



# SOP ON USE OF AI-GENERATED AUDIOVISUAL CONTENT

Two-pager Series || #4  
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2026

## WHAT is the SOP for?

The SOP sets out when and how AI may be used to create, edit and disseminate audiovisual content in UN peacekeeping. **It establishes permitted and prohibited uses and minimum standards for authorisation, accuracy, disclosure and human review.**

## WHO is it aimed at?

This SOP applies to all **DPO and peacekeeping personnel** involved in the production, approval or dissemination of audiovisual content, including civilian staff, uniformed personnel, consultants, government-provided personnel and interns. External vendors producing content for DPO or peacekeeping missions must also comply.

## WHY is it needed?

**AI-generated and AI-altered content** offers new creative and accessibility opportunities, but it can also mislead audiences, blur the distinction between authentic and synthetic content, reinforce harmful stereotypes and undermine trust in the United Nations.

## WHERE does it apply?

The SOP applies to **AI-generated and AI-altered audiovisual content** intended for both internal and public-facing use, including strategic communications, public information, training materials and informational products for Member States, civil society and other partners.

## QUICK GUIDE: THREE CATEGORIES OF AI USE



### 1. PHOTOREALISTIC SYNTHETIC CONTENT

**PROHIBITED**  
WITH A NARROW EXCEPTION

Content that could reasonably be mistaken for authentic, naturally recorded visuals or audio is prohibited.

- Synthetic images, video or audio depicting real or fabricated people, places or events
- Imitation or cloning of an identifiable person's likeness or voice
- AI manipulation of documentary evidence
- Reposting or sharing photorealistic synthetic content in an official capacity



#### NARROW EXCEPTION:

May be used for internal UN peacekeeping training and pedagogical simulations only, subject to prior authorisation and strict safeguards.



### 2. NON-REALISTIC SYNTHETIC CONTENT

**PERMITTED**  
WITH CONDITIONS

Clearly illustrative, symbolic, stylised or abstract AI-generated content may be used when it cannot reasonably be mistaken for authentic, naturally recorded visuals or audio.

#### EXAMPLE OF USE:

- Illustrations and cartoons
- Symbolic or schematic imagery
- Abstract animations
- Clearly synthetic, non-cloned audio
- Translation



### 3. AI-ASSISTED TECHNICAL ENHANCEMENT

**PERMITTED**

AI tools may be used for purely technical enhancements that do not generate synthetic content or materially alter meaning, identity or context in a way that could mislead audiences.

#### EXAMPLE OF USE:

- Colour correction
- Stabilisation and noise reduction
- Background removal
- Accessibility enhancements
- Auto-captioning and subtitling (human review required)
- Translation (human review required)



**BE TRANSPARENT**  
Clearly disclose AI use to maintain trust and integrity.



**ENSURE HUMAN OVERSIGHT**  
Apply human review and editorial control at every stage.



**RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS**  
Protect privacy, dignity and avoid harm or discrimination.



**MAINTAIN ACCOUNTABILITY**  
Responsibility for AI content must be clear and traceable at all times.



**EXAMPLES OF DISCLOSURE TEXT**  
Use clear and specific disclosure appropriate to the context.

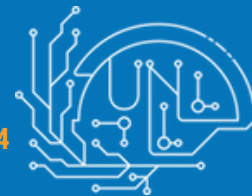
“ Image generated using AI for symbolic representation.” ”

“ Voiceover generated using a non-cloned AI voice.” ”



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## Authorization and review of AI-generated and AI-altered audiovisual content

The SOP specifies both the authorisation requirements and the criteria that must accompany a request, including risks, necessity and proportionality, mitigation, and accountability measures.



## REQUIREMENT FRAMEWORK



### 1. AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED FROM HOM OR HOD

Prior authorization must be obtained for:



#### Photorealistic synthetic content

Used only for training and other pedagogical materials for authorized purposes.



#### Non-realistic synthetic content

Used to portray sensitive topics such as violence, SGBV, human suffering, trauma, protest, displacement, or other situations involving heightened risk of harm, stigma or retraumatisation.



### 2. WHERE TO SEEK AUTHORIZATION

Authorization must be sought at the appropriate level.



#### Peacekeeping missions

From the Head of Mission, with advice from the Strategic Communications and Human Rights components (where present). If not present, the DPO Strategic Communications Section and Information Integrity Unit may be consulted.



#### Headquarters

From the Head of Department, advised by the DPO Information Integrity Unit and the Strategic Communications Section.



### 3. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ALL USE CASES

The originating office must assess and submit a request for authorization based on:

1



Whether the proposed content may pose a risk to human rights or the reputation of the Organization.

2



Whether and why synthetic content is necessary and proportional to risks (why authentic imagery may not be viable).

3



Mitigation measures that will be put in place to manage risks (e.g. disclosure, distribution control, expert review, consent, privacy).

4



What accountability and remedial measures will be in place (who is the author of the content, who is responsible for modifications).



### 4.

#### REVIEW, CLEARANCE AND WORKFLOW



All AI-generated audiovisual content on sensitive topics that has been created with prior approval must be reviewed and cleared by the Head of DPO or Head of Mission, as applicable, prior to finalisation and dissemination.



AI-altered content must be reviewed and cleared by the relevant Section, Service and/or Division head of the relevant office, in line with procedures, and observing the relevant measures indicated in section C of this SOP.



Personnel can use the workflow in the SOP on use of AI-generated audiovisual content to assess specific use cases. If any uncertainty remains after completing the workflow, the DPO Information Integrity Unit and the Strategic Communications Section may be consulted for advice.



## SENSITIVE TOPICS REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDS



**Sensitive topics** include: violence, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), human suffering, trauma, protest, displacement and other situations involving heightened risk of harm, stigma or retraumatisation.



**Photorealistic synthetic content:** prohibited.



**Non-realistic synthetic content:** may be used only under strict safeguards when authentic imagery would pose a risk.



#### When permitted:

- Remove details that could identify or endanger individuals or communities.
- Ensure content cannot be mistaken for documentary evidence.
- Use for contextual, explanatory or educational purposes — not as a representation of lived experience.
- Consult relevant subject-matter experts.
- Include clear and persistent disclosure.
- Obtain prior authorisation.



The SOP prioritises credible, authentic imagery where it can be used without compromising safety, dignity or well-being.

#### EXAMPLES OF DISCLOSURE TEXT

- “Image generated using AI for symbolic representation.”
- “Voiceover generated using a non-cloned AI voice.”
- “Historical re-creation generated using AI, based on archival sources and expert review.”