



## Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation

### KEY MESSAGES

*Secretary-General will launch the Roadmap on Thursday 11 June, 2020. These key messages should guide UN spokespeople when referring to the report and featuring within UN content.*

#### Topline messages

- **We cannot reap the full benefits of the digital age without mobilizing the global cooperation and governance needed to mitigate its potential harms.**
- **Digital cooperation must keep pace with the accelerating shift towards a digital world, otherwise we risk a growing digital divide.**
- **The UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation provides a vision and steerage for a digitally interdependent world. It lays out actions for the global community to CONNECT, RESPECT, and PROTECT people in the digital age.**
- **The Roadmap is a call to connect all people by 2030; respect human rights online; and protect the most vulnerable from the potential perils of digital advancement.**
- **The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored our reliance on digital technology and is an urgent call to address how we can use and safeguard digital technologies to help all people**

#### What is digital cooperation and why does it matter?

- Accelerated by the COVID-19 crisis, the world is shifting from analog to digital faster than ever before. While the digital era has brought society many incredible benefits and can help us to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, we also face many challenges such as growing digital divides, cyber threats, and human rights violations online.
- Everyone is impacted by digital technologies and everyone has a role to play in shaping the digital future. Managing the social, political, cultural and economic impacts of digital technologies requires global cooperation – across borders, and between sectors. Though, without digital cooperation, we will see further digital fragmentation and increased vulnerabilities.
- The United Nations stands ready to serve as the global platform for dialogue on digital cooperation, where governments, the private sector and civil society come together to harness these technologies and mitigate their risks.

#### What is the United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation?

- **The United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation outlines concrete actions for the global community to CONNECT, RESPECT, and PROTECT people in the digital age.**

### Why does the Roadmap matter?

- The Roadmap advocates for global cooperation around digital issues that matter for all people. The Secretary-General has set forward the Digital Cooperation Roadmap to:
  - **CONNECT: We must achieve universal, safe, inclusive, and affordable access to the Internet for all by 2030. Overcoming the digital divide is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.**
  - **RESPECT: Human rights exist online as they do offline and need to be at the center of digital technology. Putting human rights and human agency at the center of everything is crucial in the digital space.**
  - **PROTECT: We must mitigate online harms and rising digital security threats, especially for the most vulnerable amongst us.**

### Background:

- In June 2020, the United Nations Secretary-General issued a Roadmap for Digital Cooperation calling on the global community to collaborate on a range of areas related to the use of information and communications technologies as we look toward a post-COVID-19 world.
- The Secretary-General's Roadmap builds on recommendations made by the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, and input from Member States, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and other stakeholder groups.

### The Roadmap's key actions:

- To meet the call to connect, respect, and protect the online world, the action-oriented Roadmap presents the Secretary-General's recommendations for concrete action by diverse stakeholders that would enhance global digital cooperation in the following areas:
  1. **Achieving universal, affordable, connectivity by 2030**—everyone should have access to the internet.
  2. **Promoting digital public goods to create a more equitable world**—the internet's open source, public origins should be embraced and supported.
  3. **Ensuring digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable**—under-served groups need equal access to digital tools to accelerate developmental progress.
  4. **Strengthening digital capacity building**—skill development and training are needed around the world.
  5. **Ensuring the protection of human rights in the digital era**—human rights apply both online and offline.
  6. **Supporting global cooperation on Artificial Intelligence that is trustworthy, human-rights based, safe and sustainable and promotes peace**
  7. **Promoting digital trust and security**— calling for a global dialogue to advance the Sustainable Development Goals.
  8. **Building a more effective architecture for digital cooperation**—make digital governance a priority and focus the organization's approach.

### Why now?

- If digital cooperation cannot keep pace with the accelerating shift towards a digital world, we risk an even greater digital divide.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored an even greater need for and reliance on digital technology, which will make the world more interdependent than ever before. COVID-19 is an urgent call to address how we can use and safeguard digital technologies to help all people.
  - Amid the devastation of COVID-19, digital technologies offer safety, relief, and hope to many—through vaccine research, remote work, e-commerce, and public service announcements.
  - As COVID-19 brings growing reliance on connectivity, it exposes the growing divide between digital haves and have-nots. Digital divides threaten to become the new face of inequality, poised to exacerbate economic and other existing inequalities. Given the rapid and irreversible changes overcoming societies in our COVID and post-COVID world, there is a critical need to accelerate the multi-stakeholder cooperation necessary to expand affordable Internet access to all.
  - As we emerge from the crisis there needs to be a global, collective responsibility to rebuild economies and societies on a safer and more equitable technological foundation.
  - The pandemic has also highlighted the rising threats to personal security and critical infrastructure. We have seen cyberattacks on healthcare services, systems, and personnel who are fighting to save lives and mitigate the damage of the virus. These attacks – including against the World Health Organization – highlight the vulnerability of our systems and the need for digital cooperation.

### The Roadmap's purpose:

- We need global vision and steerage for a digitally interdependent world. The fourth industrial revolution is long underway as the fusion between our digital and physical worlds accelerates—and yet technology has largely gone ungoverned.
- **The Roadmap for Digital Cooperation calls for us to scale-up successful efforts and broaden partnerships. It is a call to connect all people by 2030; respect human rights online; and protect the most vulnerable from the potential perils of digital advancement.**
  - There is a need to prevent the online world from increased digital fragmentation. Geopolitical divides, technological competition, and polarization are undermining the shared character of the digital world. The digital age can be one that is marked by increased international cooperation – not distrust.
  - Expanded international cooperation—to establish understandings, norms, cooperative frameworks, and safeguards—is urgently needed to ensure humanity maximizes the benefits and minimizes the risks of technology.

### The need for digital cooperation:

- This era of rapid technological transformation has accelerated development at an unprecedented scale – and it has outpaced policymaking at the national, regional, and global levels. It is clear that we cannot reap the full benefits of the digital age without mobilizing the global cooperation and governance needed to mitigate its potential harms.
  - Digital technology and the Internet have the potential to bring us together and uplift humanity for a more prosperous future, but achieving this outcome requires global cooperation.
  - Economic prosperity increasingly depends on access to the internet and digital tools, but many people lack equal access. Especially since the post-COVID world will be more

digital than ever before, the global recovery from COVID makes addressing digital issues even more urgent.

- Cyber conflict is on the rise. Digital security and privacy are increasingly at risk. If we do not come together to address the challenges and opportunities of digital technology, we will lose the opportunity to manage its impact, steer its use, and ensure that it presents a level playing field.
- Faced with a limitless digital future, government action is critical, but cooperation must be global and multi-stakeholder, with support from the private sector, technology companies, civil society, and other stakeholders.
- Collective global action will help ensure digital technologies are harnessed for the good of all. At the UN's 75th anniversary, we must rise to the challenge and take concrete action together to support greater connectivity, inclusion, digital human rights, trust, and security.