Statement of the Arab Republic of Egypt
delivered by
Counselor Amr Aljowaily
Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations in New York
before
Thematic Cluster 6 of The First Committee
on
“Other Disarmament Measures and
International Security”

New York, October 30, 2013

Mr. Chairman,

I would like at the outset to associate my delegation with the statements of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered by Indonesia, and of the Arab Group delivered by Bahrain.

Our remarks will focus on the issue of Information and Communications Security in light of the report by the “Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security” (GGE) contained in document A/68/98*.

Egypt participated actively in the activities of the GGE. We contributed to its discussion on the increasingly important issue of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) security. The GGE report, which is before us in the current session of the First Committee, is a good base to continue the discussion on this important subject. On many aspects, it offers the starting point for further work, in particular on issues related to the international legal framework.

Mr. Chairman,

On this occasion, we wish to highlight the following points:

1. In their use of ICTs, States must observe their obligations under Article 2(3) of the United Nations Charter to settle international disputes by peaceful means, as well as the prohibition in Article 2(4) of the Charter on the threat or use of force. In the context of ICT Security, which is the subject of the GGE, threat or use of force would also encompass the destruction or causing harm in any form to all layers of the ICT infrastructure, whether physical or digital, of a Member State. I specify in particular three interlinked layers of the internet: a) telecommunications and related infrastructure; b) technical standards; and c) content and its related applications.
2. Gaps in capacity related to ICT security among States increase vulnerability in an interconnected world, and present additional challenges to developing countries due to the limited resources. Developing countries are most affected by the negative impact of adverse and malicious uses of ICT, commensurate capacity building and adequate transfer of knowledge and technology should be integral to any multilateral initiatives regarding ICT security.

3. Establishing attribution for attacks on ICTs, and the related aspects of state responsibility, requires enabling to the fullest degree, the participation of all countries, especially developing countries, in all arrangements related to the management and governance of the critical internet infrastructure. The contribution of governments in areas related to public policy aspects of ICT security should be recognized in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

We have highlighted a few issues of priority related to ICT security. There are many other issues that need to be addressed as well. For this reason, Egypt strongly supports paragraph 29 of the report of the GGE which cites that the Group “recommends regular institutional dialogue with broad participation under the auspices of the United Nations”. We call on the First Committee to consider alternatives in this regard. Pending the establishment of such mechanism, Egypt supports the continuation of the work of the GGE as recommended by draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/68/L.37. In light of the increased interest in the issue of ICT security, and benefiting from the progress thus far achieved, we reiterate our position that the size of the GGE should be increased to ensure parity with larger GGEs established by the First Committee.

Egypt stands ready to contribute to the discussions of the upcoming session of the GGE, as part of the cumulative expertise in this regard. The work of the United Nations remains indispensable as it provides the only universal and truly multilateral forum for deliberations and consensus building related to ICT security. Such efforts, within the United Nations, build upon the global consensus contained in the outcome documents of the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society. These efforts should be geared towards safeguarding cyberspace from becoming an arena of cyber conflict, and ensuring instead the exclusive peaceful uses which would enable the full realization of the potential of ICTs for contributing to social and economic development.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.