



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE

برلمان البحر الأبيض المتوسط

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**Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly 2023 Conference on the 4IR -
Artificial intelligence, Disinformation and Parliament: Ensuring the Integrity of
our Digital Democracy 4-6 December 2023, Online**

**Session dedicated to “Synthetic Media and Parliamentarian -
Understanding the Threats as Public Figures”**

Friday 6 December, 11 -11.45 am GMT

Good afternoon to you colleagues at PAM.

Being a politician, a parliamentarian and also a technology expert as well an IT educator; presents a unique opportunity to shape up policies and discussion that bridge the gap between governance, communities, technology and education. It allows for the implementation of innovative solutions, improved efficiency, and informed decision-making more especially on the advancements and also on the threats that technology offers in our societies.

During this session, I will take you into some facts that we as politicians are exposed in this digital world.

Today, I will speak about synthetic media, also known as

deepfakes, which poses a significant threat to parliamentarians and public figures.

Rapidly evolving technologies use artificial intelligence to manipulate or generate audio, video, and other content that can be indistinguishable from reality. So much accuracy, so much detail, as if we are experiencing the real-real thing!

Just last month, UNSG (United Nations Secretary General) Guterres was presented with a video of himself speaking perfect Chinese. **All generated by AI.**

Mr Guterres explained how he had the surreal experience of watching himself deliver a speech in **flawless Chinese** – despite the fact that **he does not speak Chinese**. His lips movement **corresponded exactly** to what he was saying.

This is just one vivid example of the incredible possibilities – and the potential dangers – of AI, today.

Over the past years, we use to speak about the hazards exposed through the internet, through the communication and sharing of sensitive and personal data over the net. At that time we referred these threats coming through Malware, Phising, Identity Theft as much we do encounter these on our social media platforms and that include online scams, ransomware, online predators, cyberbullying, fakenews, and more.

We speak constantly about Cybercrime and the lack of privacy in this digital age.

This mix of digital phenomena advancements will continue to rise. Progress in digitalisation and data harvesting everywhere especially on cloud has led to the systematic use and manipulation of such data mining through AI nowadays.

This is the next step forward in digitilization. The more we have data the more accurate articial intelligence will become.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays a significant role in influencing and shaping future decisions across various domains. The impact of AI on decision-making is multifaceted and extends to areas such as business, healthcare, finance, education, politics and more.

We will soon be experiencing the "chipping" of humans for health reasons. Implantable microchips or devices will be installed in our bodies that will, remotely transmit data which will provide continuous monitoring of various health parameters.

These are challenging times, globally, and AI could power extraordinary progress for humanity in any sector and not just health.

The transformative potential of AI and the next generation of internet of things is hard to even grasp and predict. AI will have a global transformation about our decisions for the next 20 years, and as much

Internet was **such an impact** on humanity, for the past 30 years.

But how could AI be of a threat to politicians?

Synthetic media pose a very serious threat as they can be used in misinformation campaigns, for political manipulation, and to erode public trust in the political process and public institutions. It can maliciously influence political campaigns, and voters.

To understand and address these threats, public figures like politicians and parliamentarians should consider the following strategies for action:

Public Awareness:

We, and all as public figures should educate themselves and their constituents about the existence of synthetic media and its potential threats. Raising awareness about the technology's capabilities can help people become more informative with the way they consume news from different media.

Authentication and Verification:

Develop and promote robust authentication and verification processes for all media content. Encourage the use of trusted platforms and ensure that people can easily distinguish **between genuine and manipulated media.**

Cybersecurity Measures:

We, should invest in strong cybersecurity measures to protect our personal information and digital identities. This includes using secure communication channels, regularly updating passwords, and being cautious about sharing sensitive data. We, parliamentarians have a strong responsibility.

We must also be aware and vigilant of hidden identities and deal with the profiles that we communicate with greater attention.

Legal Frameworks:

While ensuring safeguard of freedom of expression, new legislative frameworks that address the creation and dissemination of deepfakes must be advocated for. These may include regulations related to content creation, distribution, and penalties for malicious use of synthetic media

Proactive Communication:

Be prepared to address the **issue head-on**. Public figures must release statements to clarify any potential deepfake incidents and emphasize the importance of verifying the authenticity of any content involving them.

Technology Solutions:

Invest in and support the development of technology solutions that can detect and mitigate the impact of deepfakes. These may include deepfake detection tools and digital forensics experts.

For example, **Microsoft Video Authenticator** is a tool designed to analyze videos and provide a confidence score indicating the likelihood of manipulation.

International Cooperation:

Advocate for international cooperation and information sharing among governmental, parliamentary bodies, law enforcement agencies and relevant stakeholders to address the global challenges posed by synthetic media. It is crucial to foster collaborative efforts to develop robust strategies and international agreements for combating the proliferation of synthetic media, including those operating from or even mandated by complicit states and safeguarding the integrity of public discourse, and severely prosecute offenders and the criminal regimes behind them.

As we are today, PAM encourages continued dialogue and collaboration among policymakers, technology experts, and civil society to develop comprehensive strategies, policies and international legal frameworks that uphold the principles of transparency, accountability, countermeasures, prevention and control, for

preserving democratic governance.

Thanks for your attention.