

Making artificial intelligence (AI) accessible, inclusive, and beneficial for all

Intervention by

Dr. K. N. Gunalan, P.E., Pres. 20 ASCE, Bc.GE, NAC

Co-Chair STC MG

Chair WFEO UN Relations Committee

President Atlas Initiative

VP| Senior Project Director HNTB Corporation

Thank you, your Excellencies. Appreciate the opportunity to share some thoughts on behalf of the engineering community. As we begin to address the topic at hand, would like to draw everyone's attention to the need for sustainable and resilient infrastructure needed to support not only the digital transformation but more importantly AI needs. We need sustainable energy and water resources in addition to other infrastructure to support AI revolution. We respectfully ask that policy makers consult the engineering community before planning as to where and how to physically locate the facilities needed to serve the best interest of all. We have the resources such as the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Sustainability Standard ASCE 73-23; the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) and other Standards to draw on. In the spirit of leaving no one behind, I would also like to draw your attention to the approximately two billion people who are not aware and do not have access to the basic infrastructure and means to leverage AI.

The World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) with the support of over thirty million engineers around the world, is working on raising awareness through its academy and building capacity to support the needs in Africa. With the support of UN DESA and its TFM, we are confident that we will be able to scale up the effort and address the needs in other emerging economies and regions around the world including the global south. In addition, through WFEO's various working committees and affiliates, we have the resources and capacity to develop policies that will be ethical, inclusive, equitable for all.

We are ready, willing, and able to support all member states to address the needs, gaps, implement whatever is needed to bridge the gaps to make AI accessible, inclusive, and beneficial for all.