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Agenda item 95

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

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Ms. Sanna **Orava** (Finland)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2021, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-sixth session the item entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security” and to allocate it to the First Committee.

2. At its 1st meeting, on 30 September 2021, the First Committee, taking into consideration the physical distancing guidelines and constraints related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which prevented the Committee from organizing a full-fledged session, decided, on an exceptional basis and without setting a precedent, to convene in-person and virtual meetings and to conduct its work in three phases. The first phase would be a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely items 92 to 107, the second phase would be dedicated to thematic discussions and the third phase would be action on all draft proposals. The Committee also decided to convene three virtual informal meetings of two hours each for interactive dialogues on specific subjects. Also at its 1st meeting, 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.

3. At its 2nd to 7th meetings, from 4 to 7 and on 11 and 12 October, the Committee held a general debate. On 8, 15 and 21 October, the Committee held virtual meetings for exchanges with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, civil society, independent experts, and other high-level officials nominated by the regional groups. The Committee also held 5 meetings (8th to 12th), on 13, 14 and 18 October, for

¹ A/C.1/76/CRP.2, available at www.un.org/en/ga/first/76/documentation76.shtml.



thematic discussions. At those meetings, as well as during the action phase, draft resolutions were introduced and considered. The Committee took action on all draft resolutions and decisions at its 13th to 18th meetings, on 27 October, from 1 to 3 and on 5 November.²

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Official compendium of voluntary national contributions on the subject of how international law applies to the use of information and communications technologies by States submitted by participating governmental experts in the Group of Governmental Experts on Advancing Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/266 (A/76/136);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security (A/76/187).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/76/L.13

5. On 6 October, the representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States of America, on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritania, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe, submitted a draft resolution entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, and advancing responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies" (A/C.1/76/L.13). Subsequently, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Cabo Verde, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zambia joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At the 17th meeting, on 3 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/76/L.13 without a vote (see para. 7).

² For an account of the Committee's discussion of the item, see A/C.1/76/PV.2, A/C.1/76/PV.3, A/C.1/76/PV.4, A/C.1/76/PV.5, A/C.1/76/PV.6, A/C.1/76/PV.7, A/C.1/76/PV.8, A/C.1/76/PV.9, A/C.1/76/PV.10, A/C.1/76/PV.11, A/C.1/76/PV.12, A/C.1/76/PV.13, A/C.1/76/PV.14, A/C.1/76/PV.15, A/C.1/76/PV.16, A/C.1/76/PV.17 and A/C.1/76/PV.18, as well as A/C.1/76/INF/5.

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, and advancing responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 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, 73/27 of 5 December 2018, 73/266 of 22 December 2018, 74/28 and 74/29 of 12 December 2019, 75/32 of 7 December 2020 and 75/240 of 31 December 2020, as well as its decisions 72/512 of 4 December 2017 and 75/564 of 28 April 2021,

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 conflicts arising from the use of information and communications technologies,

Recalling that a number of States are developing information and communications technology capabilities for military purposes and that the use of information and communications technologies in future conflicts between States is becoming more likely,

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

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,

Expressing concern also about malicious information and communications technology activities aimed at critical infrastructure and critical information infrastructure facilities supporting essential services to the public,

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 information and communications technology security,

Reaffirming that voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour can reduce risks to international peace, security and stability, and do not seek to limit or prohibit action that is otherwise consistent with international law but nonetheless to set standards for responsible State behaviour, while also reaffirming that, given the

unique attributes of information and communications technologies, additional norms could be developed over time and, separately, noting the possibility of future elaboration of additional binding obligations, if appropriate,

Reaffirming also that the United Nations should continue to play a leading role in promoting dialogue on the use of information and communications technologies by States,

Recognizing the importance of the efforts made in this direction by the Group of Governmental Experts and the Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security,

Guided by the 2010, 2013 and 2015 reports of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security,¹

1. *Recognizes* the adoption of the consensus final report of the Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security;²

2. *Welcomes* the consensus final report of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Advancing Responsible State Behaviour in the Context of International Security;³

3. *Calls upon* Member States to be guided in their use of information and communications technologies by the 2021 report of the Open-ended Working Group and the 2021 report of the Group of Governmental Experts;

4. *Supports* the open-ended working group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021–2025, and acknowledges its mandate in accordance with General Assembly resolution [75/240](#);

5. *Underlines* further that the open-ended working group 2021–2025 should take into account the outcomes of the previous Open-ended Working Group and the Groups of Governmental Experts and add to the efforts undertaken by them, and should be consensus-based and results-oriented;

6. *Invites* all Member States, taking into account the assessments and recommendations contained in the report of the Open-ended Working Group and 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;

(b) The content of the concepts mentioned in the report of the Open-ended Working Group and the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts;

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

¹ [A/65/201](#), [A/68/98](#) and [A/70/174](#).

² [A/75/816](#).

³ [A/76/135](#).