

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



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

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

*Phone: (212) 861-4900
Fax: (212) 628-0252
517-7427*

S T A T E M E N T

**BY HEAD OF THE RUSSIAN INTERAGENCY DELEGATION
TO THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF
THE UN OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON SECURITY OF
AND IN THE USE OF ICTS 2021-2025,
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
INFORMATION SECURITY OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION DR. VLADIMIR SHIN**

New York, 13 December 2021

Unofficial translation

Check against delivery

Your Excellency Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs,

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

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

I am glad to welcome the participants of the first substantive session of the UN Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on security of and in the use of ICTs 2021-2025.

The outgoing year has become a turning point in the global discussion on information security: final reports of the first OEWG and of the Group of Governmental Experts were agreed upon by consensus, a relevant Russia-US draft resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly with a record number of 108 cosponsors without a vote. We expect that these achievements and the overall constructive atmosphere will allow us to have a successful session and further proceed to pragmatic work on all aspects of the OEWG mandate.

Russia is convinced that the in-person format of negotiations broadens our opportunities to find points of convergence and achieve concrete results. It is for this reason that we supported the Chair's suggestion to hold the first substantive session in a fully in-person mode. At the same time I regret to state that throughout the preparations for this event we faced considerable organizational difficulties. A meaningful part of the Russian interagency delegation did not manage to come to New York, due to the fact that the American side delayed the issuance of entry visas till the very last moment, despite numerous requests sent well-ahead of the meeting. Some members of our delegation did not receive visas at all. We know that our colleagues from a range of other countries faced a similar situation.

We consider this unacceptable. We will counter any attempts to limit the right of states to participate in the negotiation process within the OEWG. Given that the Group will work for five years in accordance with its mandate, we call on the American side to refrain from projecting our bilateral divergences onto global negotiations, as well as from abusing its status of the country hosting the UN headquarters, employing it as a political leverage. We would appreciate if the UN Secretariat could share its considerations on how to avoid such situations in future.

Despite these overshadowing factors, we intend to participate in the first substantive session of the OEWG in the most active and constructive manner.

The Russian Federation presumes that the mandate of the OEWG enshrined in the UNGA resolution 75/240 of 31 December 2020 and confirmed in the UNGA resolution 76/19 of 6 December 2021 should serve as a basis for its activities. The Group shall adopt all its decisions by consensus.

The OEWG mandate defines as a priority further development of rules, norms and principles of responsible behaviour of States and of the ways for their implementation. We understand that this area of work requires particular attention given the growing threats and challenges in information space. This puts on our agenda the need to gradually move from non-binding, recommendatory norms to developing and agreeing upon clear and equal rules of behaviour for all states in information space and making them legally-binding. We stand ready to make concrete contribution to our work in this area.

As long as the OEWG was established under the auspices of the UNGA First Committee, which is in charge of disarmament and international security issues, it is the aspects of ensuring security in the use of ICTs that should be the Group's focus. A possible significant dimension of our efforts may be the elaboration of legal and practical mechanisms of cooperation that would contribute to creating a system of international information security based on the principles of conflict prevention and promotion of peaceful use of ICTs.

The OEWG should become a platform not just for discussions, but for pragmatic negotiations aimed at achieving tangible results. It is important to provide for an in-depth and thematically specialized discussion to ensure a more thorough consideration of every element of the Group's mandate, aiming at formalizing concrete agreements once they are reached.

In accordance with the resolution 75/240 the OEWG may also decide to interact, as appropriate, with other interested parties, the so-called stakeholders. In our view, the precedent of the first OEWG completely proved its value: NGOs that enjoy consultative status with ECOSOC, as well as other NGOs that applied and were approved on a non-objection basis by UN member states, were invited to official sessions as observers. These modalities for interaction with NGOs are perfectly natural for the OEWG as a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly.

As long as states alone have the right to participate in the negotiation process within the OEWG, our priority should be to ensure full-scale participation of states in our work. It would be reasonable to interact with other actors in an intersessional format dwelling into particular aspects of the Group's mandate. In this regard, we support the Chair's suggestion to enhance the number of intersessional consultative meetings of the new OEWG, coupling them with each substantive session.

I wish to representatives of all states successful and fruitful work. Thank you for attention.