Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a Fractured World: Bridge-Building for Asia-Pacific and Beyond

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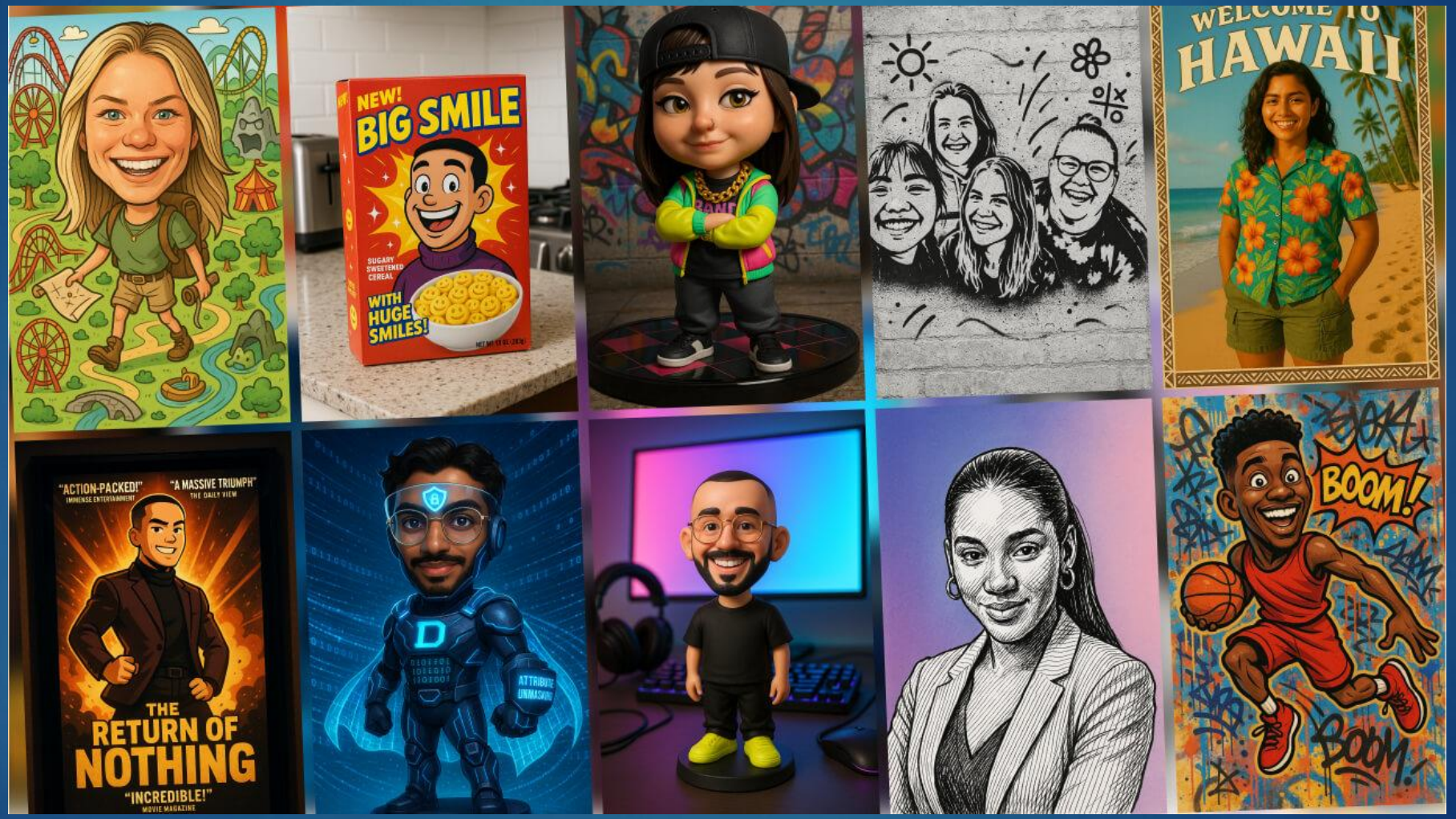
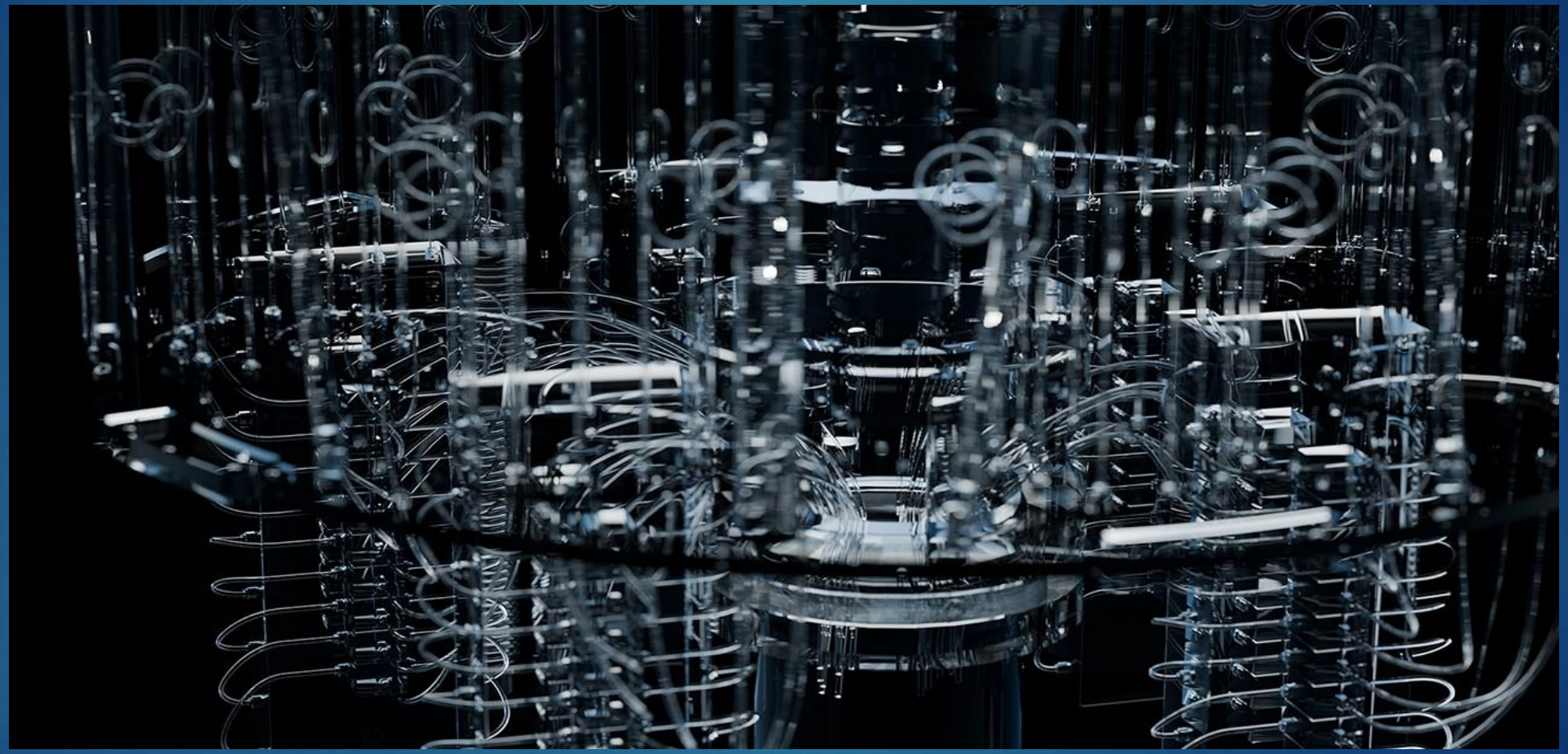
CHAT GPT image generation 2025
Source: https://snapbar.com/blog/ai-photo-booths-in-2025-chat-gpt-4o-image-generation



Quantum Computing: source: https://blogs.nvidia.com/blog/gtc-2025-quantum-day/



Algorithm:s Source: https://news.mit.edu/2021/how-quickly-do-algorithms-improve-0920

Fragmentation ?

- Multipolarity
- Polycrisis
- War/lack of peace
- Key Human Rights Violations
- Non-democracies

- Development gaps/poverty and lack of access to tech
- Environmental degradation and global warming
- Intense superpower and other rivalry
- Emerging Tech….of a possibly destructive kind..e.g. killer robots

Connectivity ?

- UN still exists, despite cut backs and drawbacks
- Some multilateral entry points still possible, to establish guardrails linked with AI
- Some regional convergences possible. In Asia-Pacific: ESCAP, UNESCO regional focal points
- Some constructive developments from countries
- Some constructive inputs from other stakeholders, such as business sector/platforms/providers and consumers/users

Soft(er) or Hard(er) Approach

- Soft(er) approach – policies, declaration, recommendations, e.g. with general principles, such as transparency and accessibility, and or business Codes of Conduct as self-regulation rather than State-imposed regulation…soft law…e.g. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Hard(er) approach; binding treaties, State laws and regulations…e.g. new Cybercrimes Convention/Treaty; national AI law with criminal and or civil/administrative sanctions (e.g fines)
- Perhaps MIX ?

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Source: Stock Image

Generative AI

IT CAN CREATE

AT TIMES BY ITSELF, WITHOUT HUMAN CONTROL

Artificial Intelligence(AI)

- Covered by UNESCO recommendation
- Many emerging soft and hard laws:

- Multilateral Approach: soft law: **2021 UNESCO Recommendations on Ethics of Artificial Intelligence**

Definition of AI systems per UNESCO (non-exhaustive)

- AI systems as systems which have the capacity to process data and information in a way that resembles intelligent behaviour, and typically includes aspects of reasoning, learning, perception, prediction, planning or control.

UNESCO- Ethical approach (soft law)

- Values:
- Respect, protection and promotion of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms and human dignity
- Environmental and ecosystem flourishing

- Ensuring diversity and inclusiveness
- Living in peaceful, just and interconnected societies
- Principles:
- Proportionality and do no harm
- Safety and security
- Fairness and non-discrimination
- Sustainability
- Right to privacy and data protection

- Human oversight and determination
- Transparency and explainability
- Awareness and literacy
- Multistakeholder and adaptive governance and collaboration
- Policy:
- Ethical impact assessment
- Ethical governance and stewardship
- Data policy

- Development and international cooperation
- Environment and ecosystem
- Gender
- Culture
- Education and research
- Communication and information
- Economy and labour
- Health and social wellbeing
- Monitoring and evaluation

- Humans in the loop and humans in command principles

Asia-Pacific (AP)Developments

- AP participated in 2024 Summit of the Future and the Global Digital Compact: Feed-back process on AI to experts group of the UN
- Some coverage by ESCAP and UNESCO in the AP region, including recent UNESCO-related declaration 2025 from the region

Countries of AP

- On AI, mostly soft law approach of policies rather than hard laws
- Where there are hard laws, they tend to be general and faciltative rather than controlling
- In addition, most countries have personal data protection law and intellectual property (copyright/patents) law which can be used to regulate AI to some extent
- Most countries do not have specific laws on AI but many are now considering possibility of laws

One AP Country: most detailed Laws and evolving

- Data protection and intellectual property laws
- Several AI related regulations
- Now preparing comprehensive AI law
- It has a law to compel the registration of algorithms, as well as both registration and oversight of deep synthesis systems which might produce deep fakes or hallucinations, such as deceptive visual, voice or written content.
- It has also introduced ethical reviews of such systems.

- The country opted for interim measures on generative AI, upholding core socialist values and underlining personal data protection and respect for IP.
- It also introduced mandatory labelling or watermarking of AI generated content.

- in draft form a more comprehensive AI law which seeks to provide even broader coverage of users' rights and privacy and IP related protection, as well as the rights of workers and disadvantaged groups.

- Criminal law sanctions

Another AP country

- 2026, the Framework Act on Artificial Intelligence Development and Establishment of a Foundation for Trustworthiness

- - obligations for “high-impact” AI systems in key areas such as , healthcare, energy, and public services
- mandatory labeling for some applications of generative AI.

Regional ? European Union (EU) AI Act

- Hard Law: EU AI Act in force 2024
- Prohibited AI such as
- Subliminal AI interacting with emotions and leading to child-related violence

- V Social score – classifying persons as trustworthy or not, leading to discrimination
- V Remote biometric facial recognition AI in public spaces, with some exceptions e.g. for law enforcement
- V Real time biometric surveillance, with some exceptions

- High risk AI needing guardrails.e.g remote biometric facial recognition for law enforcement purposes
- Need due diligence, risk mitigation with notification to national agency

- Other AI: self regulation by industry
- Monitoring by regional body of EU
- Heavy adminsfrative sanctions for violations… fines (billions of euros)

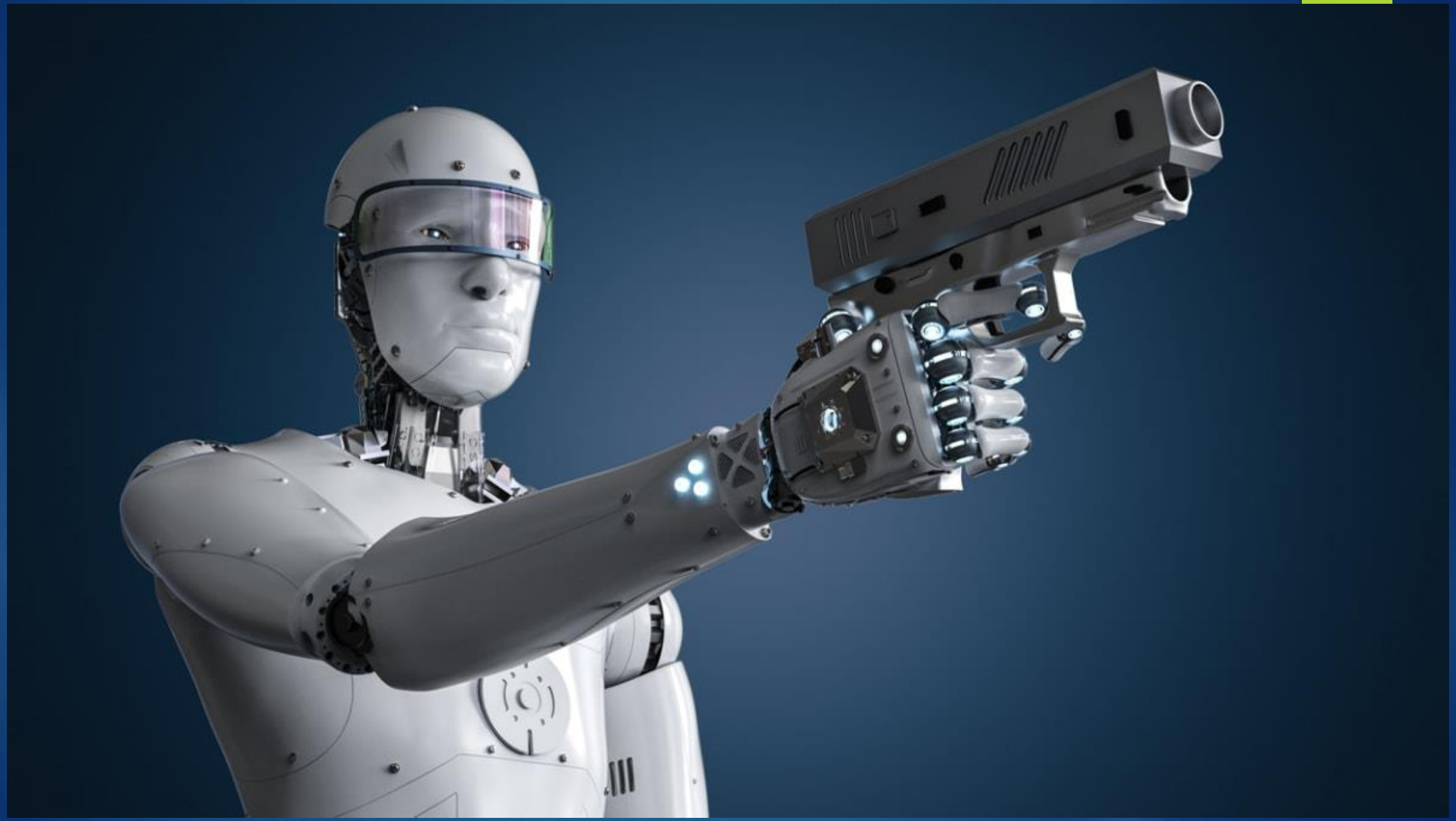
Thailand ?

- Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA)
- Intellectual Property Laws

- AI law ? One of the draft Thai AI laws follows the prohibitions of EU AI Law .e.g. prohibit social scoring.

ASEAN

- **ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics**
- Soft law type



Source: https://www.channelnewsasia.com/commentary/war-killer-robot-ai-lethal-autonomous-weapons-3203846

Stumbling blocks

- national security: too broad in non-democracies
- Too subjective/extensive criminalization of cybercrime…limiting freedom of expression, dissent
- some destructive AI/tech
- surveillance..remote, biometric, real time
- social scores
- subliminal attacks on people…
- strict registration of platforms/providers
- data/AI illiteracy

- registration of algorithms/open up black box ?
- business related guardrails with too much content moderation and or too much State control
- Limited consumer participation and difficult redress where violations
- competition/rivalry at bilateral level
- State super-imposition

Transversal Truths

- AI Intersection with human rights, such as freedom of expression and right to privacy/personal data protection: need to respect civil, political, economic, social, cultural rights as guided by multilateral framework (UN!), even if global fragmentations
- Beware of political context….non-democracies more likely to control strictly and or manipulate against dissidents
- More difficult in war situations. Need international treaty on self-automated AI systems as killer robots

- Development angle (SDGs): call for access to all to leave no one behind; equity and anti-poverty, gender sensibility and response to vulnerabilities
- Environmental challenge and climate change inviting good tech to help address global warming, pollution and loss of biodiversity
- Need Options of soft(er) laws and policies, hard(er) laws and policies and or a mix, emanating from not only the State, but also with inputs from business sector and with substantive participation of general public/consumers/users

Let's Build Bridges:

- Safe, secure, smart, sustainable…as aspiration for implementation grounded on human rights, peace, democracy, sustainable development and environment, and friendly tech!
- Personal data protection law
- Copyright ? Patents

- Labelling/watermarks indicating AI-generated…right to know that AI is behind it
- Non-discrimination and v social scores/profiling
- Special protection re vulnerabilities, e.g. children…e.g. online protection law and policy

- Business sector…Code of Conduct/Ethics as self regulation (though limited space in non-democratic systems)
- Consumer voice as stakeholder (though limited in non-democratic systems)
- Human control as essential..and the right to access a human behind the AI!

- Education for safe use – data/AI literacy, and at times with tech detoxification
- Cooperation with UN and follow-up to global summit of the future's Global Digital Compact…grounded on local realities, peoples' substantive participation, and shared wisdom!

Source: https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2020/9/9/21418390/robots-pandemic-loneliness-isolation-elderly-seniors

Not to forget our Interface with AI: 3 Human C's

- **Conscience**
- **Consciousness**
- **Care-cum-Consideration** (towards **life**…)

THANK YOU!

Source: https://www.gtlaw.com.au/insights/human-rights-meet-artificial-intelligence-ahrc-reports-ai