

**Постоянное
представительство
Российской Федерации
при Организации
Объединенных Наций**

*136E 67th Street
New York, NY 10065*



**Permanent Mission
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations**

Phone: (212) 861-4900

Fax: (212) 628-0252

517-7427

S T A T E M E N T

**BY DR. VLADIMIR SHIN,
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
INFORMATION SECURITY OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION OF THE UN OPEN-ENDED
WORKING GROUP ON SECURITY OF AND IN THE USE OF
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES 2021-2025**

New York, 1-2 June 2021

Unofficial translation

Check against delivery

Distinguished Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs,

Distinguished Ambassador Burhan Gafoor, Chair of the UN Open-ended Working Group,

Dear ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

I am sincerely happy to greet all the participants of the organizational session of the UN Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021-2025.

The global discussion on international information security has reached an important turning point. Despite the challenges posed by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, since the beginning of this year, we have managed to achieve significant success by joint efforts. In March, the first OEWG adopted its final report by consensus of all UN Member States, and just last week the relevant UN Group of Governmental Experts successfully completed its work. After a long time, the atmosphere of constructive consensus is being reestablished in the UN negotiations on ICT-security, and we, ourselves, are not mere outside observers, but direct and active participants of these extraordinary events.

As head of the Russian delegation, I feel particularly delighted to say that the OEWG mechanism, launched upon Russia's initiative in 2018, has proved its relevance and effectiveness in practice. Notwithstanding the objective and natural divergences among States on the very sensitive issues that immediately affect the interests of national security, the first OEWG accumulated extremely useful experience of positive cooperation. Many countries got the opportunity to directly participate in the discussions on ICT-security for the first time. Another essential achievement of the OEWG was shaping an expert community of cyberdiplomacy professionals.

Against this background, we consider it extremely important to make every possible effort to preserve the positive atmosphere of multilateral dialogue on the

whole range of issues related to ICT-security under the UN auspices, as well as to advance this negotiation process to a new level.

From our perspective, the new OEWG is an adequate format for this purpose provided its work is organized in an appropriate way.

Let me briefly set out our vision of its concept and organizational design. Further details of our approach are reflected in the position paper that was circulated earlier and elaborated in line with the relevant note of the UN Secretariat.

In our view, the Group's work should remain grounded on the principles of inclusivity, openness, transparency and be democratic in nature. The OEWG should become a platform not just for discussions, but for pragmatic and constructive negotiations, aimed at achieving tangible, practical results. In other words, the structure and the activities of the Group should fit the formula "result-oriented, not report-oriented".

Given that this mechanism will work for five years, it should be flexible enough and able to evolve accompanying the needs of the international community. With a view to optimizing the process, agreements can be formalized once they have been achieved, without waiting until the completion of the Group's mandate.

The starting point for the OEWG process is the UN General Assembly resolution 75/240 and the mandate clearly set forth therein. Pursuant to the resolution, the Group takes all decisions by consensus. As to other issues, being a UNGA subsidiary body, the OEWG may act in accordance with its rules of procedure. We suggest fixing this understanding in a clear-cut manner, leaving no room for dubious interpretations, in the outcome document of the current session.

The resolution also envisages the possibility of establishing thematic subgroups within the OEWG to facilitate a more thorough discussion on specific elements of its mandate. Organizing the process this way seems feasible to us, from the perspective of making negotiations more focused and systemized. In particular we suggest considering the possibility of setting up a priority subgroup on threats and rules of responsible behaviour, as well as subsidiary subgroups on the applicability of international law to the ICT-sphere, confidence-building measures, capacity-building and regular institutional dialogue. If needed, States may suggest establishing

additional subgroups within the OEWG structure on aspects of ICT-security of particular interest to them, but the final decision will, of course, be adopted by consensus.

For the sake of a better coordination of work, as well as to provide equal opportunities to all participants of the process, it would be rational to hold subgroup meetings in a consecutive order within each substantive OEWG session. At the same time, intersessional work, primarily, virtual consultations, will be of great importance.

The management of such a complex and long-term process should be exercised, as much as possible, on an objective, impartial and neutral basis. In this regard, I am pleased to welcome the election of the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the UN in New York, Ambassador Burhan Gafoor, as Chair of the OEWG. Singapore has been making a significant contribution to the discussions on ensuring ICT-security at the international, regional and bilateral levels, it enjoys broad authority with the global community, and, no less importantly, has proved its ability to effectively organize complicated multilateral processes, aimed at achieving tangible results, at numerous occasions. We are convinced that under the Singaporean chairmanship we will manage to achieve further considerable success.

In order to promptly inaugurate the work of the Group, we assume it is important to address all key organizational issues at the current session and follow-up on the remaining ones during the intersessional period. Thus, by the time of the substantive meeting in December, we would have everything sorted out and ready to start real negotiation process.

I would like to request the UN Secretariat to circulate the text of my statement, as well as the aforementioned concept note on the work of the Group, as official documents of the UN General Assembly.

Thank you for attention.