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World Government Summit: How the Merging of Humans and Technology Will Define the Next 50 Years

As part of the World Government Summit last week in Dubai, conference organizers presented the "Government in 2071" initiative — a roadmap for government interactions with "citizens and stakeholders" in a dramatically shifting dystopian future impacted by automation, robotics and climate change.

By Michael Nevradakis, Ph.D.

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As part of the World Government Summit (WGS) last week in Dubai, conference organizers presented the "Government in 2071" initiative — a roadmap for governments to interact with "citizens and stakeholders" in a dramatically shifting future impacted by automation, robotics and climate change.

Convened from Feb. 13-15 under the slogan "Shaping Future Governments," the WGS brought together key global figures to discuss the future of the world in a format similar to that of the recent World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting.

While Elon Musk and Klaus Schwab — who offered competing visions of the future at the event — dominated media coverage, the WGS has issued its own set of dystopian predictions for the future in its "Government in 2071: Guidebook."

The guidebook predicts that catastrophic climate change, mass migration, mass layoffs due to automation, ensuing social unrest, and the merging of humans and technology will define the next 50 years.

It presents this vision as the "best-case scenario" for 2071.

> **Robert F. Kennedy Jr** ✔
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> .@elonmusk: "One of the biggest risks to the future of civilization is AI. But AI is both positive or negative — it has great promise, great capability but also, with that comes

great danger."

2071: Catastrophic climate change, mass unemployment, social unrest and humans as cyborgs

The "Government in 2071" report offers a comprehensive set of predictions of how the world will transition in the coming decades, up to the year 2071.

The report was originally created in 2018 by the summit conveners, but it stayed largely under the radar until this year when its vision — which closely mirrors ideas put forth by the WEF — has gained more widespread traction.

Talks at this year's WGS were often reflective of the vision outlined in the report.

WGS described the 2071 initiative as follows:

> "Government in 2071 is an initiative launched by the World Government Summit with the vision of preparing governments for the future. With 2071 being targeted as the year for the findings, societal and technological megatrends were captured. The predicted megatrends highlight the potential changes in citizens' lives, and how societies will operate and be governed.

> "These findings were compiled to form a guidebook intended to direct governments towards a future better prepared for. Government in 2071 has not only redirected the strategies of governments, but also those of private entities and startups."

The report divides the future into three eras: the Digital Connectivity Era (2018-2030), the New Exploration Era (2030-2050) and the Techno-Humanitarian Era (2050-2071).

It touts "government" as the provider of solutions to all challenges foreseen for the coming decades.

It predicts that in coming decades, "Climate refugee immigration is forecasted as a critical issue governments address, unless rising water levels and desertification are addressed by major and timely innovation breakthroughs."

"Laws and industry regulations will have to be adapted to AI [artificial intelligence]," it predicts, while "mixed-profit/public-private corporations will emerge," which "will work closely through joint ventures and partnerships with leading corporates to create smart cities and upgrade government functions."

As a result of such partnerships, "coalitions of non-state players will become more important in shaping policy outcomes," while a singular "Ministry of the Future" will exist "to ensure that decisions and directions are based on long-term planning and to avoid short-termism pressures of newly elected leaders," the report says.

This mirrors rhetoric espoused by U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres at this year's WGS meeting, where he said "We must avoid short-term policymaking that delays taking on the big tests we face."

The report also predicts that an "increasingly displaced workforce" will be "transitioning to new roles" while "job transformation/universal income will be a key area where government will have to [provide] support," by "provid[ing] access to financial support and a basic income as a social safety net."

It also foresees wholesale changes for education. "New-normal education reform will be integral as emphasis shifts from early and initial education to continuous education and adaptability," and school enrollment will "gradually … become less important" as "children may likely attain intelligence in ways other than attending school full-time."

Government "will need to incorporate advanced technologies into its own operations to remain effective, and new solutions will be required for advanced cities," which the report foresees would be "adaptive and predictive cities" due to "advancements across AI, quantum computing, IoE [Internet of Everything] and sentient systems."

Healthcare won't be left out of this transformation. "Advanced preventative healthcare will become a greater priority as medical implants and faster detection methods prevail, and as rising and aging population necessitates closer management of healthcare costs," according to the report.

"AI/robotics will be incorporated into healthcare practices" while health-related metrics may include "the percentage of population with AR [augmented reality] tools/implants," it says.

All of this will occur, the report claims, against a backdrop of severe climate change, as a result of which "Governments will have to create dedicated resources, supported by rigid policies, to ensure temperature rises are limited to 2^0C or below."

The report included separate projections for each of the three upcoming "eras," presenting many of these predictions in the form of "first-person" accounts from hypothetical citizens of these future societies, including a 20-year-old student, young couples with and without children and an "elderly" couple.

The Digital Connectivity Era

For the Digital Connectivity Era, the report predicts the growth of the IoE, AR and VR (virtual reality) technologies, the advent of "floating farms," "space mining missions" and "eco solar ships," the growth of "climate refugees" and the gig economy, and "increased social and civic unrest" as a result of "unemployment [and] financial collapse."

A hypothetical 20-year-old student in 2030 would take most university classes through "VR with human teachers and AI assistants" and would be "concerned that predicting crime through AI analytics could profile innocent people" — a concept infamously portrayed in the 2002 film "Minority Report."

A hypothetical "couple with children" would "work for a space mining company — mostly from home to spend more time with the children," and would communicate with doctors "via text and chatbots." "Blockchain and AI" would be used "to mine our patient records ahead of time."

A hypothetical "couple with no children" would "work in the military with supersoldiers" and "own a home in an area that has become high-risk for floods."

They might be excited to receive "a text saying that my license is automatically renewed," as "the government checks my identity, vision, driving and residence records and makes the decision without me having to go to the physical office and apply."

A hypothetical "elderly couple" during this era would be "actively engaged in co-creating societal solutions with government," which would provide "a self-driving car service" to take them to the community center, while their "prescription bottles" would remind them to take their pills and "smart pills" would give their doctor "an endless stream of information" on how their body responds to treatment.

The New Exploration Era

The report says the New Exploration Era "will be marked by human capacity augmentation and AI technologies as well as space exploration," which would move society from a "problem-solution" paradigm to an "opportunity-exploration" one.

It would include a "near-space tourism sector, space mining, garden buildings, floating settlements and robot relationships."

The report also predicts that self-regulating "conscious cities," universal basic income, higher corporate taxes, "majority renewables" and "automation-driven job losses" will be common.

These job losses might lead to "increased social and civic unrest."

It also foresees "more forced migration" and "urbanization pressures" due to rising sea levels and natural disasters."

It says there will be a "continued rise of DIY [do-it-yourself] healthcare," "100% renewable energy cities," "increasing friendships with robots" and a "subscription economy" where "people own less and experience more."

The hypothetical 20-year-old during this era, a virtual Ivy League graduate, would be concerned about "increasing civil unrest due to mass job automation."

They might say things like, "There was a riot in our city center last night. Some groups are gathering to protest against mass job automation. Things got pretty hostile."

This hypothetical 20-year-old might also be concerned by a "bioterrorism attack," commenting, "It was so sad when we heard that the bioterrorism attack ... wiped out 33 million people!"

They might also express concern about the "large income inequality gap between the mega slums and middle-income families in some parts of the world."

A hypothetical couple in this era might be concerned with inequality between those that can and cannot afford "brain implants."

"Ordinary citizens are just starting to become cyborgs, affording brain implants, but it is still for the rich or for people in high positions. It is still expensive, but it is causing a major education gap in mega-intelligence," they might say.

"Near-space tourism" would "make waves" by this era, according to the report, but "government requirements" would be needed for travel.

A hypothetical "couple with children" in this era would be "recently jobless and thinking to start a space mining consulting business."

The couple would be happy to have "a healthcare pod at home where we can send in samples to our doctor" and "AR glasses" to which "our city government regularly sends announcements … promoting cross-cultural harmony and connectivity."

The report predicts many jobless couples, stating:

> "Robots [at this time] have taken over all tasks in many sectors, e.g. lawyers, nurses, and pharmacists. But goods and services are cheap now making basic living either cheap or free. Having a job is more out of a passion for a higher income, than a basic need."

A hypothetical childless couple during this era would likely also be jobless and worried about having sufficient social protection. They might voice concerns such as:

> "More people around the world are becoming refugees due to rising sea levels and desertification.

> "Some cities were even fully submerged! Our city is taking some people in and housing them in 3D printed floating island communities. …

> "[But] most of us have a small, superfast personal device that runs our homes, transports us, manages our lifestyles, bank accounts, and education …

> "[And] our government is allocating more of the budget to permanent social protections for the unemployed due to automation."

One of them might say an "AI based health monitoring service, leveraging my life-long health data stream, has predicted that I'm likely to have a heart attack in the near future," and "government health services has sent me a customized suggested diet plan."

A hypothetical elderly couple during this era might expect a pension, but comment, "The government has pushed back the age of pension, and we are not happy with that."

They might also observe that "robots are increasingly part of the decision-making process in the senate" and that "our Prime Minister has an AI robot as a special advisor."

The Techno-Humanitarian Era

The report predicts the Techno-Humanitarian Era will be "marked by a shift in innovation efforts and global priorities towards redefining and empowering a new technology-enhanced humanity."

Such shifts would include "space hotels and flying cars" and "underwater cities, and space mining of resources," but also be marked by "adverse effects of climate change," like "submersion of cities" and "unbearable temperatures."

Residents of this era could expect to see "sentient" cities, universal basic income, "AI labor relations" and "shared-profit corporations." Most jobs that existed in 2018 will, by then, have been replaced by automation.

The report predicts urbanization in this era will include "new housing solutions," such as "large skyscrapers, city-in-a-pyramid, earth-scrapers, floating cities, undersea cities," along with "continued large funding investments towards geoengineering efforts."

It predicts social protections will increase because AI will produce greater inequality.

In this era, "Health care advancements [will] have cured many, if not most, diseases of the last half-century. However new diseases [will] have emerged due to climate change effects," it says.

It also predicts more people will have augmentable implants in their brains, "making them more intelligent than humans."

As a result, the report argues, "education as we knew it in past generations needs to be totally transformed if we want it to stay relevant. Children and adults will need to be trained on how to use their brain implants."

By 2071, continues the report, "genomic health [will be] screened at birth" and one's birth certificate will be part of a "global registry." Land ownership will be part of a "global blockchain registry."

As previously reported by The Defender, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular, Goal 16.9, call for the provision of a digital legal identity for all, including newborns, by 2030.

Corporations will be the "largest source of social service funding by design," and "AI courts" will "settle employment disputes," the report continues.

"Owner-aware homes," will be "registered by government and require annual audit/approvals," while "Robots/AI" will lead "community policing, firefighting [and] paramedic" services.

"Augmentation implants" will also be registered and renewed with the government, as will space travel.

By this time, a hypothetical 20-year-old might work "for a company that produces technology for cooling the planet," while a hypothetical parent might work in space for a mining company and commute home every six months.

A hypothetical childless couple would volunteer with the military for a "special basic income" and might be "forced to migrate to an underwater city," where they would receive "a small, but nice, government subsidized smart home."

Instead of meeting friends at cafes, the couple would meet them in their apartment, which would have "a built-in 3D hologram space."

There would be "no need for toll booths, credit cards or passports anymore," as people would be identified "by molecular-sized computers that are embedded in everything."

Households would be smaller "due to lower fertility," the report predicts.

The "Government in 2071" report states its predictions for each era are "based on [a] plausible best-case scenario" that "assumes no 'shock events'" and is based on the "most developed city" of each time period, leaving to the imagination what other scenarios might entail.

Notably, though, Arturo Bris of the IMD World Competitiveness Center told delegates at this year's WGS meeting that a "shock" is needed to spur the "transition" to a new "world order."

He did not specify what this "shock" might be.

SUGGEST A CORRECTION

Michael Nevradakis, Ph.D.

Michael Nevradakis, Ph.D., based in Athens, Greece, is a senior reporter for The Defender and part of the rotation of hosts for CHD.TV's "Good Morning CHD."

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