[7th Annual SYP Conference: 'AI, Peace and Security']

The use of AI-powered technologies in the UN's efforts to promote peace and security globally

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27 January 2024

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Background and Overview

Background

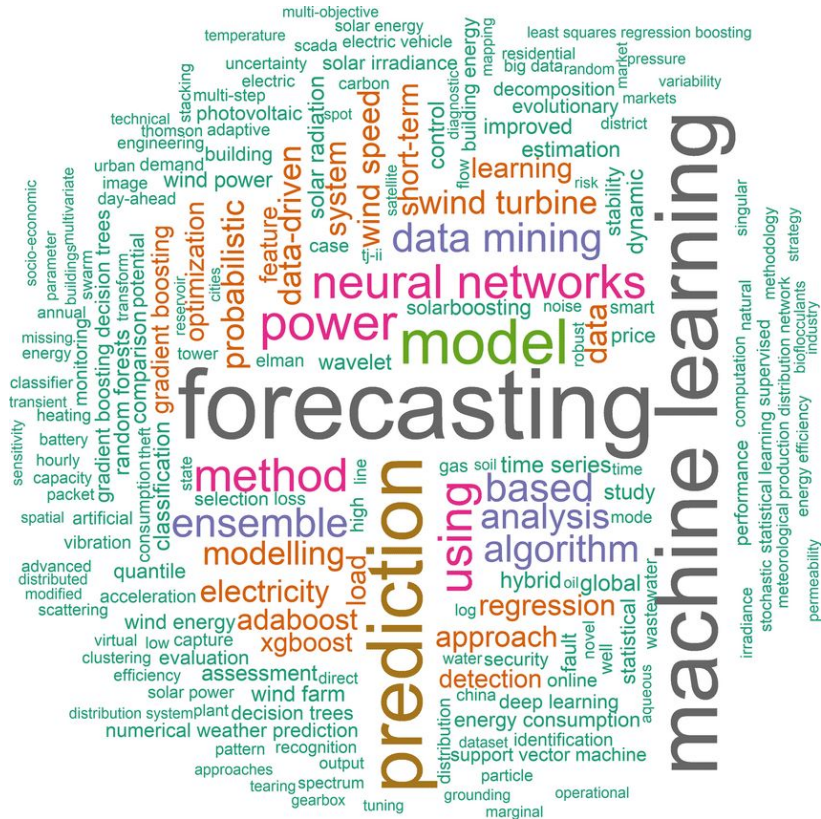## Myself

- Sarah Weiler
- Research Fellow with GPRG's AI Governance program
- MSc China & International Relations
- Diverse research experience
  - Interested in Global Politics, Global Catastrophic Risk Studies, Democratic Theory & Practice, Philosophy of Knowledge

The presentation's origin

- Context: internship with UN OCHA, Oct 2023 - Jan 2024

- Project goal: Overview of past and ongoing UN activities related to the responsible and effective adoption of AI and AI-powered tools

- Output: database of guidelines, working groups, ongoing projects, AI use cases, and training resources (open access)

AI x UN x peace & security -- complexity abounds
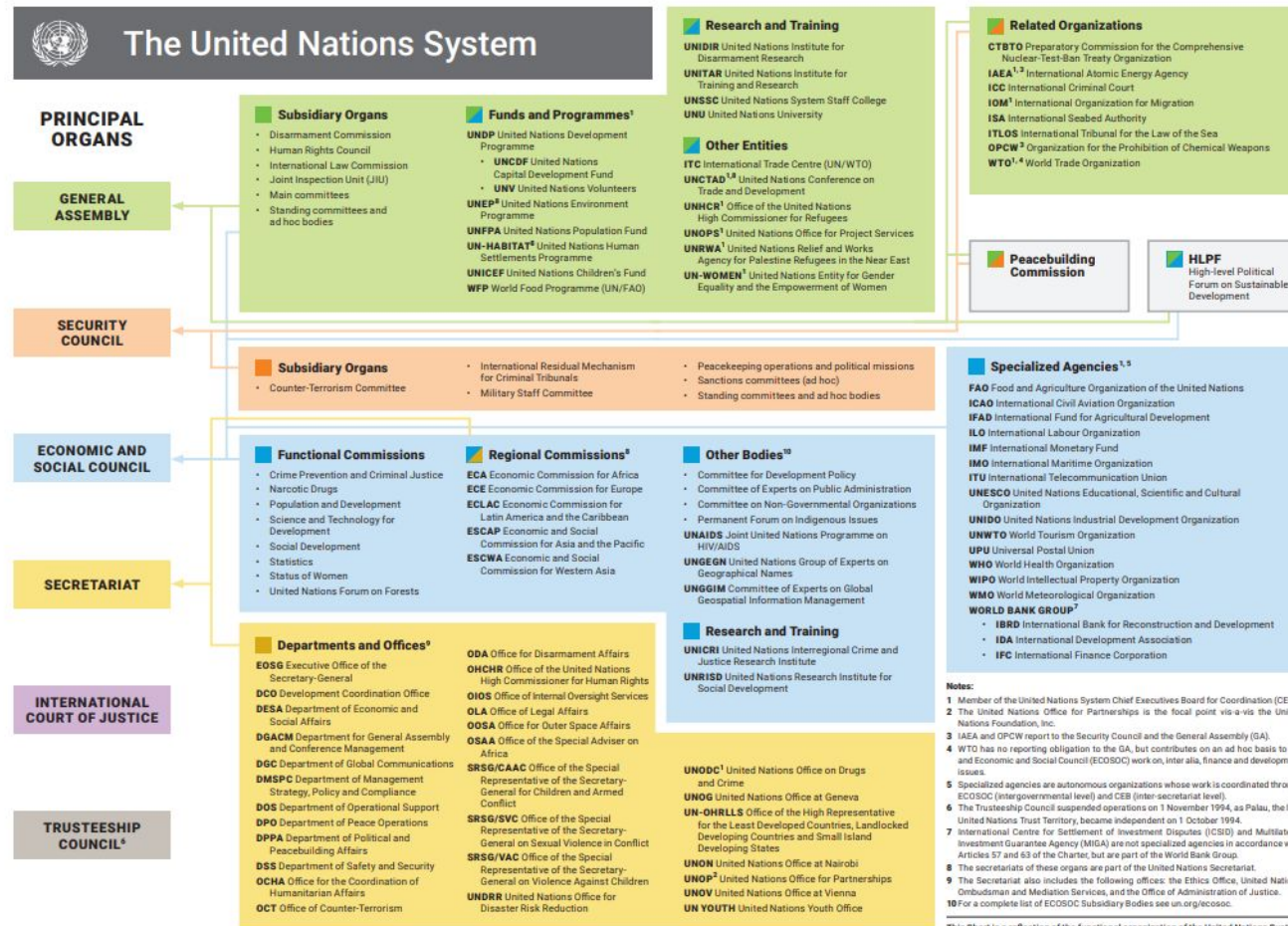

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AI x UN x peace & security -- complexity abounds

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estby and Strand, 2014

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AI in the UN's promotion of negative peace

The UN's promotion of negative peace

The UN's promotion of negative peace

Fighting the misuse of AI in the military realm

Research, dialogue, advocacy

Disarmament and arms trading

AI-assisted monitoring and verification

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding

Research, dialogue
AI-assisted data analysis
AI-enabled Digital Dialogues

AI in the justice sector

Research and analysis
Guidelines, guardrails

03 AI in the UN's promotion of positive peace

The UN's promotion of positive peace

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Using AI constructively and responsibly

Predictive analytics

E.g.: Flood forecasting

Situational awareness

E.g.: Analysis of infrastructure damage after a disaster

Information management

E.g.: Identification of relevant documents ahead of a negotiation

Governance (global and UN-internal)

E.g.: Principles of a human-centric approach to AI

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My takeaways, and thoughts on where to go from here

Takeaways

A cause for hope, but also a call to action

- Challenge: information management

  - Rapid AI developments
  - Lack of expertise and established frameworks
  - Lack of regulation and oversight
  - Complexity of real-world environment -> complexity of UN efforts

- How to contribute?

  - Need for further research
  - Need for responsible tech development geared towards UN activities & SDGs
  - Need for tech-savy and ethics-aware personnel at the UN
  - Need for critical observation and commentary outside the UN

Takeaways

Core sites to learn more

- Annual report: [United Nations Activities on Artificial Intelligence (AI)](#)

- UN DPPA-DPO: Futuring peace ([website](#), [blog](#))

- Upcoming conferences

  - [Global Forum on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence 2024](#) (5-6 Feb 2024)
  - [UNU Macau AI Conference 2024. AI For All: Bridging Divides, Building A Sustainable Future](#) (24-25 April 2024)
  - [AI for Good Global Summit 2024](#) (30-31 May 2024)
  - [Summit of the Future](#) (22-23 Sep 2024)

THANK YOU :)

Sarah Weiler
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0A Annex: More details on UN efforts to promote negative peace

The UN's promotion of negative peace

Fighting the misuse of AI in the military realm

Research, dialogue, advocacy

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AI-assisted monitoring and verification

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding

Research, dialogue
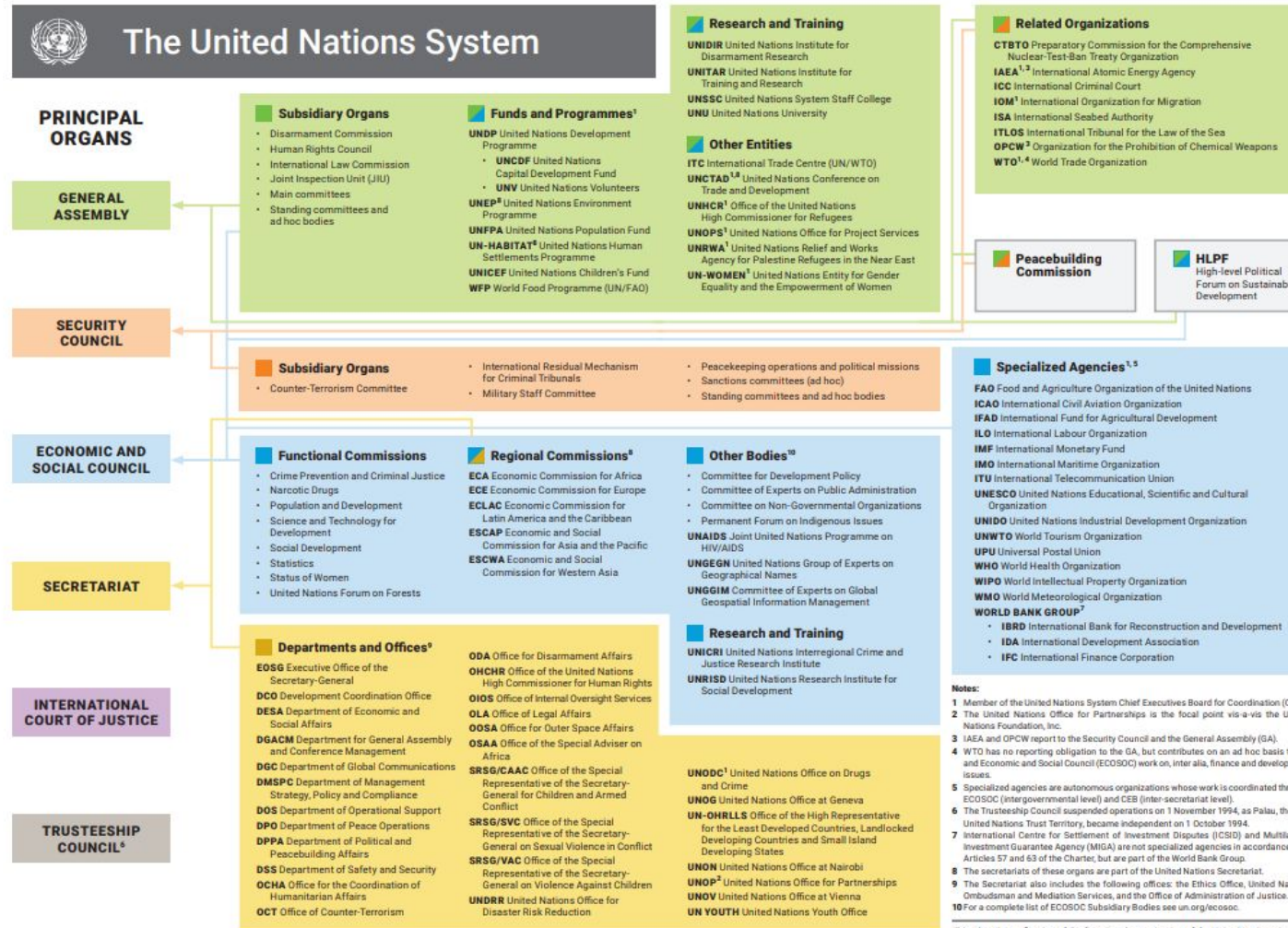AI-assisted data analysis
AI-enabled Digital Dialogues

AI in the justice sector

Research and analysis
Guidelines, guardrails

Fighting the misuse of AI in the military realm
(UNIDIR, UNODA, UNSG, etc.)

The 2022 Innovations Dialogue: AI Disruption, Peace and Security (Conference Report)

1 May 2023

Research, dialogue, advocacy

- UNIDIR's Security and Technology Programme, [AI and Autonomy workstream](#)

- UNODA and Sipri's "Responsible Innovation in AI for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation" project

- Secretary-General's "Report on current developments in science and technology and their potential impacts on international security and disarmament efforts", delivered to the General Assembly

- Global governance initiatives

Artificial Intelligence Beyond Weapons: Application and Impact of AI in the Military Domain

11 October 2023

Disarmament and arms trading
(CTBTO, IAEA)

AI to assist monitoring and verification

- AI-assisted signal detection
  - E.g.: Seismic aftershock monitoring to detect weapons tests
  - E.g.: Anomaly detection in satellite images of nuclear power plant inspection sites
- AI-assisted information management and data analysis
  - Processing of safeguards-relevant documents and data
  - Network processing of detected signals to analyse their likely cause (weapons testing vs. natural vs. other)

Limitations to accuracy and precision: AI is an aid, not a replacement of human monitoring

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding
(UNDPPA)

Research, analysis, discussion

- Futuring peace blog

- Reports (e.g.: Digitial technologies and mediation)

- Stakeholder dialogues

- AI Innovation workshops

- Technology debates

- Digital transformation at the UN: Innovation Space @UNHQ

RE-THINKING
PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Peace negotiations are tough and complex. Facilitating talks between conflict parties requires patience and finesse on the part of UN mediators. What could peace brokers do to better ease tensions and foster empathy? What will safe spaces for peace talks look like in the future?

© UNDPPA 2020

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding
(UNDPPA)

Data management & analysis

- Diplomatic Pulse: searchable document repository
- Peace & Security Data Hub
- Geospatial analysis of conflict sites
- Sparrow: Social Media analysis
- E-Analytics toolbox

Digital dialogues

"Talking peace" series: Live translation, summarization, and coordination of mass consultation with local populations

Successful pilots in Yemen (2020), Iraq (2021), Bolivia (2021-22), Lebanon (2022)

AI in the justice sector

UNICRI: research and analysis

- [AI Toolkit](#) to inform Responsible AI Innovation in Law Enforcement
- [AI for Safer Children initiative](#)
- AI in Counter-terrorism
- [Policy Framework for Responsible Limits on Facial Recognition](#)

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Annex: More details on UN efforts to promote positive peace

Using AI constructively and responsibly

Predictive analytics

E.g.: Flood forecasting

Situational awareness

E.g.: Analysis of infrastructure damage after a disaster

Information management

E.g.: Identification of relevant documents ahead of a negotiation

Governance (global and UN-internal)

E.g.: Principles of a human-centric approach to AI

Using AI constructively: Some examples

Predictive analytics

- Goal: preventive action
- Method: machine learning
- Examples
  - Flood forecasting
  - Forecasting migration flows
  - Forecasting food insecurity

Situational awareness

- Goal: more effective crisis response
- Method: geospatial analysis, social media analysis, pattern-matching, signal detection
- Examples
  - WFP's Hunger Map
  - PulseSatellite: A tool using human-AI feedback loops for satellite image analysis in humanitarian contexts

Using AI constructively: Some examples

Large Language Models

- LLMs for information management
  - Chatbots to query document repositories
  - Chatbots to analyze spreadsheet data
  - LLMs to clean and merge disparate data sources

- LLMs in daily admin work
  - Chatbots to help fill out forms
  - Automation of repetitive tasks
  - Meeting transcription, summarization, and generation of action items

Using AI responsibly: Some examples

Global Governance

- Ethical guidance and monitoring
  - Fundamental principles: UNESCO
  - Refugee rights: UNHCR
  - Children's rights: UNICEF
  - Women's rights and gender issues: UNFPA, UN Women, UNESCO
- Convening conferences and stakeholder dialogues
  - Global Forum on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence 2024 (5-6 February 2024)
  - UNU Macau AI Conference 2024. AI For All: Bridging Divides, Building A Sustainable Future (24-25 April 2024)
  - AI for Good Global Summit 2024 (30-31 May 2024)

Using AI responsibly: Some examples

UN-internal use

- Ethical and operational guidance
  - Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System (UNSCEB 2022)
  - Navigating the issues and risks of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the workplace (WHO Information Note, 2023)
- Knowledge exchange and best practices
  - UN Generative AI Practice Group (Teams group)
  - United Nations Innovation Network (UNIN)
  - UN Geo-AI Working Group