Center for AI and Digital Policy

October 16, 2023

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak
10 Downing Street
SW1A 2AA
United Kingdom

Dear Prime Minister,

We write to you regarding the upcoming AI Summit to urge you to ensure that the AI safety agenda does not displace the AI fairness agenda. The Center for AI and Digital Policy, representing AI policy experts from more than 80 countries, is squarely focused on the need to ensure that national AI policies promote democratic values.

We know from your meeting with President Biden earlier this year that you share this commitment. Yet the reports of the upcoming UK AI Summit show a narrow focus on safety and existential risk. While we do not dispute these are important considerations for AI governance, they must not be the only considerations. Topics such as bias, equity, fairness, and accountability should be included in the meeting agenda.

Civil society groups and independent academic experts must be at the table with tech CEOs, government ministers, and others who will shape the UK AI strategy and propose the next steps after the Summit is concluded. They should not be relegated to fringe events. Public participation is central to democratic legitimacy.

We also urge you to establish prohibitions on the development and deployment of certain AI systems. The previous UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has said that there should be a moratorium on AI systems that violate human rights. Computer scientists have urged a pause on advanced AI systems. If it is not possible to maintain control of an AI system, then there should be a clear obligation to terminate the AI system. One concrete outcome of the AI Summit should be the endorsement of the Termination Obligation set out in the Universal Guidelines for AI.

The UK government must seize this moment to ensure that AI is trustworthy and human-centric, that AI governance protects fundamental rights, upholds democratic values, and preserves the rule of law. The Center for AI and Digital Policy stands ready to assist you in this critical undertaking.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely yours,

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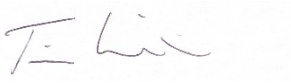

Tina Lassiter
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Attachments

Merve Hickok and Marc Rotenberg, *The UK AI Summit: Time to Elevate Democratic Values*, **Council on Foreign Relations** (Sept. 27, 2023), https://www.cfr.org/blog/uk-ai-summit-time-elevate-democratic-values

Merve Hickok, Lorraine Kisselburgh, Marc Rotenberg, *UK AI Policy*, **The Economist** (May 13, 2023)

Center for AI and Digital Policy

COUNCIL on FOREIGN RELATIONS

from Net Politics *and* Digital and Cyberspace Policy Program

The UK AI Summit: Time to Elevate Democratic Values

Ahead of the Global Summit on Artificial Intelligence Safety from November 1 to 2, the United Kingdom needs to bring its AI policy back in line with the values of freedom, democracy, and rule of law.

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak delivers a speech during a press conference on the net zero target, at the Downing Street Briefing Room in central Londonon September 20, 2023. Justin Tallis/Reuters

Blog Post by Merve Hickok and Marc Rotenberg, Guest Contributors

September 27, 2023 11:28 am (EST)

Not long ago, the United States and the United Kingdom were leading the effort to establish global norms for the governance of artificial intelligence (AI). Both nations

Center for AI and Digital Policy

The Economist

Letters | On non-aligned countries and Ukraine, Israel, Turkey, artificial intelligence

Letters to the editor

We share your assessment that Britain's "light-touch" approach to regulating AI is unlikely to establish the necessary guardrails to make it safe and reliable. In our comprehensive survey of national AI policies and practices, the ***Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values index***, we found that countries favour greater regulation as they develop a deeper understanding of the uses of AI. This is true not only in the EU and China, but also in America, where Joe Biden has recently stated that companies should not release commercial AI products that are not safe. The White House has called for an AI bill of rights, and federal agencies, including the Federal Trade Commission, have issued a joint declaration on enforcement efforts against discrimination and bias in automated systems. Chuck Schumer, the leader of the Senate, has made AI a legislative priority.

As for the principles-based approach you propose, one possibility is the **Universal Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence**, a foundational framework for AI policy that outlines rights and responsibilities for the development and deployment of AI systems to maximise the benefits and minimise the risks.

MERVE HICKOK
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LORRAINE KISSELBURGH
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Washington, DC

May 11, 2023

Center for AI and Digital Policy