

THE FUTURE OF CYBER NORMS: MORE ACCOUNTABILITY OR RETURN TO THE NORM OF STATE IMPUNITY?



Breakfast discussion with the like-minded partners hosted by the EU Cyber Diplomacy Initiative – EU Cyber Direct

26 July 2022, 8:15 – 9:30

EU Delegation to the United Nations, 666 3rd Avenue, 31st Floor

Participation in this event is by invitation only. Please register by email to Nils Berglund (nils.berglund@iss.europa.eu) before 14:00 EST on 25 July 2022.

Context

Following the period of norm development in the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) and the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG), international community has seen three different approaches to the discussion about norms and principles of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace adopted by states and coalitions of states: norms implementation, norm contestation and adaptation, and proposals for development of new norms. The purpose of this meeting is to take a critical look at each of these approaches and propose possible ways to further consolidate and operationalise the like-minded coordinated approach in the current cyber norms debate.

We offer two discussion points to facilitate this effort:

1. **The clarification of different states' perceptions of how international norms function in global governance.** Current cyber norms debate is founded on the scholarly definition of social norms as expectations of appropriate behaviour from actors with a given identity. This is not a universal definition, however. Russia's advocacy for cyber norms codification demonstrates a doctrinal difference, which is useful to grasp for developing a more strategic diplomatic practice. Russia's entrepreneurship on tightening the rules for attribution, for example, hints at a return to an older non-cyber specific norm of state impunity which is contradictory to the spirit of state responsibility and the global effort to promote accountability in cyberspace. How can the like-minded countries engage in a strategic contestation of this norm?
2. **A comprehensive take on cyber norm implementation as a strategic process of shaping the meaning and application of cyber norms,** which can feed back into the global framework of responsible state behaviour. While implementation is often seen as a predominantly technical operationalisation and translation of international agreements into domestic legislation, we will show that it could also be a creative and contentious undertaking that establishes the use of norms.



Agenda

08:00-08:15 Registration and breakfast

08:15-08:20 Welcome and introduction to the discussion

Patryk PAWLAK

Brussels Executive Officer and Project Director, EU Cyber Diplomacy Initiative – EU Cyber Direct

This meeting advances the earlier reflection about cyber norms within the EU Cyber Direct project (see the background material below) and will serve to formulate a more strategic and policy-oriented framework for approaching norm implementation and norm contestation in action.

08:20-08:35 Introduction to the theme “The future of cyber norms”

Xymena KUROWSKA

Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Central European University; Member of the Advisory Board, EU Cyber Diplomacy Initiative – EU Cyber Direct

Professor Kurowska is an International Relations theorist interested in interpretive policy analysis. She received her doctorate in political and social sciences from European University Institute in Florence. She works within international political sociology and critical affective geopolitics, using security theory, psychosocial and anthropological approaches, and relational and interpretive methodologies. She served as the CEU principal investigator in Global Norm Evolution and Responsibility to Protect project and chair of International Political Sociology section at International Studies Association. She is a co-editor-in-chief of *Journal of International Relations and Development* and sits on the editorial board of *Global Studies Quarterly* and *Global Constitutionalism*.

08:35-09:30 Discussion about possible like-minded strategies

Background material

Xymena Kurowska (2019) [*The politics of cyber norms: Beyond norm construction towards strategic narrative contestation*](#)

Xymena Kurowska (2019) [*What does Russia want in cyber diplomacy? A primer.*](#)