preventative or mitigating measures could include supporting independent research and civil society monitoring, promoting AI literacy, building digital security capacity, or collaborating on developing locally relevant, rights-respecting AI models (especially in regions with weak governance or oversight).



Ensuring Transparency and Accountability: Organizations should be transparent with users and the public by publishing HRDD and HRIA findings, disclosing government interventions where possible, and providing clear communication in local languages. They should also establish accessible grievance mechanisms, in line with UNGP best practices, to enable affected users or rightsholders to raise and resolve human rights concerns.

GNI Policy Brief on Government Interventions in AI:

ONE PAGER (COMPANIES: AI SAFETY)



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The Brief highlights how government interventions in AI can both advance and undermine the rights to freedom of expression, privacy, and non-discrimination. Positive measures—such as mandatory human rights assessments, risk-based regulation, privacy laws, inclusive investments, and rights-focused procurement—can strengthen protections, while overbroad censorship, discriminatory surveillance, restrictive export controls, and weak legal safeguards risk violating rights and deepening inequality.

The Brief concludes with recommendations for governments, companies, and civil society, encouraging all sectors to use international human rights law as a basis for developing and analyzing interventions that impact human rights. The recommendations made to AI safety practitioners within **companies** include:



Embedding Human Rights Responsibility in AI Safety Initiatives: All companies involved in the AI value chain should incorporate respect for human rights into their AI safety policies and initiatives, including but not limited to the right to freedom of expression, privacy, and non-discrimination. They should make a best effort to uphold international human rights standards, even if national regulations fall short, and demonstrate their adherence through frameworks like the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the GNI Principles and Implementation Guidelines.



Conducting Responsible Policy Advocacy: Companies should actively advocate for laws and regulations that align with international human rights norms and avoid supporting those that do not. They are encouraged to collaborate with civil society, international organizations, and multistakeholder groups to advance coherent, rights-respecting public policy in all jurisdictions where they operate.



Considering the Impact of Government Demands as part of AI Safety: AI safety practitioners should be involved when companies assess and respond to government demands or restrictions based on international human rights criteria—legality, legitimacy, necessity, and proportionality, as such demands can impact the company’s AI safety efforts. When such actions fail to meet these standards, firms should seek to challenge, limit, or mitigate compliance through advocacy, dialogue, and engagement in multilateral or multistakeholder forums.



Adapting Safety Efforts to Include Ongoing Human Rights Due Diligence: Companies should conduct ongoing human rights due diligence (HRDD), including engaging with affected stakeholders, to identify, prevent, and mitigate potential human rights impacts from AI systems. In high-risk scenarios, such as launching new products or operating in sensitive regions, companies should also perform detailed Human Rights Impact Assessments (HRIAs). These human rights-focused assessments can and should complement ongoing AI safety and policy efforts. For example, for identified AI-related risks to rights, preventative or mitigating measures could include supporting independent research and civil society monitoring, promoting AI literacy, building digital security capacity, or collaborating on developing locally relevant, rights-respecting AI models.



Center Transparency and Accountability in AI Safety Efforts: Organizations should be transparent with users and the public by building on ongoing transparency reporting to include publishing HRDD and HRIA findings, disclosing government interventions where possible, and providing clear communication in local languages. They should also establish accessible grievance mechanisms, in line with UNGP best practices, to enable affected users or rightsholders to raise and resolve human rights concerns.