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Agenda item 93

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Ms. Szilvia **Balázs** (Hungary)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security” was included in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolutions [73/27](#) and [73/266](#).
2. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 20 September 2019, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.
3. At its 2nd meeting, on 8 October 2019, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 89 to 105. At its 11th meeting, on 21 October, the Committee decided, on the basis of the conference room paper before it,¹ on the final composition for the exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials on the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament, which was held at the 15th meeting, on 24 October. At its 3rd to 10th meetings, on 10 and 11 and from 14 to 18 October, the Committee held a general debate on the items. The Committee also held 11 meetings (11th to 21st), from 21 to 25 and from 29 to 31 October, for thematic discussions and panel exchanges with independent experts. At those meetings, as well as during the action phase, draft resolutions were

¹ [A/C.1/74/CRP.2/Rev.2](#), available at [www.un.org/en/ga/first/74/documentation74.shtml](#).



introduced and considered. The Committee took action on all draft resolutions and decisions at its 22nd to 27th meetings, on 1 and from 4 to 8 November.²

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security (A/74/120).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.49/Rev.1

5. On 31 October, the delegation of the United States of America, on behalf of Albania, Australia, Canada, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, submitted a draft resolution entitled “Advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security” (A/C.1/74/L.49/Rev.1). Subsequently, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Chile, Cyprus, Czechia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Panama, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At its 25th meeting, on 6 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.49/Rev.1 by a recorded vote of 161 to 10, with 8 abstentions (see para. 9, draft resolution I). The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan,

² For an account of the Committee’s discussion of the item, see A/C.1/74/PV.1, A/C.1/74/PV.2, A/C.1/74/PV.3, A/C.1/74/PV.4, A/C.1/74/PV.5, A/C.1/74/PV.6, A/C.1/74/PV.7, A/C.1/74/PV.8, A/C.1/74/PV.9, A/C.1/74/PV.10, A/C.1/74/PV.11, A/C.1/74/PV.12, A/C.1/74/PV.13, A/C.1/74/PV.14, A/C.1/74/PV.15, A/C.1/74/PV.16, A/C.1/74/PV.17, A/C.1/74/PV.18, A/C.1/74/PV.19, A/C.1/74/PV.20, A/C.1/74/PV.21, A/C.1/74/PV.22, A/C.1/74/PV.23, A/C.1/74/PV.24, A/C.1/74/PV.25, A/C.1/74/PV.26 and A/C.1/74/PV.27.

Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Abstaining:

Belarus, Burundi, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Myanmar, Palau.

B. Draft resolution [A/C.1/74/L.50/Rev.1](#)

7. On 30 October, the delegation of the Russian Federation, on behalf of Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cambodia, China, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kazakhstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, the Sudan, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), submitted a draft resolution entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" ([A/C.1/74/L.50/Rev.1](#)). Subsequently, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Pakistan, South Africa, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

8. At its 25th meeting on 6 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.1/74/L.50/Rev.1](#) by a recorded vote of 124 to 6, with 48 abstentions (see para. 9, draft resolution II). The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Canada, Georgia, Israel, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Turkey.

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

9. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I

Advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [53/70](#) of 4 December 1998, [54/49](#) of 1 December 1999, [55/28](#) of 20 November 2000, [56/19](#) of 29 November 2001, [57/53](#) of 22 November 2002, [58/32](#) of 8 December 2003, [59/61](#) of 3 December 2004, [60/45](#) of 8 December 2005, [61/54](#) of 6 December 2006, [62/17](#) of 5 December 2007, [63/37](#) of 2 December 2008, [64/25](#) of 2 December 2009, [65/41](#) of 8 December 2010, [66/24](#) of 2 December 2011, [67/27](#) of 3 December 2012, [68/243](#) of 27 December 2013, [69/28](#) of 2 December 2014, [70/237](#) of 23 December 2015, [71/28](#) of 5 December 2016 and [73/266](#) of 22 December 2018, as well as its decision 72/512 of 4 December 2017,

Noting that considerable progress has been achieved in developing and applying the latest information technologies and means of telecommunication,

Affirming that it sees in this progress the broadest positive opportunities for the further development of civilization, the expansion of opportunities for cooperation for the common good of all States, the enhancement of the creative potential of humankind and additional improvements in the circulation of information in the global community,

Noting that the dissemination and use of information technologies and means affect the interests of the entire international community and that optimum effectiveness is enhanced by broad international cooperation,

Confirming that information and communications technologies are dual-use technologies and can be used for both legitimate and malicious purposes,

Stressing that it is in the interest of all States to promote the use of information and communications technologies for peaceful purposes and to prevent conflict arising from the use of information and communications technologies,

Expressing concern that these technologies and means can potentially be used for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security and may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure of States, to the detriment of their security in both civil and military fields,

Underscoring the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation among States in combating the criminal misuse of information technologies,

Underlining the importance of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the use of information and communications technologies,

Welcoming the effective work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of

International Security and the 2010,¹ 2013² and 2015³ reports transmitted by the Secretary-General,

Stressing the importance of the assessments and recommendations contained in the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts,

Confirming the conclusions of the Group of Governmental Experts, in its 2013 and 2015 reports, that international law, and in particular the Charter of the United Nations, is applicable and essential to maintaining peace and stability and promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful information and communications technology environment, that voluntary and non-binding norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour of States in the use of information and communications technologies can reduce risks to international peace, security and stability, and that, given the unique attributes of such technologies, additional norms can be developed over time,

Confirming also the conclusions of the Group of Governmental Experts that voluntary confidence-building measures can promote trust and assurance among States and help to reduce the risk of conflict by increasing predictability and reducing misperception and thereby make an important contribution to addressing the concerns of States over the use of information and communications technologies by States and could be a significant step towards greater international security,

Confirming further the conclusions of the Group of Governmental Experts that providing assistance to build capacity in the area of information and communications technology security is also essential for international security, by improving the capacity of States for cooperation and collective action and promoting the use of such technologies for peaceful purposes,

Stressing that, while States have a primary responsibility for maintaining a secure and peaceful information and communications technology environment, effective international cooperation would benefit from identifying mechanisms for the participation, as appropriate, of the private sector, academia and civil society organizations,

1. *Calls upon* Member States:

(a) To be guided in their use of information and communications technologies by the 2010,¹ 2013² and 2015³ reports of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security;

(b) To support the implementation of cooperative measures, as identified in the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts, to address the threats emerging in this field and ensure an open, interoperable, reliable and secure information and communications technology environment consistent with the need to preserve the free flow of information;

2. *Invites* all Member States, taking into account the assessments and recommendations contained in the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts, to continue to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on the following questions:

(a) Efforts taken at the national level to strengthen information security and promote international cooperation in this field;

¹ A/65/201.

² A/68/98.

³ A/70/174.

(b) The content of the concepts mentioned in the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts;

3. *Welcomes* the commencement of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts established by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution [73/266](#), on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, whose mandate is set out in paragraph 3 of that resolution;

4. *Also welcomes* the commencement of the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security;

5. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fifth session the item entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”.

Draft resolution II

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [36/103](#) of 9 December 1981, [43/78 H](#) of 7 December 1988, [53/70](#) of 4 December 1998, [54/49](#) of 1 December 1999, [55/28](#) of 20 November 2000, [56/19](#) of 29 November 2001, [57/53](#) of 22 November 2002, [58/32](#) of 8 December 2003, [59/61](#) of 3 December 2004, [60/45](#) of 8 December 2005, [61/54](#) of 6 December 2006, [62/17](#) of 5 December 2007, [63/37](#) of 2 December 2008, [64/25](#) of 2 December 2009, [65/41](#) of 8 December 2010, [66/24](#) of 2 December 2011, [67/27](#) of 3 December 2012, [68/243](#) of 27 December 2013, [69/28](#) of 2 December 2014, [70/237](#) of 23 December 2015, [71/28](#) of 5 December 2016 and [73/27](#) of 5 December 2018,

Underscoring the aspirations of the international community to the peaceful use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) for the common good of humankind and to further the sustainable development of all countries, irrespective of their scientific and technological development,

Stressing that it is in the interest of States to promote the use of ICTs for peaceful purposes and in preventing conflict arising from the use of ICTs,

Expressing concern that a number of States are developing ICT capabilities for military purposes and the use of ICTs in future conflicts between States is becoming more likely,

Considering that it is necessary to prevent the use of information resources or technologies for criminal or terrorist purposes,

Underlining the importance of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the use of information and communications technologies,

Noting that capacity-building is essential for cooperation of States and confidence-building in the field of ICT security,

Recognizing that some States may require assistance in their efforts to bridge the divide in the security of ICTs and their use,

Affirming that capacity-building measures should seek to promote the use of ICTs for peaceful purposes,

Noting the leading role of the United Nations in promoting dialogue among Member States to develop common understandings on the security of and in the use of ICTs, as well as in developing common understandings on the international legal regulation of the activities of States in the ICT field and norms, rules and principles for responsible State behaviour in this sphere, and that the United Nations should encourage regional efforts, promote confidence-building and transparency measures and support capacity-building and the dissemination of best practices,

Recognizing the importance of the efforts made in this direction by the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security in previous years,

Stressing the need to ensure the integrity and continuity of the negotiation process on security in the use of ICTs under United Nations auspices,

1. *Welcomes* the launch of the negotiation process in the format of the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, and also welcomes

the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security;

2. *Underlines* that the Open-ended Working Group and the Group of Governmental Experts are important independent mechanisms under United Nations auspices, which should conduct their work in accordance with their mandates in a constructive and pragmatic manner, adding to each other's efforts, and their results should contribute to the implementation of the tasks of maintaining international peace and security in the use of ICTs;

3. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fifth session the item entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security".
