

AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL STATEMENT: AGENDA ITEM 3

Australia strongly supports the continuation of a forum for technical exchange on cybercrime issues here in Vienna.

Throughout its mandate and work plan, the intergovernmental expert group has played two roles: it has conducted the very specific task of collecting the recommendations on which we are focussing today.

But it has also served as a platform for detailed, technical discussions among experts, in which we have shared information and learned more about one another's approaches to tackling the growing threat of cybercrime.

We have not always been able to find consensus on some of the issues we have discussed, but this discussion and exchange has nevertheless been extremely valuable to my delegation and to many others.

One thing all Member States have repeatedly reaffirmed is the importance of maintaining a forum for technical dialogue and exchange.

Chair, Australia's preference would be for the intergovernmental expert group to continue providing this function at the conclusion of its work plan.

With a simple adjustment of the IEG's existing mandate, we can reframe the IEG's work to recognise the conclusion of the study, and ensure the IEG's future work is focussed on technical exchange.

However, if Member States' preference is not to renew the IEG in any form, then we would call for the creation of a new mechanism for practical exchange, open to all Member States, and based in Vienna.

This will allow us to maintain the invaluable practitioner-level engagement from which we have all benefitted, as we continue to develop our response to the growing threat of cybercrime.

Chair, let us be very frank: the Ad Hoc Committee has a highly focussed mandate – the elaboration of a new international treaty. While Australia did not support the creation of the Committee, we accept the General Assembly's decision to establish its mandate and we will engage with it constructively.

However, in doing so, we must acknowledge that the AHC's highly specific mandate means it will be unable to provide a suitable forum for the kind of technical exchange and dialogue member states need.

Given the growing and complex challenge of cybercrime, this technical exchange is more important than ever.

Australia strongly supports the continuation of this aspect of the IEG's work, whether under the auspices of the IEG, or through some new Vienna-based mechanism established by Member States.

Thank you.