Opening Remarks by Ms. Amina Bouayach, GANHRI Chairperson

International Conference

Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights: Opportunities, Risks, and Pathways to a Better Future

27-28 May, 2025
Doha, Qatar

Ms. Maryam bint Abdullah Al-Attiyah, Chairperson of the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar, dear friend,
Mr. Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,
Mr. Mohammed bin Ali Al Mannai, Minister of Communications and Information Technology of Qatar,
Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Al Yamahi, President of the Arab Parliament,
Mr. Abdulrahman Ali Muhammad Al Farahid Al Malki, President of the National Cybersecurity Agency in Qatar,
Ms. Mary Kawar, Director of the UNDP Regional Hub in Amman

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished participants,

It was my wish to join you in person for this two-day conference, but regrettably, I am unable to be there physically.

The topic bringing us together today is undoubtedly of great relevance. It's gaining momentum, evolving at a rapid pace, and affecting every aspect of our lives.

We can all agree that we are living through a defining moment, witnessing a true revolution and a pivotal turning point in the course of human development.

The digital space, advanced technologies, and artificial intelligence are reshaping our world and deeply impacting our daily lives. They spark debates, drive initiatives, and raise concerns, proving that innovation is the engine powering smart services of high quality and efficiency.

Hardly a day goes by without a groundbreaking discovery or a remarkable innovation, compelling us to reflect deeply and rethink the boundaries of what is possible.

The opportunities are vast, but so are the disparities, between countries who are already benefiting or should soon benefit from this progress, and others still searching for their path, while some remain, to this day, left far behind.

Real and tangible risks threatening rights, freedoms, pathways, and at times, the very essence of human dignity.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A few days ago, the International Labour Organization released a report revealing that artificial intelligence threatens women's jobs more than men's.

- Biases are sometimes built into the systems, their designers, or the people training them;

- Vulnerable groups, especially women and girls, are often targeted, with deepfake pornography, which our conference will discuss, being a stark example;

- Systems can be a threat to freedom of expression, opinion, privacy, and even the right to peaceful assembly;

- Algorithms can make it easier and faster to spread misinformation, which threatens access to information, electoral choices, and democratic

processes.

These concerns, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, are not theoretical. They are the lived reality for many of the most vulnerable among us.

As actors in the field of human rights, we do not stand in the way of technological progress, nor do we wish to. What we do seek is for artificial intelligence systems and algorithms to be designed in ways that protect individuals and advance both human dignity and rights.

International human rights law, which I believe is one of our most important shared achievements, is not a barrier to innovation. It is a global framework that ensures access and benefit for all.

Innovation is no longer optional; it is a pressing need and a necessity, and so are rights and freedoms. Respecting them is not a choice. They are fundamental and non-negotiable.

Harnessing the full potential of AI and advanced technologies in a safe and inclusive way requires a shared framework of international governance, rooted in a firm commitment to protecting human rights.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

National Human Rights Institutions go beyond advising governments and stakeholders on the use of AI and related policies: they monitor impact on rights, process related complaints, and advocate for strong safeguards and justice.

GANHRI and its regional networks work to amplify this collective voice and drive advocacy both regionally and globally, aiming to ensure that human rights are integrated into AI systems from the outset, an approach we refer to as Human Rights by Design.

With that in mind, we renew our call to all relevant actors to cast light on the impact of the digital space and AI systems on human rights, laying particular focus on issues such as technology-facilitated gender-based violence, privacy

violations, discrimination, hate speech, incitement to violence, and obstacles to equal access to rights.

These themes and objectives will be explored in detail throughout this conference, an event we, at GANHRI, are proud to co-sponsor.

I would like to thank the NHRC of Qatar for hosting us, and extend our gratitude to all our partners.

I'm confident that the brilliant minds gathered in this conference will shed light on the human rights challenges posed by AI systems.

Thank you from Rabat.