**POSITION PAPER**

**AGENDA-REGULATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO PREVENT DIGITAL COLONIALISM**

**COMMITTEE-UNGA**

**PORTFOLIO-SWITZERLAND**

**INTRODUCTION**

The **Swiss Confederation** stands firmly committed to the **principles of human rights**, which are essential for ensuring a dignified life and achieving sustainable development. As a nation with a long-standing record of neutrality and opposition to colonialism, Switzerland recognizes the urgent need to address the **emerging threat of digital colonialism**, especially as it disproportionately impacts **poorer and developing nations** through the **unregulated use of Artificial Intelligence** and digital technologies.

**BACKGROUND**

**Digital Colonialism** refers to the **domination of digital spaces, data, and technological infrastructure** in less-developed countries by powerful global tech giants—mainly from the **United States and China**. This phenomenon leads to several negative outcomes:

* **Digital Exploitation**: Users’ data is harvested and monetized without fair compensation.
* **Cultural Erasure**: Dominant cultures are amplified, while local languages, traditions, and content are marginalized.
* **Economic Dependence**: Developing countries become reliant on foreign technology and platforms, limiting their digital autonomy.

Ultimately, digital colonialism creates a digital ecosystem where **wealthier nations control the tools and reap the benefits**, while poorer countries are left **dependent and vulnerable**.

**SWITZERLAND’S PERSPECTIVE**

Switzerland strongly advocates for the **regulation of Artificial Intelligence** and the **protection of digital rights** to combat digital colonialism. Although it has no single policy named directly after this issue, Switzerland has enacted **multiple measures** that collectively address this growing concern.

Key initiatives include:

* The **Digital Foreign Policy Strategy (2021–2024)**, which champions **digital self-determination**—emphasizing individuals' control over their own data within international legal frameworks.
* Several Swiss **cantons** such as Geneva, Neuchâtel, Basel-Stadt, Lucerne, Jura, Zug, and Vaud have proposed or implemented **constitutional rights to digital integrity**, affirming citizens' autonomy over their digital lives.

**PROPOSALS**

To effectively safeguard digital human rights and resist digital colonialism, Switzerland proposes the following actions:

1. **Data Sovereignty**
   * Encourage countries to **store and manage data locally**, reducing reliance on foreign cloud infrastructure.
2. **Open-Source Requirements**
   * Promote **open-source software** in public services to avoid dependency on proprietary platforms controlled by foreign corporations.
3. **Citizen-First Digital Governance**
   * Prioritize the **rights to digital integrity and self-determination**, ensuring that citizens—not corporations—control personal and national data.
4. **Global Digital Governance Hub in Geneva**
   * Strengthen Geneva’s role as a **global center for digital cooperation**, ethics, and technology policy-making.

**CONCLUSION**

With its strong commitment to neutrality, human rights, and digital trust, Switzerland considers fair and moral technology use to be a moral requirement as well as a matter of policy. Switzerland reaffirms its commitment to an inclusive, respectful, and rights-based digital future by advancing data sovereignty, open-source practices, and citizen-first governance, as well as by positioning Geneva as a key hub for international digital cooperation. It is only through collaboration, regulation, and shared accountability that the global community can ensure that technology serves all humanity—not just the privileged few.