STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE
OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications
in the Context of International Security)

Distinguished Mr. Chairman,

The problem of international information security (IIS) that has emerged from
unprecedented breakthrough in the development and use of information and
communication technologies (ICT) is acquiring special relevance and becoming a
priority among new challenges and threats.

The recent events in the world have shown that the threat coming from the use of
ICT for the purposes inconsistent with the goals of ensuring international peace and
security is a real one and it can not only seriously damage the information systems,
resources and critical networks, but undermine political, economic and social stability,
and also provoke an outbreak of large scale information wars.

Willing to contribute to a better understanding of threats in the field of IIS and to
search for joint ways to combat these threats Russia, back in 1998, launched an
initiative to address at the international level the international information security in
all its dimensions – politico-military, counter-terror and anti-crime. For over a decade
the General Assembly has been adopting practically by consensus the Russia-proposed
resolution on the Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications.
We are grateful for the support to our draft resolution at the 65th UNGA session.

This year, Russia is tabling an updated draft resolution cosponsored by 24 states on the Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. This draft resolution is based on the UNGA Resolution 65/41, dated December 8, 2010. It contains mainly editorial amendments as compared to the previous draft. As a new element it clarifies the mandate of the UN ICT Group of Governmental Experts to be convened in 2012. The updated draft notes that the focus of the GGE work will be “… to study existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, including norms, rules and principles of responsible behavior of states and confidence building measures in information space…)

Taking into account positive experience and the inputs of the previous GGE as recorded in its report on information security (July 30, 2010) it would be a logical continuation for UN ICT GGE to start working on practical mechanisms of cooperation and interaction on international information security.

The timeliness and significance of the task to elaborate principles, norms or rules of conduct in information space is recognized by a majority of states and is being discussed at various international organizations, conferences and forums.

We thank all cosponsors of our draft resolution and, viewing the importance and relevance of this topic, call on states that have not yet done so, to consider joining the cosponsors of this resolution.

We are looking forward to adoption of this resolution by consensus, as in the previous years.

Pursuant to the initiative to develop a code of conduct in information space under item 93 of the 66th session of UNGA a draft Rules of Conduct for IIS has been circulated as an official document. An explanatory note to the UN Secretary General regarding these Rules has been signed by the Permanent Representatives of Russia, China, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to the UN.

The Representatives of four States call in this letter for a wider international discussion in the framework of the UN to reach a consensus as soon as possible regarding the principles that define the conduct of states in the information space with a particular emphasis made on ensuring the international information security.

This is a first document of its kind that contains comprehensive and systemic proposals of the interested states on the issue of the use of ICT.
Its main objective is to determine the norms of responsible conduct of states in the field of international information security taking into account the challenges and threats of politico-military, criminal or terrorist nature arising in this area. The Rules intend to counter the use of information and communications technologies for purposes inconsistent with the goals of international peace, stability and security. The objective of this document is also to ensure human rights and freedoms in the information space, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all states, and development of multilateral transparent and democratic international mechanisms to manage the Internet.

The document submitted by us is an invitation for discussion. Russia calls on all interested parties to actively engage in this debate. We believe this initiative will be a first step towards future elaboration of a universal document under the UN auspices that would as much as possible take into account the interests of the entire international community and aim at comprehensive measures to ensure international information security.

With the same goal in mind Russia has developed and presented a concept of a Convention on international information security at the second International Meeting of High Representatives on Security Issues held in Ekaterinburg (September 21-22, 2011). This is an attempt to rethink the IIS issue in the light of relevant international legal inputs and achievements. It is assumed that the concept, presented as an invitation for extensive international discussion, might eventually lay groundwork for developing a relevant international convention under the UN auspices and allow the international community to join its efforts toward this end. (For the text of the document, please, visit the official site of the MFA of Russia; section: Basic documents on domestic and foreign policy).

We are ready to continue consultations on IIS issues and pursue interaction on the entire range of issues related to international information security both under the UN auspices and within various international organizations and forums. We believe this will be consistent with the interests of international security and overall stability.