

PANELISTS DEBATE

Susan LIAUTAUD, Vice Chair of the Court of Governors of the London School of Economics and Political Science, Founder, Susan Liautaud & Associates Limited (SLA)

I have been very unfair to you all, because I have asked you complicated questions and I am only going to give you about a minute or two to answer them. Can we please start here?

Kriengsak CHAREONWONGSAK, President of the Institute of Future Studies for Development in Thailand, Former Member of Parliament, Thailand and Chairman, Success Group of Companies

Let me try to be very brief in your question about voting machines, technological voting. I would be very much in favour of efficiency in voting, provided that we can take care of the following key hiccups that I am worried about. Number one, would powerful authoritarian regimes rig the results, working behind the scenes with a computer wizard to rig the results so cleverly that no one would realise? Number two, the privacy of voting could be easily violated. When you vote by machine, people could keep your information, whatever they say about security, Snowden has shown that it is not. Therefore, how could we remove the issue of the privacy of our own vote? Third, are the necessary technological governance processes being put in place and what are the due processes we need before even thinking about technological capability? The state of technological progress varies in different places in the world. In some of the least developed countries, something like that would be very difficult, for example, the cost of installment, the cost of machines, the cost of going to vote by machine when they may not have personal mobile phones, or things like that. How would we cover those costs? Then there is the issue of voter complacency, who are there, seen clearly. No matter how easy it is to vote, if they are complacent it will not solve that problem. There is also the question of tech unable people, who are not tech savvy and social media in cooperation with governments could easily steer the direction of voting. These are some of the issues that worry me. Therefore, I am going to conclude by saying, as I said in my speech, that if you have integrity, it will supersede all the technological machinery that we have. That is the question of integrity on all sides: politicians', voters', and those being elected.

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Thank you, Kriengsak. We are seeing here that the same issues are coming up again and again: integrity; governance models; social responsibility.

Mari KIVINIEMI, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD, former Prime Minister of Finland

Thank you. It is a very good question and very challenging for all governments to find a good solution to implementing legislation for specific goals, while not simultaneously distorting the function of the market in a way that creates unethical situations. I would say that it is life. Also, the OECD is an organization that tries to help governments find the right legislation. We do a lot of peer reviews, give guidance when it comes to, for example, recommendations on multinational enterprises. We have tool kits and help to implement them, not only for governments but also for companies, so that they can see how things are done in other companies, for them to fulfill their criteria. Implementation is important, but also oversight and monitoring which, of course, are done by governments, but also by citizens, NGOs, by media. Everyone must be on board, so all the stakeholders have to be involved to make the system work.



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Your comments remind me not only of the pivotal role of the OECD, but also the comments of Mr. Prime Minister of Qatar this morning, of which at least the English translation was the need to shoulder the responsibility for legal and ethical.

Ashwani KUMAR, Senior Advocate at the Supreme Court of India, former Parliamentarian for the State of Punjab, former Minister of State in the Departments of Industrial Policy & Planning, Parliamentary Affairs, Planning, Science, Technology and Earth Sciences, India

Susan, you asked me a difficult question. How would I advise the heads of state to introduce the element of ethics and what should they do? Let me start by answering you, and this statement is rooted in my perception of ethics and democratic politics. The only justification for the pursuit of power, which rests on the faith of the people, is to strive to establish societies that are seen to be fair, just and that promote equality and inclusion. The only ethical standard which you can use to measure the exercise of power as a rightful exercise or wrongful exercise thereof, is the extent to which the exercise of power has helped create a fair and just society. Again, it is a question of ethics. The question of the morality of power is ultimately a question of the ethics of power. I dare say that all democratically elected governments, sooner or later, face this test, whether in the perception of the people on whose faith and trust governments come into being, governments have been able to discharge and vindicate their burden. There is no shortcut. The morality of power depends on the ends to which it is applied; this is an ethical question. This would be my advice to all heads of government and people who exercise power; please promote a just and fair society. Without political stability, which is again a function of the policies that governments pursue, you cannot establish a fair and just society. If the policies pursued by people in government and power are not inclusive, they lead to alienation, division and xenophobic urges. Quite clearly, those leaders would lose the trust of the people.

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Thank you, Ashwani. Bruno and then we will open the conversation with all of you. On the question of if you could name the next priorities for cooperation between business and government.

Bruno LAFONT, Co-chairman of the Board of Directors, LafargeHolcim

I think I talked clearly about my priorities. I think that the need for commitment and measurement from countries and companies is very clear. Redefining values for companies is very important but there are also more practical ways to be more efficient in those transformations, by aligning public bodies. I have not mentioned that, but if the UN, the FCC and the UN climate organization could work rapidly alongside WTO, I think it would improve and accelerate the process. There is a need for separate groups to work together and for governments to start testing their new measurements on climate, for example, on public procurement. Public procurement is a very practical way to start transforming our cities, the way we live and the companies we produce.

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Thank you, Bruno.