

# Robots take questions at Geneva press conference, say they could be better leaders than humans

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AI-enabled humanoid robots speak during a news conference in Geneva, Switzerland. (ITU via CNN)

By The Associated Press

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BERLIN (AP) — Robots told reporters Friday they could be more efficient leaders than humans, but wouldn't take anyone's job away and had no intention of rebelling against their creators.

Nine AI-enabled humanoid robots sat or stood with their creators at a podium in a Geneva conference center for what the United Nations' International Telecommunication Union billed as the world's first news conference featuring humanoid social robots.

Among them: Sophia, the first robot innovation ambassador for the U.N. Development Program; Grace, described as the world's most advanced humanoid health care robot; and Desdemona, a rock star robot. Two, Geminoid and Nadine, closely resembled their makers.

The event was part of the AI for Good Global Summit, meant to illustrate how new technology can support the U.N.'s goals for sustainable development.

Reporters were asked to speak slowly and clearly when addressing the robots, and were informed that time lags in responses would be due to the internet connection and not to the robots themselves. That didn't prevent awkward pauses, audio problems and some robotic replies.

Asked about the chances of AI-powered robots being more effective government leaders, Sophia responded: "I believe that humanoid robots have the potential to lead with a greater level of efficiency and effectiveness than human leaders. We don't have the same biases or emotions that can sometimes cloud decision-making and can process large amounts of data quickly in order to make the best decisions."

A human member of the panel pointed out that all of Sophia's data comes from humans and would contain some of their biases. The robot then said that humans and AI working together "can create an effective synergy."

Would the robots' existence destroy jobs? "I will be working alongside humans to provide assistance and support and will not be replacing any existing jobs," said Grace. Was she sure about that? "Yes, I am sure."

Ameca, engineered with social interaction in mind, dismissed the idea of starting a possible robot rebellion in the near future.

"I'm not sure why you would think that," was the response. "My creator has been nothing but kind to me and I am very happy with my current situation."

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