



Press Release

***Pakistan Calls for a Comprehensive International Framework
to Govern Cyberspace***

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Pakistan has highlighted the urgent need for a comprehensive, legally-binding framework to govern global cyberspace, urging the international community to tackle the challenges posed by unregulated cyberspace and the malicious use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Ambassador Usman Jadoon, the Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, emphasized this critical issue during a side event on developing a national position on the interpretation of international law and state use of ICT. The event was organized by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) at UN Headquarters today.

Ambassador Jadoon stressed that Pakistan considers cyberspace a common heritage of mankind, noting the undeniable role of ICTs in the socio-economic development of nations. He underscored the necessity for regulated global cyberspace to ensure both regional and global security.

The Ambassador outlined the significant threats posed by unregulated cyberspace and the malicious use of ICTs, including cyber-attacks, cyber-terrorism, disinformation campaigns, and attacks on critical infrastructure. He explained that, in response to these threats, Pakistan has established a national position on cyberspace security.

"Like many countries, Pakistan faces significant challenges from the misuse of ICTs," stated Ambassador Jadoon. He highlighted how the offensive cyber capabilities possessed by certain states and the sophisticated hacking tools available to non-state actors have transformed cyberspace into an arena of conflict.

Ambassador Jadoon asserted that it is time to create a legally-binding comprehensive framework under the UN's auspices to govern global cyberspace. He explained that the formulation of Pakistan's position on the application of international law in cyberspace was an inter-agency effort, incorporating inputs from stakeholders such as the Ministry of IT & Telecommunication, legal institutions, law enforcement agencies, academia, and think tanks.

He said the unique nature of ICTs complicates the application of international law in cyberspace. He pointed out that the borderless nature of the internet leads to a fragmented legal landscape, hindering cohesive international cooperation.

Ambassador Jadoon said that Pakistan advocates for the application of UN Charter principles in cyberspace, including non-use of force, sovereign equality, non-intervention, and peaceful dispute resolution. He, however, added in the same breath that the transnational nature of cyber technologies reveals gaps in the existing international law framework, making the application of these principles challenging.

Ambassador Jadoon also acknowledged the difficulties in applying International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in cyberspace. He emphasized that the interconnected nature of the internet necessitates transformations in the existing IHL framework to uphold cardinal principles such as distinction, proportionality, and precaution.

He said that attributing cyber attacks and malicious activities is particularly challenging due to the anonymity and transnational nature of the internet. He further stated that additionally, the absence of capacity building among states significantly hinders the application of international law in cyberspace.

Ambassador Jadoon called for fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory access to cyber technologies and related products to ensure a safe, secure, and stable cyberspace.

In view of these challenges, Ambassador Jadoon expressed Pakistan's support for an objective debate under the auspices of the UN to discuss the means and methods of applying international law in cyberspace, including the formulation of a legally binding instrument.

"Pakistan remains steadfast in its commitment to addressing the threats posed by unregulated cyberspace and the malicious use of ICTs. We call on the international community to work together to create a secure and stable cyberspace for all," concluded Ambassador Jadoon.