Executive Summary

This document, prepared by the Centre for Global Studies of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, attempts to sketch out key elements relative to the malicious use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the information ecosystem by authoritarian regimes and transnational terrorist and criminal networks. Moreover, it outlines the vital link between emerging technologies and security. It stresses that existing regulations are inadequate to address cyberspace security, endangered by technologies such as AI, Quantum Computing, fake news for manipulating public opinion and elections, AUVs, and the dark web. The innovative technological revolution has become essential and pervasive in today's developed societies, increasingly complex and central to discussions about the planet's fate. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the transformation of the security concept within the framework of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This revolution is part of a geo-strategic change visible from space to the social level: online and offline experiences and lives have become deeply intertwined. The challenge of security in the revolution of innovative technologies fuels the asymmetric risk between autocratic and democratic systems: the latter cannot be left behind in the challenge of innovation.

This report highlights the impact of malicious use on democratic processes and their resilience in the context of the current geopolitics of (in)security. It also pays particular attention to the impact of the technological revolution on the nature and effectiveness of intelligence, counterintelligence activities, and war. The world has witnessed a general increase in crises, armed conflicts, and humanitarian crises in recent decades. In this context, there is a vast potential to endanger or disrupt democratic processes. Conversely, there may also be opportunities to further democracy. This report aims to highlight the options available to address AI and its implications for the future of democracy. It also explores the application of how law and jurisprudence worldwide relate to these questions. From this perspective, the current impact of AI on democracy is a crucial indicator. The report, therefore, promotes reflections on the challenges and the need to regulate AI from a legal and legislative perspective.