

FAQ on the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes

4 October 2024

Is there a United Nations convention on cybercrime?

In the context of the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes, Member States negotiated a new draft “United Nations convention against cybercrime; strengthening international cooperation for combating certain crimes committed by means of information and communications technology systems and for the sharing of evidence in electronic form of serious crimes”. On 26 May 2021, the GA adopted [resolution 75/282](#), according to which a draft convention was to be provided to the GA at its 78th session. On 9 August 2024, the Committee approved a draft text of the Convention to submit to the General Assembly. For further details, please see page 3.

Who decided that there should be an international convention on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes?

The GA made this decision on 27 December 2019, by adopting [resolution 74/247](#) on “Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes”. This resolution launched the process towards a new international convention and established an [Ad Hoc Committee](#).

Is there already an international convention on the use of ICTs for criminal purposes/cybercrime?

There are a number of conventions of varying scope that address the issue of the use of ICTs for criminal purposes/cybercrime, but there was no UN legally binding instrument on this subject. This could change once the General Assembly considers adoption of the draft convention approved by the Ad Hoc Committee.

What is the relationship with existing international instruments?

According to GA [resolution 75/282](#), the process towards the UN convention shall take into account existing international instruments and efforts at the national, regional and international levels on combating the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes. This also includes the outcomes of the [open-ended intergovernmental Expert Group to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime](#), a subsidiary body of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The draft convention approved by the Committee and submitted to the General Assembly for adoption contains provisions that show that existing instruments were taken into account.

How were the negotiations conducted?

Negotiations took place during the sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee according to the roadmap and mode of work for the Ad Hoc Committee, which was adopted at its first session in March 2022. You will find information on the eight Ad Hoc Committee formal sessions and five intersessional consultation meetings on the website of the Committee.

Are only governments involved in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee?

GA [resolution 75/282](#) encouraged the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee to solicit inputs from a diverse range of stakeholders such as interested intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as other non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector. For more information about the engagement of multistakeholders kindly visit the [webpage](#) of the Ad Hoc Committee.

What was the work of the Ad Hoc Committee?

The Ad Hoc Committee convened a three-day organizational session in May 2021 in New York, where it elected Officers of the Committee and discussed an outline and modalities for further activities. The Committee also held informal consultations under the leadership of its Chair to facilitate the fulfilment of its mandates.

On 24 February 2022, the Ad Hoc Committee held a one-day [organizational session](#) in New York, to resolve organizational matters (deciding on the participation of multi-stakeholders, in accordance with paragraph 9 of GA resolution 75/282 and electing two Vice-Chairs of the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee).

At its [first session](#) (28 February – 11 March 2022), the Committee conducted a preliminary exchange of views on key elements of the convention. It decided on the [structure of the convention](#), agreed on the [road map and mode of work](#) for the Ad Hoc Committee, including the organizational arrangements for intersessional consultations with multi-stakeholders.

At its [second](#) (30 May – 10 June 2022) and [third sessions](#) (29 August – 9 September 2022), the Ad Hoc Committee undertook a first reading of the chapters on criminalization, the general provisions, procedural measures and law enforcement, international cooperation, technical assistance, preventive measures, the mechanism of implementation and the final provisions, and the preamble, and exchanged views on the basis of the written submissions of Member States.

At its [fourth](#) (9-20 January 2023) and [fifth sessions](#) (11-21 April 2023), the Ad Hoc Committee undertook a second reading of the chapters on the criminalization, general provisions, procedural measures and law enforcement ([A/AC.291/16](#)), as well as on the preamble, the provisions on international cooperation, preventive measures, technical assistance and the mechanism of implementation and the final provisions ([A/AC.291/19](#)), using a consolidated negotiating document prepared by the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on the basis of the outcomes of the first reading of those draft chapters during the second and third sessions.

In addition, in line with the methodology for conducting of work by the Ad Hoc Committee at its fourth session (available [here](#)), and the revised methodology for conducting of work by the Ad Hoc Committee at its fifth session (available [here](#)), proposed by the Committee Chair, five co-facilitated informal negotiation groups were created for Member States to exchange views on specific areas identified by the Chair as requiring particular attention and potentially benefitting from focused informal discussions, in order to explore possibilities for compromise and solutions. For more information on the co-facilitated informal negotiation groups, please see [here](#).

The Chair, with the support of the secretariat, prepared a [draft text of the convention](#), based on the outcomes of the fourth and fifth sessions. At its [sixth](#) session (August 29 – 1 September 2023), the Ad Hoc Committee undertook a reading of the draft text of the convention. To facilitate the efficiency of the plenary meetings, the Chair appointed co-facilitators and coordinators to convene informal meetings to further discuss specific issues. The outcome of the sixth session, including its informal meetings, is available [here](#).

The concluding session was held from 29 January to 9 February 2024 in New York. During the session the Ad Hoc Committee considered a [further revised draft text of the convention](#). In addition, the Chair and the co-facilitators on the use of terms convened open-ended informal meetings to further discuss key provisions. Moreover, in this session the Ad Hoc Committee decided to suspend its work and recommended to the General Assembly that a reconvened concluding session be held at a later date to allow the Committee to finalize its work. The outcomes of the concluding session are available [here](#).

In accordance with General Assembly decision 78/549, the reconvened concluding session met in New York from 29 July to 9 August. For the outcomes of this meeting, please see the next question.

Moreover, five intersessional consultations with multi-stakeholders were held on [24-25 March](#), [13-14 June](#), [3-4 November](#) 2022, [6-7 March](#), and [20-21 June](#) 2023, in line with paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 75/282 and the road map and mode of work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

What were the outcomes of the reconvened concluding session?

At the reconvened concluding session, the Ad Hoc Committee approved a draft General Assembly resolution to which the approved draft text of the Convention ([A/78/986-A/AC.291/28](#)) is annexed, for consideration and adoption by the General Assembly. It also considered interpretative notes on certain articles of the draft Convention and agreed on their inclusion in the report of the session as an annex. The documents considered at the reconvened concluding session are available [here](#). The report of the session was published on 1 October 2024.

What is the role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)?

UNODC serves as secretariat to the Ad Hoc Committee, including for the sessions held in New York and Vienna. For more information, kindly visit the [homepage](#) of the Committee.

UNODC also has a Global Programme on Cybercrime, mandated to assist Member States in their struggle against cyber-related crimes through capacity-building and technical assistance. For more information: [UNODC Global Programme on Cybercrime](#).