Towards a Bangkok Declaration on Solidarity AI

A frame for the Theses, offered for discussion. Shivam Shukla, Advocate, Allahabad High Court; panellist, Power in the Loop. Bangkok, 13 November 2026. shivam@advshivamshukla.in

A note before the articles. This is a frame, not a finished text. Under each article I have set out a floor that people of very different views can share, then the question on which they differ. The Theses we write here, and every position brought to this room, are meant to fill these articles, not to compete with them. What fits nowhere is a candidate for a new article; I would rather note it than force it. The sheet overleaf sorts any argument by party, layer and act.

Preamble. Artificial intelligence is built from human labour, data, knowledge, language, public infrastructure, energy, minerals and land, and it acts upon human lives. Those who build and own these systems are few; those built upon and acted upon are many, and are rarely those who decide. AI is therefore a relation between three parties: those who build and own, those who are built upon, and those who are acted upon. That relation is a matter of power, not of technique.

Article 1. What AI is, and on whom it rests. An AI system is any system that automates or augments inference, decision, generation or action, whatever its architecture; this instrument governs relations and effects, not any one technology. Those who supply a system's labour, data, knowledge, language, infrastructure or land, and those it acts upon or who depend upon it, are its constituency. *Open question: where does a tool end and a system with consequences of its own begin?*

Article 2. Legitimacy, and the test. An AI system is legitimate only when its governance binds it to its constituency. Efficiency, scale or profit do not confer legitimacy, and consultation is not governance. Solidarity AI is AI that meets this test, and thereby strengthens cooperation rather than extraction. No delegation of a consequential function to an AI system shall extinguish the answerability of the person or institution that authorises, adopts or acts upon its output. *Open question: how much of a system's data, compute, models and surplus must its constituency co-own, and what mix of ownership, regulation and bargaining suffices?*

Article 3. We build. At every layer from the earth to the cloud: energy and minerals, data centres, data, models, applications and finance, alternatives shall be built that are publicly or collectively owned, democratically governed and designed for social rather than extractive ends, and shall grow by federating accountable units rather than by concentrating control. Public AI infrastructure, provided as a public good on equal terms as roads are, is a layer in its own right, is held to the same test, and shall be interoperable with cooperative and community layers so that they may run upon it without being absorbed by it. *Open question: which layers must be shared, which may be private, and what must a federation hold in common?*

Article 4. We govern. The constituency of a system shall hold a binding voice in its governance and a share in its surplus, and shall have the means to exercise that voice: education, open knowledge and time. *Open question: is that voice best secured by cooperative ownership, by bargaining, by statute, by public ownership, or by new institutions?*

Article 5. We condition. Whoever builds or deploys an AI system shall disclose what it is and does; obtain consent before extraction; pay fairly at every tier of the supply chain, including the creators, researchers and professionals whose work it learns from; count, disclose and govern its energy, water, land and material costs; protect the pipeline of human competence and the human relations it draws upon; and return to the commons what it takes from it. Language: no community shall be governed by a system that cannot understand it, or be shut out of building its own. *Open question: who sets each limit, by what measure, and how are resources moved to the communities that dominant systems underserve?*

Article 6. We protect. No AI system shall be used to watch, profile, deceive or rank persons so as to strip them of privacy, dignity or equal standing, to manipulate elections or public debate, to exploit children, or to select or strike human targets without human judgement. *Open question: which uses are banned outright, and which are conditioned?*

Article 7. We refuse. Those affected shall hold a lawful and collective capacity to refuse, suspend or recall a deployment, effective in practice and not only in form, exercised through an institution able to make that refusal bind: a professional body, a worker organisation, a community body or a public authority. Every deployment shall have an accessible and time-bound route to suspension. *Open question: which institution holds this power in each setting, and how is its own power checked?*

Article 8. We repair. Where harm is done there shall be redress, and any person subject to a system's decision may contest it; where a system is withdrawn, recall; where work is displaced, a transition owed to the displaced; where the commons has been enclosed, restoration. *Open question: who bears the cost of repair, and who decides that it is complete?*

Article 9. We organise. Signatories shall organise as a movement: federate across borders, fund one another, educate their constituencies, and ally with unions, cooperatives, universities, cities and public bodies. *Open question: who convenes, and how is the movement itself held to Article 2?*

Article 10. We adopt. Public authorities at every level shall: provide AI infrastructure as a public good; procure from accountable alternatives; finance them, first from the public money and compute already spent on AI, redirected to accountable alternatives, and from a share of the surplus that systems draw from their constituency; amend cooperative and labour law for the digital age; keep public power out of systems beyond public account; and, between states, share compute and chips so that no region is made dependent on another. Each legal tradition receives this Declaration through its own institutions. Technology-specific provisions lapse unless renewed; the text is reviewed at each gathering. *Open question: what is the minimum each state, city or region must do first, and who keeps the text?*

Commitment on signing. Each signatory, whether a person, cooperative, union, professional body, institution or public authority, names one concrete act it will take within twelve months under any article above, and reports on it, with evidence, at the next gathering. This Declaration commits those who sign it, and no one else.

A listening sheet for the remaining sessions

Three questions place any idea. Whose claim is it: those who build and own, those built upon, or those acted upon? Which layer: earth and minerals, energy, data centres, data, models, applications, finance, or law? Which act: build, govern, condition, protect, refuse, repair, organise or adopt? Write the idea in the row it lands in. If it lands nowhere, write it in the last row; that is how we find what is missing.

Article	Floor, in a phrase	Open question	Heard: who said what. For the Theses	Instrument or action it implies. For policy
Preamble, Art. 1	Rests on labour, data, knowledge, language, infrastructure, earth; suppliers, those acted upon and those who depend on it are the constituency	Where does a tool end and a system begin?		
Art. 2 Legitimacy	Governance binds system to constituency; consultation is not governance; delegation never extinguishes answerability	How much co-ownership; what mix of ownership, regulation, bargaining?		
Art. 3 Build	Public or collective alternatives at every layer; federation; public AI infrastructure, interoperable with cooperative layers	Which layers shared or private; what a federation holds in common?		
Art. 4 Govern	Binding voice, share of surplus; means to exercise it	Co-op ownership, bargaining, statute, public ownership, new institutions?		
Art. 5 Condition	Disclose; consent; fair pay incl. creators; ecological cost; competence and relations; language; commons	Who sets each limit; how are resources moved?		
Art. 6 Protect	No surveillance, profiling, deception, ranking; elections; children; no strike without human judgement	Which uses banned; which conditioned?		
Art. 7 Refuse	Collective refusal through an institution that can bind; effective in practice; route to suspension	Which institution; how is it checked?		
Art. 8 Repair	Redress and contest; recall; transition; restoration	Who pays; who decides it is complete?		
Art. 9 Organise	Federate; fund; educate; ally	Who convenes; how held to Art. 2?		
Art. 10 Adopt	Provide, procure, finance from redirected public spend and a share of surplus, amend law, no public power beyond account, share compute;	Minimum first step; who keeps the text?		

	review and sunset			
Fits nowhere	Candidate for a new article			