

CYBER DIPLOMACY COMPASS

BRIDGING EXPERTISE AND DIPLOMACY FOR THE UN GLOBAL MECHANISM

EU Cyber Direct – EU Cyber Diplomacy Initiative

Date: 16 – 17 July 2026

Location: European Union Delegation to the United Nations, 666 3rd Ave | New York, United States

Background and Context

The July 2026 plenary of the UN Global Mechanism will open its first substantive cycle and begin to shape the process ahead. The Global Mechanism represents a structural shift in cyber diplomacy, formalising the role of non-governmental expertise through the Dedicated Thematic Groups (DTGs) and consolidating avenues for capacity-building to strengthen this process. This recognition reflects a broader acknowledgement that effective cyber governance cannot be sustained without the technical and scientific knowledge that expert communities can provide across different regional contexts and the diverse sectoral perspectives that different stakeholder communities bring. Yet questions remain on how to build a common language, shared priorities, and a genuinely bidirectional exchange between delegates and expert stakeholders, where knowledge flows in both directions and regional perspectives from across the globe are treated as indispensable inputs rather than optional additions. These are critical conditions to ensure effective implementation of the UN Global Mechanism.

In this context, the inaugural Cyber Diplomacy Compass, convened by *EU Cyber Direct – EU Cyber Diplomacy Initiative* in New York on 16–17 July 2026, will bring together UN delegates and expert communities from across regions in an informal, knowledge-oriented space ahead of the UN Global Mechanism plenary. The Compass creates a setting where diplomatic and expert communities can engage openly, share new perspectives on the latest challenges, and learn from one another across regional and disciplinary lines. By making that exchange more structured and pragmatic, the Compass helps both communities enter the formal process better prepared, with a clearer common language and a stronger shared analytical foundation for the work the DTGs will require.

Structure of the Event

The Cyber Diplomacy Compass is structured across two days, combining expert-led stakeholder sessions, structured roundtables, and a scenario-based exercise, each format serving a distinct purpose in bridging diplomatic and stakeholder communities. The event format provides participants with concise, evidence-based input on issues relevant to the Global Mechanism cycle, designed to be accessible to a diplomatically diverse audience rather than a specialist one. Each session is paired with a structured roundtable to ensure that knowledge exchange is bidirectional, giving delegates the space to engage with and connect expert perspectives to their own priorities and regional contexts. The discussion will benefit from novel exchange formats, including a scenario-based exercise and Cyber Diplomacy Boardgame. Working through a structured simulation, participants from both communities engage collectively with a realistic governance challenge, surfacing in real time the complementarity between technical expertise and diplomatic capacity. The event is by invitation only, with participation balanced across regions, institutional backgrounds, and areas of expertise. Working groups are deliberately mixed across communities and sessions, so that cross-community familiarity and trust, including across regional lines, can develop progressively over the course of the two days.