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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Women's Federation for World Peace International, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[26 January 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Technology, Electricity, and the Education Gap: Addressing Challenges in the Least Developed Countries

The intricate relationship between technology and electricity is irrefutable, with the absence of a reliable power supply and proper infrastructure disproportionately affecting the least developed countries. In these regions, households, schools, hospitals, and businesses often endure prolonged periods without access to essential services, further exacerbating existing challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic has starkly highlighted the consequences of this technological disparity, particularly in the field of education. While students in developed countries seamlessly transitioned to online learning platforms, those in least developed countries faced significant barriers, resulting in extended periods of educational hiatus. Worryingly, a substantial number of these students, especially young girls, have not returned to school even after the pandemic has subsided.

The positive impact of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) during the pandemic is undeniable. It has not only facilitated remote learning but has also contributed to advancements in healthcare, communication, and overall societal well-being. However, the rapid progression in technology has concurrently widened the educational gap between developing and developed nations. This divide urgently requires intervention to ensure a future that is fair and equitable for all.

The looming influence of artificial intelligence (AI) and automation poses additional challenges, especially in terms of employment and economic inequality. Developing countries face the risk of being disproportionately affected in the global job market compared to their developed counterparts. This concern is underscored by data illustrating the disparities in AI research and development investments and capabilities between different regions.

As technology advances, so does the pressure on professionals in developing countries to further their education to meet the qualifications accepted in developed nations. This phenomenon is particularly evident among medical and educational professionals, contributing to a 'brain drain' from less developed regions.

Investment in education and training programs is crucial to equip individuals with the skills needed to navigate the evolving job market. The global recognition of qualifications from developing countries is a pivotal step toward ensuring a level playing field for professionals worldwide.

The evolving landscape of technology brings forth new challenges, such as privacy invasions and data manipulation. Collaborative efforts between governments and technology companies are essential to develop strategies that combat the spread of misinformation, protect democratic processes, and safeguard individual privacy.

Concrete data on the prevalence of privacy violations, cyber-attacks, and the spread of misinformation globally underscore the urgency of implementing robust legal frameworks and regulations. This approach is necessary to ensure responsible and ethical technology use, protecting individuals and maintaining the integrity of digital systems.

In conclusion, while embracing technological innovation, a conscientious and deliberate approach is paramount. Balancing the benefits of technology with ethical considerations and global equity requires sustained efforts, collaborative initiatives, and a commitment to harnessing technology for the betterment of society as a whole.
