



A Warning on the AI Society from Nobel Laureates

-AI's Risks Should Be Addressed Through Multilateral Cooperation, Not Great-Power Dominance-

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This is an English version of Japanese report ”ノーベル経済学賞受賞者等による AI 社会への警告～大国主導ではなく多国間で AI の弊害の解決を～ ”

■Economists, Including Nobel Laureates, Sound the Alarm on the AI Society

On July 13, a group of economists—including 16 Nobel Prize laureates in economics—issued a statement calling for urgent action to develop policies and institutional frameworks to address the economic impact of the spread of artificial intelligence (AI). The statement, titled We Must Act Now, is brief, but its key messages may be summarized as follows:.

- (1) AI may become radically more powerful over the next 10 years.
- (2) This could drive an unprecedented transformation of our economy, larger than the Industrial Revolution,
- (3) It could bring risks, including large-scale job displacement, as well as opportunities such as major gains in living standards.
- (4) Economists, policymakers and technology leaders must act now to understand the economics of transformative AI and to build the incentives, guardrails, and institutions needed to steer AI in a direction that complements humans and benefits society

The number of signatories continues to grow, reaching approximately 2,100 as of July 16.

The statement sets out an important broad direction, though it does not go into specifics. Even so, the fact that it has been endorsed by numerous Nobel laureates—among them former Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke, Columbia University Professor Joseph Stiglitz, MIT Professor Daron Acemoglu, and NYU Professor Paul Krugman—suggests that it is likely to exert significant influence on public debate and real-world policymaking in the period ahead.

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■ The Time Has Come for International Institutions-Global Challenges Should Be Addressed Multilaterally, Not Under Great-Power Leadership

There can be little doubt that AI is already having a historic impact on our economies and societies. Against this backdrop, it is highly significant that leading economists are not arguing against AI itself, but rather calling for the construction of institutional frameworks that can guide its development in ways that are beneficial to humanity. This is precisely the kind of issue that should be discussed from the standpoint of ensuring that the benefits of AI are shared globally.

At the same time, major powers such as the United States and China are increasingly prioritizing their own national interests over multilateral coordination. If this trend continues, international standards may be shaped in ways that disproportionately favor the major powers, while the world risks becoming divided into blocs centered respectively on the United States and China.

To avoid such an outcome, international institutions should play a leading role in shaping discussions from the perspective of the global common good. In particular, they must function as venues for consolidating the views of countries other than the United States and China—that is, the non-G2 economies, whose voices often carry less weight in international debates. By building cohesion among these countries, the non-G2 could strengthen its bargaining power vis-à-vis both Washington and Beijing, and ultimately create a framework into which the United States and China themselves can be drawn.

Japan, as a treaty ally of the United States and a country with deep historical and economic ties to China, is well positioned to serve as an intermediary between the non-G2 countries and the two major power

Under these conditions, criticism of the governing system tends to be discouraged, and

■ Beyond the SDGs: Sustainable Development in the Age of AI

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established by the United Nations, target the year 2030. With limited time remaining, the international community should not only accelerate efforts to achieve the SDGs, but also begin considering what comes next—namely, a Beyond SDGs agenda. In practice, however, attention has increasingly been drawn to geopolitical concerns, particularly following the advent of a second Trump administration, while the United States has also adopted a tougher stance toward international institutions. As a result, it is difficult to say that momentum behind the SDGs is currently strengthening.

That said, the principles underlying the SDGs remain as important as ever. If so, the pathway toward those goals should be updated to reflect the realities of the present era. In current terms, this means thinking seriously about how to prevent negative geopolitical shocks; how to build cooperative mechanisms that can help countries avoid destabilization even if such shocks materialize; and how to ensure that AI is harnessed in ways that lead not to dystopia but to a

more prosperous and humane future. It is from this perspective that multilateral discussions should move forward.

On December 18 this year, Japan will mark the 70th anniversary of its admission to the United Nations. This milestone should serve as an opportunity to deepen discussion on the future role of international institutions and on what a Beyond SDGs agenda ought to look like in the age of AI.

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Reference

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<https://www.wemustactnow.ai/>