International code of conduct for information security

- Area: COMBINED INTERNET GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES AND ROADMAP
- Entitled by: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China
- Region: People?s Republic of China
- Organization: Government of People's Republic of China
- Sector: Government
- Keywords: information security; international cooperation; international deliberations; global culture of cybersecurity;
- Doc Attached: Click here to see the doc 1

Abstract

Recent years have witnessed the considerable progress achieved in developing and applying the latest information and telecommunication technologies, which could potentially be used for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security. It is of great significance that the common challenges in the sphere of information security should be dealt with through international cooperation and in the spirit of mutual respect. To that end, China, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have jointly elaborated in the form of a potential General Assembly resolution on an international code of conduct for information security and call for international deliberations within the United Nations framework on such an international code, with the aim of achieving the earliest possible consensus on international norms and rules guiding the behaviour of States in the information space (see annex).

Document

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, in which, inter alia, it recognized that scientific and technological developments could have both civilian and military applications and that progress in science and technology for civilian applications needed to be maintained and encouraged,

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

Recognizing the need to prevent the potential use of information and communication technologies for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security and may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure within States, to the detriment of their security,

Underlining the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation among States in combating the criminal misuse of information technologies and, in that context, stressing the role that can be played by the United Nations and other international and regional organizations,

Highlighting the importance of the security, continuity and stability of the Internet and the need to protect the Internet and other information and communications technology networks from threats and vulnerabilities, and reaffirming the need for a common understanding of the issues of Internet security and for further cooperation at the national

and international levels,

Reaffirming that policy authority for Internet-related public issues is the sovereign right of States, which have rights and responsibilities for international Internet-related public policy issues,

Recognizing that confidence and security in the use of information and communications technologies are among the main pillars of the information society and that a robust global culture of cybersecurity needs to be encouraged, promoted, developed and vigorously implemented, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/211 of 21 December 2009, entitled “Creation of a global culture of cybersecurity and taking stock of national efforts to protect critical information infrastructures”,

Stressing the need for enhanced efforts to close the digital divide by facilitating the transfer of information technology and capacity-building to developing countries in the areas of cybersecurity best practices and training, pursuant to resolution 64/211,

Adopts the international code of conduct for information security as follows:

Purpose and scope

The purpose of the present code is to identify the rights and responsibilities of States in information space, promote their constructive and responsible behaviours and enhance their cooperation in addressing the common threats and challenges in information space, so as to ensure that information and communications technologies, including networks, are to be solely used to benefit social and economic development and people's well-being, with the objective of maintaining international stability and security.

Adherence to the code is voluntary and open to all States.

Code of conduct

Each State voluntarily subscribing to the code pledges:

(a) To comply with the Charter of the United Nations and universally recognized norms governing international relations that enshrine, inter alia, respect for the sovereignty,

territorial integrity and political independence of all States, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and respect for the diversity of history, culture and social systems of all countries;

(b) Not to use information and communications technologies, including networks, to carry out hostile activities or acts of aggression, pose threats to international peace and security or proliferate information weapons or related technologies;

(c) To cooperate in combating criminal and terrorist activities that use information and communications technologies, including networks, and in curbing the dissemination of information that incites terrorism, secessionism or extremism or that undermines other countries' political, economic and social stability, as well as their spiritual and cultural environment;

(d) To endeavour to ensure the supply chain security of information and communications technology products and services, in order to prevent other States from using their resources, critical infrastructures, core technologies and other advantages to undermine the right of the countries that have accepted the code of conduct, to gain independent control of information and communications technologies or to threaten the political, economic and social security of other countries;

(e) To reaffirm all the rights and responsibilities of States to protect, in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, their information space and critical information

infrastructure from threats, disturbance, attack and sabotage;

(f) To fully respect rights and freedom in information space, including rights and freedom to search for, acquire and disseminate information on the premise of complying with relevant national laws and regulations;

(g) To promote the establishment of a multilateral, transparent and democratic international Internet management system to ensure an equitable distribution of resources, facilitate access for all and ensure a stable and secure functioning of the Internet;

(h) To lead all elements of society, including its information and communication partnerships with the private sector, to understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to information security, in order to facilitate the creation of a culture of information security and the protection of critical information infrastructures;

(i) To assist developing countries in their efforts to enhance capacity- building on information security and to close the digital divide;

(j) To bolster bilateral, regional and international cooperation, promote the important role of the United Nations in formulating international norms, peaceful settlements of international disputes and improvements in international cooperation in the field of information security, and enhance coordination among relevant international organizations;

(k) To settle any dispute resulting from the application of the code through peaceful means and to refrain from the threat or use of force.