

Introducing Curated #3: Digital Technologies and Human Rights

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Abstract: Welcome to our third Curated series, which asks 'Is human rights prepared for digital technologies?' The series marks our first joint venture. It has been developed as a partnership between *Human Rights Preparedness* and asiablogs, and will be published in parallel by both blogs.

We chose the topic of our third Curated section for a simple but compelling reason: existing and emerging digital technologies have enormous potential and profound implications for human rights. These technologies can bolster human rights; however, they can also create violations of human rights—in particular, amplifying

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existing inequalities and creating new ones. The COVID-19 pandemic has further advanced the need to explore the intricate relationship between human rights and digital technologies.

Overall this Curated section aims to explore whether digital technologies create or could create a 'crisis' or 'emergency' and whether human rights is prepared for such technologies. Every Monday over the coming weeks, there will be a post on some aspect of these questions. Issues covered will include algorithmic (in)justice, rights for robots, and children's rights in the digital age. Throughout the series, the underlying question will be whether, and if so how, a rights-based approach to regulation might facilitate a transparent and accountable implementation of digital technologies.

The contributors to this Curated section include Simon Chesterman, Desara Dushi, Anusha Kharel, Wiebke Lamer, Laura Thomi and Meredith Veit, Geeta Pathak Sangroula, Puja Silwal, and Sanchit Singh, Rohini Sen, and Nimisha Srivastava. We are especially pleased to commence the series with a post that we attribute to the late Professor Christof Heyns, an internationally-respected figure in the field of human rights and new technologies and in many other human rights fields too. To produce this post, we transcribed a recording of Professor Heyns' talk during a session on 'Human Rights in Light of Technology: Exploring the interface and assessing the intersectionality', delivered at the 2020 International Confluence of Academicians. The event was jointly organised by asiablogs and Kathmandu School of Law, which is a member of the 100-university Global Campus of Human Rights. Fittingly, among his many contributions to the field of human rights, Professor Heyns played a key role in establishing the Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa, one of the Global Campus' seven regional Master's programmes. It is a privilege to include his words as part of this blog series.