EXPLANATION OF VOTE

On behalf of the European Union

by

H.E. Mr Magnus Hellgren
Ambassador

after the vote on L.39 “Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunication in the Context of International Security”

General Assembly First Committee

United Nations
New York

October 2009

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
Mr Chairman,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution L.39 entitled “Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunication in the Context of International Security”.

The European Union supported this draft resolution. We note that a GGE will study existing and potential threats in the field of information security and look forward to its report, which will be presented at the 65th session of the UNGA. We would, however, like to take this opportunity to highlight some key aspects of the relationship between security and telecommunications technologies.

The EU supports the basic principle of the resolution that the dissemination and use of information technologies and means affect the interests of the entire international community, and that optimum effectiveness is enhanced by broad international cooperation. The EU is concerned that these technologies and means can potentially be used for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security, and may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure of States to the detriment of their security in both civil and military fields.

The threat to cyber security can originate from coordinated attacks by organised criminals, non-state actors including extremists and terrorists, and individual politically motivated hackers, as massive denial of service cyber-attacks against a number of UN member states demonstrate. In this regard, the EU refers to the UN Security Council resolution 1822, which inter alia expresses deep concern about criminal misuse of the Internet by terrorist groups. The EU also welcomes initiatives of regional and global organisations to enhance cyber-security, notably the Global Cyber-security Agenda by the International Telecommunication Union.

The EU also emphasizes the need to ensure a proper balance between the interests of law enforcement and respect for fundamental human rights as enshrined in the 1950 Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the 1966 United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other applicable international human rights treaties, which reaffirm the right of everyone to hold opinions without interference, as well as the right to freedom of expression, and the rights concerning the respect for privacy and the protection of personal data.

Mr Chairman,

One of the effective ways to fight against criminal or illegal use of information technologies is criminalizing by States the misuse of information technology and implementing the measures designed to prevent damage to critical information infrastructure regardless of the source of the threat. In this regard, the EU would like to draw attention to the “Convention on Cyber Crime” of the Council of Europe. The Convention is open for accession for non-members of the Council of Europe and we call upon all States to accede to it.

Thank you.