

## **Human Rights for Conscious AI**

With technology advancing at an exponential rate, it is highly plausible that one day AI will gain consciousness. Whilst it is debatable how far into the future this will happen, humanity must be ready for its consequences when it comes. The UN Declaration of Human Rights 1948 guarantees only the rights of human beings. However, Article 1 also states that “[humans] are endowed with reason and conscience”. If an AI proves itself to possess reason and conscience through consciousness, should we grant them rights? Which rights, and will they be absolute or limited? Do we need to redefine humanity?

AI with consciousness has huge implications: it may gain greater autonomy, making them less easy to control, and compromising data security. But it may also gain empathy. Your role, as delegates of SOCHUM, is to negotiate a set of guidelines for how humans should treat and interact with (conscious) AI, that all nations would follow. You will need to navigate the tensions between market forces (huge multinational tech companies) and the pressure for humane regulations. You will have to compromise with nations in different stages of technological development – some governments, for instance, may value future growth above regulations, others may want to uphold principle, whilst still others wish to halt technological progress altogether, taking away the possibility of AI ever developing consciousness.

You may wish to consider the effects of giving AI rights in a society where humans are highly reliant on AI. But equally, you might want to think about the potential consequences of denying rights to beings that are conscious, but far more intelligent than humans.