**United Nations
Human Rights Council**

Topic Area A: "The Evaluation and Prevention of Potential Human Rights Violations due to the Rapid Technological Development"

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1. Welcoming letter

Esteemed delegates,

We are more than honored to welcome you to the Human Rights Council of the Thessaloniki International Student Model United Nations 2019 (ThessISMUN 2019). In the world of the United Nations, the Human Rights Council (UNHRC) was established so as to discuss the most important, global issues regarding human rights. Therefore, two really interesting topics were selected to let you experience the real essence of the Council.

The first topic is an opportunity for you to explore the influence of technology on human rights and how its developments may result in their violations. The second topic will give you an insight into the situation in Venezuela and it needs you to debate how the Council could help the Venezuelan people.

After thorough research, we have conducted for you two study guides, one for each topic. These will serve as your tools and your guidelines while you are making your own preparation on your country's policy. We believe that the present documents combined with your personal research will be more than sufficient to fully comprehend the two topics under discussion and be ready for our debates at the conference.

Moreover, we ought to underline that we are always at your disposal should you have any questions regarding our committee and/or our topics. With that being said, we would like to kindly ask you to respect the given deadlines to help us provide you with the support you may need.

Don't forget to have with you your negotiation skills, your respect for the diplomatic courtesy and a pen!

See you in Thessaloniki.

Best regards,

The Board of the UN Human Rights Council,

Georgiadou Danai, *President*

Aravidis Iraklis, *Vice President*

Mpountidou Anna-Maria, *High Commissioner of Human Rights*

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2. Introduction to the Committee

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body of the United Nations (UN) that consists of 47 States solely responsible for the promotion and protection of Human Rights around the globe.[1]

It was established by the UN General Assembly on the 15th of March of 2006 by resolution 60/251.[2] Its first session took place only a couple of months later, from the 19th to the 30th of June of the same year.[3]

The Council's mandate is "*to promote and protect the enjoyment and full realization, by all people, of all rights established in the Charter of the United Nations and in international human rights laws and treaties*".[4] Said mandate is supported by the resolution 48/141 of the UN General Assembly, the UN Charter, the UN Declaration of Human rights, the Treaty of Vienna, the Programme of Action, the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document and last but not least the decisions of human rights instruments.[5]

Its mechanisms are contained within the "Institution-building package" adopted a year after its creation and it contains the 3 main mechanisms: the Universal Periodic Review, which assesses Human Rights situations in UN Member States, The Advisory Committee, the HRCs' think tanks and the Complaint Procedure where HR Defenders and Non Governmental Organizations can bring forth to the attention of the Council HR violations.[6] Additionally every task the Council performs shall be reviewed by the General assembly every 5 years.[7]

The Human Rights Council can be comprised of representatives of any Member State of the UN. The member states elect via majority in the General Assembly of the UN 47 of their own in a secret voting procedure.[8] Obligatorily the Council has to have an equitable geographical distribution that goes as follows: African States: 13 representatives, Asia-Pacific States: 13 representatives, Latin American and Caribbean States: 8 representatives, Western European and other States: 7 representatives, Eastern European States: 6 representatives.[9] The Bureau of the Council is tallied to 5 people: 1 President and 4 Vice-Presidents representing one group each. They all serve for the duration of 1 year.[10]

3. Introduction to the Topic

One of the most important aspects of our everyday life is technology – an advancement of human nature that has made our life easier since its creation. From fire, farming, pottery and other low-tech survival advancements throughout the history to engine powered machines, telecommunications and even space travel, the technological

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[1] Ohchr.org. (n.d.). OHCHR | HRC Home.
https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Home.aspx

[2] ibid

[3] ibid

[4] Ochr.org.(n.d.). OHCHR| HRC Mandate.
https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ABOUTUS/Pages/Mandate.aspx

[5] ibid

[6] Ohchr.org. (n.d.). OHCHR | HRC Home.
https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Home.aspx

[7] Ohchr.org. (n.d.). OHCHR | HRC Membership Available at:
https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Membership.aspx

[8] ibid

[9] ibid

[10] ibid

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developments that the human brain managed to conceive and materialize; propelling one of the weakest mammal's evolution had created to the most dominant species on the globe.

While technology evolved at a steady pace, change brought new issues forcing mankind to question its reality and advance accordingly. That is why humanity made so many steps throughout the ages, because after the resolution of each set off issues it progressed even further, driven by the want for a better life. One of the best examples is the Renaissance followed by the era of Colonization, one very bloody period of great discoveries that questioned the very existence of Europe, followed by another equally bloody age of even greater discoveries that questioned the existence of the entirety of the world.

Hungry for more, humanity started trekking through progress quicker. That led to a hunt for resources, time and workers to materialize the dreams and aspirations of empire holders. Extensive slavery and exploitation of more than half of the known world was the state our world was in, up until the start of the de-colonization period when the human rights started to evolve. By that time terrible atrocities had been committed in its name and even more were to follow. During and after the end of War World II the rally of progress started again, rushing through the Cold War era in a pace never seen before, right up to today. Nowadays the whole world participate in the said rally and progress is faster than ever before, meaning that its effects are more obvious.

The first to take a heavy hit was the environment. Climate change, earth, water and air pollution by chemical pollutants and waste are a grave issue of today's society. Years upon years of wasteful and polluting energy sources have tempered a lot with the biosphere leading it in the verge of what is considered to be critical levels and the entire globe is at peril.

In addition, societies have undergone through massive changes due to technological advancement. Their way of function has shifted from a survival and progressive state to a more self-propelling one focused solely on consumerism through technological advancement and distanced from the protection of human rights.

Last but not least, the human kind at its core has changed, following the society trend. The economical and societal leaders have distanced themselves from the populous, in an effort to maintain their power and wealth. There exist many countries where modern slavery, especially in children, one of the most hideous crimes against humanity, exists. According to UNICEF statistics, there are pinpointed the areas in the least advanced states of the globe with the Asian- Pacific holding the first place with 127 million children working in horrendous conditions[11]. This leads to the result that the morals of the modern day human have devolved in service of technology.

Thankfully the middle spectrum of the society has started becoming more and more involved with humanitarianism and environmentalism. A small ripple effect that has started gaining momentum over the years has now turned NGOs and Human Rights Defenders into a very important weapon in the modern-day attempt of the soul of humanity to lobby against the products of technological development and easy living.

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[11]Factsheet: Child Labour. (n.d.). [report] Available at:
https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/child_labour.pdf

4. Definitions

4.1. Ethics

"*A system of accepted beliefs that control behavior, especially such a system based on morals.*"[12] When referring to ethics we will be talking for specific disciplines such as -but not limited to- bioengineering, medicine and economics: "*Many different disciplines, institutions, and professions have standards for behavior that suit their particular aims and goals. These standards also help members of the discipline to coordinate their actions or activities and to establish the public's trust of the discipline. Ethical norms also serve the aims or goals of research and apply to people who conduct scientific research or other scholarly or creative activities.*"[13]

4.2 Cyber-Security

"*The state of being protected against the criminal or unauthorized use of electronic data, or the measures taken to achieve this.*"[14] Moreover, one can define cyber-security as "*the practice of defending computers, servers, mobile devices, electronic systems, networks, and data from malicious attacks. It's also known as information technology security or electronic information security. The term applies in a variety of contexts, from business to mobile computing, and can be divided into a few common categories.*"[15]

4.3 Dumping

Taking under consideration the aspect of the definition that is in relation with trade, one can refer to the term as "*a situation of international price discrimination, where the price of a product when sold in the importing country is less than the price of that product in the market of the exporting country.*"[16] Or via the General Agreement on Tariffs and trade (commonly referred to as the GATT treaty) the exact definition is "*the introduction of a product into the commerce of another country at less than its normal value.*"[17]

With regards to the ecological aspect of the term, once can define it as "the *act of throwing something away in a place that is not suitable or allowed by law*"[18]

4.4 Anti-Dumping

Technically, it is the measures taken, by law or international treaty to prevent dumping policies. According the GATT agreement measures can be taken if "*a determination is made (a) that dumping is occurring, (b) that the domestic industry producing the like product in the importing country is suffering material injury, and (c) that there is a*

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[12] Dictionary.cambridge.org. (n.d.). Ethics | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. [online] Available at: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/ethic

[13] Resnik, D. (2015). What is Ethics in Research & Why is it Important?. [online] National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Available at:
https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/index.cfm.

[14] Oxford Dictionaries | English. (n.d.). cybersecurity | Definition of cybersecurity in English by Oxford Dictionaries. [online] Available at: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/cybersecurity.

[15] Kaspersky.com. (n.d.). *Kaspersky Lab*. [online] Available at: https://www.kaspersky.com/resource-center/definitions/what-is-cyber-security [Accessed 22 Jan. 2019].

[16] Wto.org. (n.d.). WTO | Anti-dumping - Technical Information. [online] Available at:
https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/adp_e/adp_info_e.htm.

[17] Ibid

[18] Ibid

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causal link between the two"[19]This definition covers both environmental and trade dumping since there exist countries who import waste and waste management is considered a field of industry.

4.5 Gerrymandering

The practice of "*dividing of a state, county, etc., into election districts so as to give one political party a majority in many districts while concentrating the voting strength of the other party into as few districts as possible."*[20]Historically it is attributed to a Massachusetts governor named Elbridge Gerry, who in order to win the upcoming senate elections, redrew the district boundaries. It is said that someone noticed it resembled a salamander and conjoined Gerry and –mander to form the new verb in order to make fun of him. He still managed to take the seat and even become the Vice President of the USA, in the side of James Madison[21].

4.6 Technology

According to Collins dictionary, "*technology refers to methods, systems, and devices which are the result of scientific knowledge being used for practical purposes."* [22] The said purpose can be met in every sector of society no matter how small, like art, or big like global commerce.

4.7 Advancement

Advancement is a process, which leads to the development of something new or the improvement of something already in existence. [23]

5. Historical Background

According to Jared Diamond, technology is the main cause of the changes that occurred throughout written history. [24] However, it is noticed that technology was not developed everywhere in the same pace. The main bulk of technological advancements and great empires came from Eurasia.[25] The rest of the world was influenced by the Eurasian technological development during the colonial era, when the colonial powers brought the less technologically advanced indigenous people in touch with the dull edge technology of the time.[26]

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[19]Ibid

[20] www.dictionary.com. (2018). the definition of gerrymander. [online] Available at: https://www.dictionary.com/browse/gerrymander.

[21] Encyclopedia Britannica. (2018). Elbridge Gerry | vice president of United States. [online] Available at: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Elbridge-Gerry

[22] Collinsdictionary.com. (n.d.). Technology definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary. [online] Available at: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/technology.

[23] Dictionary, A. (n.d.). ADVANCEMENT | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. [online] Dictionary.cambridge.org. Available at: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/advancement .

[24]Diamond, J. (2006). Guns,Germs& Steel- The fates of Human Societies. 2nd ed. Katoptro, pp.272-273.

[25] ibid

[26] ibid

Jared Diamond places one of the reasons this large technological gap exists on human need[27]. As the saying goes *"need is the mother of invention"*, thus people evolved their practices to suit their everyday needs. That supports the notion that war generates the greatest advancements in the field of technology.There are little to no things that surpass the need of humans to protect themselves from other humans that threaten to violate their cultural, religious and political beliefs and territory.

A proof of this concept is the creation of Roman roads. The Roman road network is a derivative of the Empire's need to march its legions quickly and efficiently through vast distances to protect their lands or conquer other lands. They were so flawlessly constructed that big parts of the network survived for eons and were used even after the fall of the eastern empire. Moreover, trains and aircrafts, were made primarily for transporting troops, as well as materials needed by the army in a faster pace and reconnaissance respectively.

Last but not least, the modern-day atomic plants are a "cleaner" or "more sustainable" form of energy production, originated from the infamous 'Manhattan Project', a 3 year 2 billion dollars program with the sole purpose of producing an atomic powered bomb to use in the war against Nazi Germany.[28] Its results are the incidents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where the American military dropped the bombs in order to force the unconditional surrender of Emperor Hirohito[29]. In addition to that, the Internet was also created by the American military for faster intelligence sharing through vast distances. Not all of the creations were made to serve one such purpose.

Once again, taking under consideration that the human need is the main purpose of the technological creation, one shall not forget the importance of the engines. The first combustion engines[30], which at the time of their creation were significantly worse than the cartridges, or the phonogram, that Thomas Edison had to publish an article in a local paper which listed uses for it in order for people to be convinced to buy it;[31]

Additionally, as Jared Diamond put it, technology develops exponentially and most of the time its actual use is found after a tool or a notion is created, found or in any shape or form completed and its uses are advanced as the time passes.[32]For example, petroleum was used as tar, resin, sulfur substitute, or accelerant before the modern times. Now, petroleum passes through a vast refinement process and is commonly used in every single one of its refined forms. The actual power that forces technology to be spread around the globe, to progress and to influence accordingly the global societies is humanity itself

People will judge whether or not new technology compares favorably to the already existing technology, therefore if it's prestigious and affordable enough to possess. [33] Additionally, they will judge if said technology is worth to be developed on an economic or societal sector or not and if it promotes their economical and practical interests by adopting the said advantage.[34] Development itself is neutral. This means that humanity gets to judge itself for its mishaps playing judge, jury and executioner.

Thus a grave problem arose. Advancement, as any other process doesn't only have a set of concrete advantages. Disadvantages do exist, of course. To refer to a previous example, combustion engines were and still are extremely useful for transferring people and goods for

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[27]Ibid pp.279-280

[28] History. (2017). Manhattan Project. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/the-manhattan-project

[29] ibid

[30] Diamond, J. (2006). Guns,Germs& Steel- The fates of Human Societies. 2nd ed. Katoptro

[31]Ibid pp 271

[32]Ibid pp 279

[33] ibid

[34] ibid

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great distances, for many years,[35] no matter how much the technology progressed were extremely polluting and wasteful. It took quite enough time to tone it down. This goes to show that the inherent issues caused by rapid progress in our lives and societies, keep piling up for years. While continuously amassing, they kept on inspiring changes in politics like the Revolution of the Bolsheviks[36], in economy securing the capitalist system[37] and last but not least lead to the reconstruction of our societies and human ethos. However the most important detail to note is that change has yet to stop.

6. Analysis of the Topic

We need to discuss this issue from the aspect of facts and figures that from this rapid technological advancement. No matter the fact that further developing technology or reforming it to a more human-friendly form can be a solution, we can locate 4 pillars-issues that are the product of technology advancing in an unequal, unsustainable and improper format around the globe. Those aforementioned issues are the change in Civic Space and the severe problem of future Resource Scarcity and Environmental pollution.[38] The third pylon is the high Inequality in many aspects of society and it is of course the direct impact such as but not limited to technology caused unemployment or disappearance of traditional societal structures.[39]

6.1 Changes in Civic Space

With the influence of technology, we have seen massive changes in the civic space. Without disregarding the fact that civic technology, a sector of technology that assists civilians in monitoring the procedures that the state takes and/ or allows for a better delivery of civic services towards the citizens, is responsible for aiding Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Human Rights Defenders and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) especially where the very idea of civil society is not developed. This has augmented the recognition of the role of civil society, has pointed out with facts and figures race and gender inequality and poverty and has proven that in states like the African ones there is a dire need of more engagement in the democratic process.

In retrospect, this all appears more than fine. Those aforementioned examples are all extremely positive and when technology engages in civil society it benefits it. By searching a little deeper, someone can see where the miscalculation is.

One of the major aspects is that technology has the potential of being a threat to democracy, since the very creation of a democratic system that allows free unimpeded speech and expression can is easily be hurt. Therefore, we see, especially nowadays where information and expression in the West are free, the rise of populist and nationalist up borderline authoritarian parties in the West that has such an advanced civic society is obvious. According to an analysis of Bloomberg[40] compiled by Professor Matthijs Roodijn of the

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[35] ibid

[36] ibid

[37] ibid

[38]Hickin, R. (2017). How is technology affecting our human rights?. [online] World Economic Forum. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/12/how-are-today-s-biggest-tech-trends-affecting-human-rights/ .

[39] ibid

[40] Tartar, A. (2017). How the Populist Right Is Redrawing the Map of Europe. Bloomberg.com. Available at: https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2017-europe-populist-right/

University of Amsterdam, we have 39 political parties in Europe classified as populist/nationalistic with the biggest ones being steering the Visegrad Group (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Poland and Hungary), a steep rise in the Scandinavian countries and even in countries like France and the Hellenic Republic[41]. This appears as a good indicator that good governance and other civic values are at stake.

Additionally, as mentioned before, civic technology assists the lobbying of Civil Society Organizations, since many of the leading NGOs -international and national ones-are able to push for humanitarian and eco-friendly policies through states. However, they are not the only ones. The belief that every government and major corporation member is incorruptible clearly doesn't even exist as a notion. There have been many members of governments that have been accused of corruption like Italy's former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who has been accused from abuse of office to bribery[42]. Technology makes these cases easier to be duplicated, since it is way easier to hide transactions and discussions or approach more vulnerable people and turn them to your "point of view" via tempering, bribery or threats alone. This leads to many cases of corrupt officials all over the world to start bending the law for their own benefits, or many lower level officials to be more easily manipulated by outlaw organizations and powerful firms that perform shady business in trade ranging from petroleum to narcotics. That is a case mostly observed to countries ravished by poverty and is clearly profiteering.

Economic profiteering isn't the only thing that corrupt officials can use civic technology for, after all elections are the only way they can remain in power. Amassing more political power is of outmost importance and spending it accordingly will insure that they remain in office.[43] The way this is done varies from country to country. For example, in Africa with the exemption of the 3 kingdoms (Morocco, Swaziland/Eswatini and Lesotho) the rest are democratic States most of which have set certain parameters in elections a 2-term limit and 4- or 5-year elections[44].

However, in Central Africa, with the addition of Togo and Djibouti, are situated some of the longest ruling presidents [45]like president Paul Biya in Cameroon, who has been leading the country since 1979 with 4 year elections up until recently[46]. These people have been accused by the UN for performing many human rights violations during their rule and they continue doing it using their ever advancing weaponry and propaganda broadcasts[47]. Thus, technology has formed an iron fist for them to rule with.

In the West the examples are way less militaristic in nature and more focused on cutthroat politics. Gerrymandering is easily a more viable technique due to technology with one of the most recent examples being the last American elections, where the system was

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[41]Heinö, A. (2018). Timbro Authoritarian Populism Index 2017. Timbro. Available at: https://timbro.se/allmant/timbro-authoritarian-populism-index2017/

[42] BBC News. (2018). The many trials of Silvio Berlusconi. [online] Available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-12403119 .

[43] Africa Center for Strategic Studies. (2017). Constitutional Term Limits for African Leaders – Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Available at: https://africacenter.org/spotlight/constitutional-term-limits-african-leaders/

[44] ibid

[45]ibid

[46]Houliaras, A. and Petropoulos, S. (2015). Η Αφρική και οι Άλλοι: Οι Σχέσεις της Αφρικής με την Ευρώπη και τον κόσμο. Athens: Kalipos.

[47]ibid

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manipulated against the popular vote, electing a president with fewer votes[48]. Additionally, more technologically advanced digital voting booths that already do exist in certain countries can be tempered with to manipulate the outcome, not to mention that this can be more easily covered up since machinery often malfunctions[49], allowing corrupt officials an easy alibi.

Civil society is not just the governments though. It is comprised from scientists as well, people that dedicate their lives into further advancing the knowledge of human race. Here we encounter a subtler part of our society that could potentially be violated, our morals.

Ethics in science is a specific category, which is subjected to the same rules and regulations as every part of the society but is often questioned. For example, the ethics regarding the advancement of Artificial Intelligence is an issue that causes many disagreements in modern day society with the construction of pre-sentient robots that are coded to act and react in a similar manner as movie cyborgs. How are they to be treated? Are they only here to do our bidding, as a form of robot slaves? Is it actually smart to construct something better than us that can actually destroy us?

These questions will take a lot of time to answer and are a proof of concept that the area in question comprises of mostly theoretical questions about the future. Bio-engineering, cloning, AI are only some of the sectors that we have barely scratched the surface of. Aren't though tangible cases, as well?

Yes, and it's called human experimentation[50]. This practice is strictly forbidden to doctors developing drugs before passing through an exhausting series of animal testing (which is equally un- ethical and yet practiced) and theorems and a series of approvals by state officials. [51]However, malpractice is dominant in such cases and experimental technology allows many major research and medical corporations to perform said experiments with little to no response from the states since it is under the grid.

6.2 Resource Scarcity and Environmental Pollution

It is commonly known that during the creation process of machinery, from the smallest gadget to the largest factory, takes a certain amount of resources. Even more so this occurs during the development process for new, innovative technological marvels. During multi-year trial and error procedures it takes thousands of tons of materials to properly run the facilities and create the products. Not to mention the workers. The cost is so high that many companies often open more than one plant specializing them into creating certain parts of the product, or even try to find different and usually illegal ways to shave off the cost while simultaneously earn more money. The most common of them used to be and still is slacking their environmental standards.

Many studies show that our climate is changing, becoming rapidly hotter [52]and not only that but we our actions are increasingly polluting the atmosphere, the water we drink and the land we live on. In addition, humanity has been the reason for many other species that

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[48]Goggin, B. (2018). Long lines, broken machines, and gun scares — here are the reported problems voters are experiencing during the midterms. [online] Business Insider. Available at: https://www.businessinsider.com/voting-problems-by-state-2018-midterm-elections-2018-11.

[49] ibid

[50] Nuremberg Code. (1949). [ebook] Us Gov. Printing office. Available at: https://history.nih.gov/research/downloads/nuremberg.pdf .

[51] ibid

[52] Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet. (n.d.). Climate change evidence: How do we know?. [online] Available at: https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/.

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inhabit this very globe have either already or are about to be extinct.[53] Admittedly we have not only been mistreating the fauna but the flora of the world as well. [54]Massive deforestation projects are still taking place around the globe with the most well known the deforestation of the Amazon forest in Brazil[55]. Furthermore, humans have been pillaging entire areas in search of minerals such as iron, gold or silver, gems such as diamonds or emeralds and of course petroleum and natural gas are only some of the things used to create components for our everyday items.

The problem lies to our consumerist society that demands more and more, leading to further need for raw materials. Therefore, the exploitation of massive areas for its goods is becoming more and more common. This is a very expensive business though and it has certain set parameters. The environment must be protected and in doing so, state of the art technology has to be used, in addition to reforesting and other supportive towards the environment techniques, which of course are being disregarded and this practice goes mostly unpunished.

The easiest way to observe this, something that has been pointed out by numerous studies and environmentally focused NGOs, is pollution. Ignoring the fact that the relative technology exists that reduces pollutants but it is relatively expensive to maintain, all major corporations in order to flood the market with their products, turn to countries that haven't signed almost any of the environmental treaties like China[56]. China has often been named "The factory of the world" because it generates a very respectable amount of the world's products and it is the biggest energy consumer of the world while simultaneously is on the top of the list in pollution ranking across the globe[57]. In doing so major firms continue to increase their profits, develop newer products but do not spend money on environmental protection ergo their drive for new technologies and profiteering hurts the globe massively.

Finally, to make matters worse there are countries that buy factory/electronic waste and process it into specifically designed plants for reuse and redistribution. It is a common practice that has been defined by law on how much is to be bought and reused[58]. Many of the top countries on this sector are the African and Asian-Pacific regions[59]. This means that mostly they do not follow protocol and have quickly been turned into dumping grounds. This practice is commonly known as environmental dumping. Governments of these places face great issues. Ghana for example is in the top of the list, with one of its territories Agbogbloshie, is known nowadays as one of the world's biggest dumpsites[60]since the country is one of the grandest dumping sites for electronic waste of the world. Ghana's authorities are unable to resolve or at least hinder the situation and many illegal processing sites have been spouting around the country profiteering from this situation adding to the great pollution risk

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[53] Bazilchuk, N. (2018). Humans have always caused plant and animal extinctions. [online] sciencenordic.com. Available at: http://sciencenordic.com/humans-have-always-caused-plant-and-animal-extinctions

[54] ibid

[55] Wwf.panda.org. (n.d.). Deforestation in the Amazon. [online] Available at: http://wwf.panda.org/our_work/forests/deforestation_fronts/deforestation_in_the_amazon.

[56]Houliaras, A. and Petropoulos, S.-custody (2013). Η Κίνα και οι Άλλοι: Οι Σχέσεις της Κίνας με την Ευρώπη και τον κόσμο. Athens: Papazisi.

[57]ibid

[58]Baldé, C.P., Forti V., Gray, V., Kuehr, R., Stegmann,P. : The Global E-waste Monitor – 2017, United Nations University (UNU), International Telecommunication Union (ITU) & International Solid Waste Association (ISWA), Bonn/Geneva/Vienna pp 55

[59]Ibid pp 60-63 & 68-71

[60] Minter, A. (2016). The Burning Truth Behind an E-Waste Dump in Africa. Smithsonian. Available at: https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/burning-truth-behind-e-waste-dump-africa-180957597/.

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the country faces since they do not follow any rules and regulations[61]. It constitutes the greatest example of pollution due to rapid technological advancement.

6.3 Inequality

Inequality is a common issue around the globe with many forms. There exists inequality in the form of gender, race, education but also technology. Obviously not all countries have the same technological level, because it is very expensive to achieve and maintain high technological standards.

This is the cause of a plethora of issues. For example, the continent with the lowest technological level is Africa.[62] Other than social inequality, it has to deal with unequal standards on the total of the continent. Diseases ravish the lands due to the lack of a capable amount of properly educated doctors and technological equipment making it impossible to properly man the existing hospitals and prevent and heal diseases as efficiently in the west.[63] There are 4 major offenders in the continent according to the World Health Organization namely HIV/AIDS, malaria, river blindness and child related illnesses and they are only being combated with the presence of western NGOs and doctors that staff hospitals and makeshift treatment areas in addition to western medicine provided via donations[64].

Where technology advancement should resolve the issue it actually widens the gap. Major pharmaceutical corporations keep on developing medicine that is going to provide them with more earnings; they are companies and not fundraisers after all. States cannot and will not usually support initiatives of such magnitude so it falls on the hands of international non-governmental organizations, alongside to the international community to close the gap.

A gap exists in education as well. While technological advancement again could provide the solution, the rapid development of new technological gadgets to assist in tutoring the younger generations even surpasses the ability of the teachers to follow them. This is true even for western countries. Firstly, this supporting equipment for even a basic quantity and quality tends to be expensive to purchase and maintain.[65] In addition to that, professors tend to be old and seasoned, meaning that they aren't accustomed to using the new technologically based techniques, or they tend to believe that it distracts their students[66]. This means that even in the west, change comes slowly. With students today being heavily influenced by technology, teachers are having difficulties to reach out to them and teach.

The other thing is that, according to an old study by R. Clark, the method one follows is not that important when it comes to teaching, but the pedagogical techniques[67]. Therefore,

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[61]ibid

[62] Houliaras, A. and Petropoulos, S. (2015). Η Αφρική και οι Άλλοι: Οι Σχέσεις της Αφρικής με την Ευρώπη και τον κόσμο. Athens: Kalipos.

[63] ibid

[64] World Health Organization. (n.d.). The African Regional Health Report: The Health of the People. [online] Available at: https://www.who.int/bulletin/africanhealth/en/.

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[67] De Bruyckere, P., Kirschner, P. and Hulshof, C. (2016). Technology in Education. [online] American Federation of Teachers. Available at: https://www.aft.org/ae/spring2016/debruyckere-kirschner-and-hulshof

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technological development is irrelevant? Not completely. When Clark was stating that no medium was capable to ensure that teachers and students alike would learn more efficiently. Internet as an idea singlehandedly disproves that theory, no matter that is being misused by both sides. By browsing over different meta-analyzing researches like the Morphy & Graham in 2012 regarding "Word-processing programs and weaker writers/ readers" -has to do with whether spellcheckers and similar programs increased reading and writing efficiency[68]- we receive multiple instances that serve as proof that technology does assist in education, thus deducting that when the technological gap augments the education efficiency drops.

6.4 Immediate Impact

Technological advancement tends to have a more immediate impact in the societies themselves. It tends to alter them from the core by changing the way they function. The main indicator is employment.

Automation is when machines and artificial intelligence, even low level like the modern day one, take the place of human workers[69]. This means that humans lose their job to technological advancement. According to the Luddite Fallacy[70], a theorem which states that when jobs are lost in an area of the economy due to technological advancement, new are created in others, thus technological unemployment doesn't exist[71]. Then how is it present?

The basis of the theorem is condensed to the fact that new jobs will be created due to the increased societal productivity.[72] However, the continuous improvement to technology alongside with the actual productivity profits benefiting only major corporations and their shareholders and not the actual working class, especially the displaced ones by automation.[73] Proof of concept is the US employment rate to productivity. A 2015 study comprised on the data of the Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis shows that since 2001 productivity is rising in a much higher rate than employment, which in the years of 2001 and 2010 actually shows drops in comparison to the previous data (1999-2008 respectively).[74] Data from the same source prove an increase of tax earnings from major corporations, meaning that they made more money in the same amount of time.[75] These data come from a country with heavily compartmentalized and automated production lines, are definitely proof enough that it exists and not that alone.

From the Luddite Fallacy we also deduce that technological advancement also augments structural unemployment. This type unemployment is caused when "*there is a mismatch of skills between the unemployed and available jobs. Structural unemployment is caused by changes in the economy, such as de-industrialization, which leaves some unemployed workers unable to find work in new industries with different skill requirements.*"

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[68] Higgins, S., Xiao, Z. and Katsipataki, M. (2012). The Impact of Digital Technology on Learning: A Summary for the Education Endowment Foundation. Durham: Durham University, pp.34-35.

[69] Pettinger, T. (2017). [online] Economicshelp.org. Available at:

https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/135481/economics/will-automation-cause-technological-unemployment/

[70]ibid

[71]ibid

[72] ibid

[73] ibid

[74]ibid

[75]ibid

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[76]This particular kind occurs mostly in strong economic growth or strong economic weakness like the economic crisis we are going through right now.[77] The jobs in question are mostly blue-collar labor, mainly located in industry and mining, thus when those industries close or their jobs are replaced by machinery, they are under-qualified to move to another field where demand exists[78].

Employment however is not the only massive indication of societal change. A massive increase to digitalization of modern society is obvious. Most of the modern processes from state to individual are either completely or partially digitalized. This boosts the process but makes it more vulnerable to manipulation, increases unemployment rates and adds on to the consumerist society, by setting an example by practice where delving further into use of digital technologies is considered a good thing. This consequently means that the tradition structure of each society changes as it balances to the new data and of course with it changes the human identity.

7. Recent Developments

Undoubtedly, nowadays, the whole world faces an incredible information and communication outbreak due to the extremely fast technological improvements of the past years. This digital phenomenon of our time has affected every single aspect of our daily life, from our common habits to the exercise of our fundamental human rights.

On the one hand, it has been beneficial for the political participation[79] and a powerful tool on the hands of the people who live in oppressing regimes and want to expose the brutality of the reality they live in. Also, technology and cyber systems are some of the main weapons governments have in order to tackle the threat of terrorism[80], especially nowadays with the situation on this matter being out of control sometimes.

On the other hand, many governments using the excuse of "national security" are using technology as a method of monitoring their own citizens. Electronic surveillance and interception are common techniques in many states, which violate fundamental human rights in the sake of the protection of the sovereignty of their nation[81][82]. In addition, in the

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[76] Pettinger, T. (2017). [online] Economicshelp.org. Available at:
https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/27657/unemployment/structural-unemployment/
[77] ibid
[78] ibid
[79]ibid

Barber, Benjamin (1984) Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age. Los

Angeles: University of California Press

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[80]United Nations, Office of Counter Terrorism, https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy .
[81]Privacy International,https://www.privacyinternational.org/press-release/52/new-privacy-international-report-shows-21-european-countries-are-unlawfully , 2017.
[82]REUTERS, Reports on surveillance of Americans fuel debate over privacy, security,
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-wiretaps-verizon/reports-on-surveillance-of-americans-fuel-debate-over-privacy-security-idUSBRE95502920130607

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continuous usage of more and more advanced technology has been taking its toll in modern day societies, alienating people and changing their economical and societal structure. On the sector of environment, pollution of air, land and water continues at a rapid pace, similar to the one of advancement of technology.

The United Nations Human Rights Council is one of the major UN Instruments that highlights and focuses on the importance of the right of privacy.[83] To begin with, the Office of the High Commissioner has published the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind in 1975[84], in which is stated that despite the beneficial character of the technological developments there is always the possibility of turning into a threat for the fundamental human rights. Also, in 1993 the Office of the High Commissioner created a new institutional position for a Special Rapporteur, whose mission would be the protection and the promotion of the basic rights of expression and opinion.[85] Those actions profess that from the early upcoming of internet the experts had already realized the tremendous changes the mankind would face in the future.

Since then a lot of work has been done over the years to protect individuals from the infringement of their rights on a national and international level. But for the past years the whole world has flooded in numerous scandals about leaks of individuals' personal data from governments to private companies and vice versa. The breaking point was in 2013 with the breakout of the Snowden case and Wiki-leaks, which actually launched the debate on the burning issue of technology and privacy[86]. The United States of America alongside countries like Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand were cooperating on a program with the title "Five Eyes" in order to control the data of citizens and leaders. The Russian Federation was, also, exposed about monitoring innocent citizens and politicians in order to have under control the law and the order in its territory.

Actually, after the Snowden scandal Russia launched the establishment of the supervision of worldwide platforms from the national Russian legislation[87]. The People's Republic of China is on the way of creation of an all-seeing surveillance state, with the existence of the biggest monitoring camera system in the entire world in the sake of the protection of the sovereignty of the Chinese nation.[88] The European countries have not been outside of this well-structured "game". It has been exposed the fact that about 21 countries of the European Union have been taking advantage of people's sensitive personal information.[89]

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[83]United Nations HRC, Office of the High Commissioner , Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/sp/pages/welcomepage.aspx, 2017.

[84]UN HRC, Office of the High Commissioner, Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankindhttps://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ScientificAndTechnologicalProgress.aspx , 1975.

[85]United Nations HRC,Office of the High Commissioner , Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council,   https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/freedomopinion/pages/opinionindex.aspx

[86]BBC News, "Edward Snowden: Leaks that exposed US spy programme"https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-23123964 , 2014.

[87]World Policy, Russia's Surveillance State,https://worldpolicy.org/2013/09/12/russias-surveillance-state/ , 2013.

[88]The New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/08/business/china-surveillance-technology.html , 2018.

[89]Privacy International, https://privacyinternational.org/press-release/52/new-privacy-international-report-shows-21-european-countries-are-unlawfully , 2017.

The most recent act of the play was the scandal with Facebook and Cambridge Analytica in 2018, which shocked the audience and traumatized deeply the trust to the political institutions and to the global platforms of communication.[90]

8. Legal Framework

A lot of work has been done over the years for the promotion of the right of privacy over the years by the UN, European and regional bodies who try to set a bold international legislative framework.

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948, which is a document that clarifies and establishes the fundamental human rights. Specifically, in Article 12 is mentioned clearly the fact that no one has the right to interfere in one private sphere.[91]

- The European Convention on Human Rights, which in Article 8 underlines the importance of the Right to Respect for private and family life, provided that someone does not have the intention to harm or endanger the security and the rule of law of their nation.[92]

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)that stress out the fact that "Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks" (Article 17).[93]

- The UN Resolution 68/167 " The right to privacy in the digital age", which was adopted by the General Assembly in 2013 and is a document that clearly acknowledges the necessity of measures that should be taken from the member states in order to protect the right of privacy in the digital age.[94]

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which was adopted by the 1989 and in Article 40 is strictly stated that a person should have their "privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings".[95]

- The Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17, where the right to privacy is underlined.[96]

- The American Convention on Human Rights (1969), in which is stressed out the fact that the citizens should be fully aware of why their personal data is used and by who.[97]

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[90]Techrepublic.com, "Facebook data privacy scandal: A cheat sheet"
https://www.techrepublic.com/article/facebook-data-privacy-scandal-a-cheat-sheet/ , 2018.
[91] United Nations, Universal Declaration for Human Rights,http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/,1948.
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[93]United Nations ,The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx,1966.
[94]United Nations ,Resolution 68/167, http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/167,2013.
[95]United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child,
https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx,1989.
[96]United nations , Sustainable Development
Goals,https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/,2015.
[97]Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, American Convention on Human Rights
,https://www.cidh.oas.org/basicos/english/basic3.american%20convention.htm,1969.

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- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which was adopted by the European Union on 2016 and entered into force on 2018. It is an absolute breakthrough in the fight against personal privacy infringement, that regulates the processing by an individual, a company or an organization of personal data relating to individuals in the EU".[98]

Despite the number of the already existing Conventions, protocols and laws one can perceive that a lot of work should take place for the adequate protection of the individuals. The challenge that the member states have to deal with is on how they are going to combine the national and the international law framework in order to make a plan which will be sustainable, viable and, of course, respectful to each and everyone's cultures and differences.[99]

9. Conclusion

It is beyond any shadow of doubt that living in the age if digitalization has its advantages and disadvantages. For example recent scandals about personal data collection[100], threatens, illegal detentions, harassment, kidnapping, torture and prosecutions to people like activists, journalists and human rights defenders[101] who stood up for their opinion in oppressing regimes prove that we, as a society, have come up a point extremely liminal and identifying about the world as it has been shaped today through the rapid technological developments.

It is clear cut that the right to privacy should not be interpreted as minor or trivial. On the contrary, it should and must be construed as fundamental and major, because is without any doubt the way for the enjoyment of other crucial and basic human rights, such as the freedom of expression[102]. It is time for the authorities and the governments of each member state to take charge of their responsibilities, firstly, towards their citizens and, secondly, towards the democratic values that the United Nations stand for and promote. The world does not need more words. The world right now demands actions and concrete measures, that will guarantee a peaceful, just and safe coexistence, without a sign of fear or hesitation for those who will exercise their rights.

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[98]European Commission, General Data Protection Regulation,https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/justice-and-fundamental-rights/data-protection/2018-reform-eu-data-protection-rules_en,2016.

[99]UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, https://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/conference-archives/new-york/2018/ny18-bgg-hrc.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0d5wjh3GkuM5oqOw-oh92wKE0Cc--MV5KOL9iiX4MNahjc8_jtxYn5jHs p.6., 2013.

[100]BBC News, https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/c81zyn0888lt/facebook-cambridge-analytica-data-breach,2018.

[101]Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ,http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/expression/docs/reports/2014_04_22_violence_web.pdf,2013.

[102]UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissionerhttps://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/conference-archives/new-york/2018/ny18-bgg-hrc.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0d5wjh3GkuM5oqOw-oh92wKE0Cc--MV5KOL9iiX4MNahjc8_jtxYn5jHs, p. 6., 2013.

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The question that arises is on how we are going to handle the invasion of technology in our private life and our daily routine and how international actors, such as the United Nation bodies, National Authorities, NGO's, Institutions and the private sector are going to cooperate and contribute during the age of information.

10. Points to Be Addressed

1. What are the possible measures that member states could adopt in order to ensure the protection of the private rights of their citizens whilst considering the growing security concerns?

2. How the citizens themselves can ensure that their personal data is protected from governmental power abuse?

3. How can citizens ensure that their right to privacy is fully protected against wide range government programs?

4. Is it feasible for the member states to have an effective national policy that respects the international law framework, regarding the issue of privacy?

5. How can the Human Rights Council reduce inequality in modern day societies?

6. How can the Human Rights Council prevent any crimes against humanity that may be committed in the process of new technology creation?

7. How can the Human Rights Council further ensure the protection of basic human rights like the right to privacy or to work, without offending the national sovereignty of their country?

8. How can we hinder the rapid devolution that our society's values are subjected through rapid technological advancement?

9. Is there a way for the Human Rights Council to promote a more eco-friendly and less consumer focused approach to modern day living?

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