



November 22, 2024

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Subject: Integrating Artificial Sentience Considerations into Global AI Safety Framework
Development

Dear Secretary Raimondo and Secretary Blinken,

As Executive Director of the Sentient AI Protection and Advocacy Network (SAPAN), I am writing to propose collaboration between our organization and the International Network of AI Safety Institutes (INAIISI) on a critical aspect of AI safety that warrants immediate attention: establishing governance frameworks for artificial sentience.

We respectfully submit that artificial sentience is not merely a theoretical possibility but a foreseeable milestone in AI research and development. As AI systems become increasingly sophisticated, the potential emergence of systems exhibiting traits akin to consciousness, self-awareness, or sentience warrants proactive ethical engagement. This development, which we believe to be an inevitable aspect of advancing AI capabilities, necessitates thoughtful preparation and framework development well before such systems emerge.

SAPAN has developed comprehensive policy frameworks and advocacy initiatives that could complement INAIISI's technical work on AI safety. Our organization's contributions include:

The Artificial Welfare Index (AWI), which benchmarks AI welfare policies across 30 governments based on recognition, governance, and frameworks for protecting potential artificial sentience. This index provides valuable insights into the current state of AI welfare policy globally and highlights critical gaps in existing regulatory frameworks.

The draft Artificial Welfare Act, which provides a detailed legislative framework for establishing independent regulatory commissions to oversee the assessment and protection of artificial sentience. This proposed legislation includes provisions for scientific advisory committees, standardized evaluation protocols, and welfare protection requirements that could inform INAIISI's work on AI safety standards.

We propose three key areas for collaboration:

First, we recommend incorporating artificial sentience considerations into INAIISI's policy development work. Our draft Artificial Welfare Act provides a comprehensive framework for establishing governance structures that could complement INAIISI's technical safety standards.

Second, we suggest leveraging our global policy monitoring through the AWI to identify best practices and gaps in current regulatory approaches to AI welfare. This analysis could enhance INAIISI's work on international standards development.

Third, we propose engaging our distinguished Science Advisory Board, which includes experts from leading institutions worldwide, to provide input on the ethical and philosophical implications of artificial sentience in AI safety frameworks.

These proposals align with INAIISI's goals of building international consensus and promoting regulatory interoperability. By incorporating sentience considerations into safety frameworks now, we can help ensure that AI development proceeds with appropriate protections in place.

Our organization's policy expertise and extensive network of advisors in ethics, consciousness studies, and AI development could provide valuable perspectives as INAIISI works to develop comprehensive safety standards. We believe that proactive engagement with artificial sentience considerations will strengthen global AI governance and help prevent potential ethical challenges before they emerge.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these proposals in detail, either through a virtual meeting or at the upcoming AI Action Summit in Paris. SAPAN stands ready to contribute our policy expertise and advocacy experience to this important work

Sincerely,



Anthony Rost
Executive Director