# The plausibility of regulating AI

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International politics takes place in an international system that is anarchic in nature. The reason for it being anarchic is the lack of a centralised control system that can swing into place and restore things during emergencies. While international organisations have played a big role in reducing possibilities of conflicts, fact still remains that even the most important international organisation of the system--the United Nations (UN) often finds itself lacking teeth in enforcing rules and regulations aimed at ensuring a peaceful world order. The biggest example of this is in the forms of the Russia-Ukraine conflict which rages on while the UN continues to bring in resolutions to stop the war.



Adopting and embracing new technologies is extremely important for various industries like Robotic Process Automation, IoT edge computing, Augmented Reality & Virtual Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity.(Getty Images/iStockphoto)

While military conflict was thought to be largely a thing of the past in the 21st century owing to the various mechanisms in place post the Second World War, fact is that the Russia-Ukraine crisis did emerge and continues to rage on. Beyond direct military conflicts, several other conflicts have also emerged over resource sharing, or in the cyber domain in the form of cyber warfare or in the possibilities of a full-scale biological warfare. The role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in all of these newer forms of warfare becomes extremely risky.

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In the United States (US), which continues to be the most powerful state in the existing world order, there was a meeting in September this year, behind closed doors to discuss the possibilities of regulating AI. Reports state that several tech bosses including Elon Musk, Mark Zukerberg, Sundar Pichai and Satya Nadella attended the meeting and that there was overwhelming consensus on the need for regulating AI. Earlier, in May this

year, Sam Altman, the CEO of OpenAI testified before a US Senate Committee, describing the potential pitfalls of the new technology. In June this year, the European Union (EU) came out with the world's first comprehensive AI law, as per which the use of AI within the EU will be regulated by the AI Act.

The new rules establish obligations for providers and users depending on the level of risk from AI. There are four levels of risk identified by the new rules, which are unacceptable risk AI, high risk AI, generative risk AI and limited risk AI. To elucidate, unacceptable risk AI, which will be banned outright in the EU includes social scoring or the classification of people based on behaviour, socio-economic status or personal characteristics, facial recognition systems and biometric identification systems.

In June this year, China rolled out some of the most detailed regulations governing AI and the measures include governing recommendation algorithms as well as new rules for synthetically generated images and chatbots in the mould of ChatGPT. The unique part of the regulations in China are that while many of the measures focus on IP protection, transparency and discriminations, the rules also provide for the adherence to the values of socialism and the prohibition of generating incitement against the State. Clearly technology and geopolitics are deeply enmeshed in China.

The limitations of a universally accepted standard for regulating AI becomes clearer when the rules around AI in China and in the EU are compared. In 2023, the EU's European External Action Service announced its plan to track information manipulation by foreign actors and to coordinate with the 27 EU countries and the wider community of non-governmental organisations. Earlier in 2020, the European Commission for the first time ever accused China of peddling disinformation. This disinformation is churned out by AI enabled bots in the form of doctored images and videos and maliciously propagated narratives online. The European Commission, in 2020 undertook plans aimed at tackling online falsehoods connected to the COVID-19 public health crisis and mentioned Beijing as a source of online disinformation linked to the pandemic, aimed at undermining western democracies, sowing internal divisions, and projecting a distorted view of China's response to the pandemic. While there are rules governing usage of AI within China, the spread of disinformation abroad and against democracies regularly and routinely takes place from actors based in China.

Another point of divergence between the rules governing AI in the EU and in China are in the approaches to facial recognition. In the EU, facial recognition technologies as stated previously fall in the unacceptable risk category and will be banned outright. In China, as per the regulations facial regulation technology can be used with a specific purpose, sufficient necessity and with strict safeguards. Surveillance cameras are ubiquitous in most Chinese cities and some of the largest suppliers of facial recognition technologies have partnerships with the local police to provide technology for security purposes. There is a caveat in the AI regulations in China against using AI for purposes seen as going against the nation.

The myriad approaches that countries have to assessing their own national security vis-à-vis how they see AI as a tool of warfare is the reason as to why there can never be universally accepted norms around AI, and the malicious potentials of AI will continue to be used by non-State actors and State actors alike. In a sense, the nature of governance of AI is exactly like the governance of international politics - anarchic, because of the lack of a centralised agency that can ensure the continuance of peace and stability.

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