



DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA DELEGATION IN NEW YORK FOR THE
CONCLUDING SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS AD HOC
COMMITTEE ON CYBERCRIME**

Media Release – 3 February 2024

A Papua New Guinea (PNG) delegation has joined other United Nations Member States delegations in New York at the United Nations Headquarters for the seventh and final session of the United Nations (UN) Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes (a.k.a. Cybercrimes), which began on 29 January 2024 and concludes on 9 February 2024.

The UN Member States were joined by UN General Assembly-approved multistakeholder participants from around the world, drawn from non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector, as ICT issues are not the sole domain of governments.

PNG is represented by a four-member delegation led by the Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations in New York, Mr Fred Sarufa, who is Acting Head of Mission, accompanied by the PNG Permanent Mission staff.

They were joined by Mr. Oala Moi, Principal Legal Counsel of the PNG Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).

DICT is providing technical advisory support to the delegation given its mandate on policy and legal matters related to the country's ICT sector.

Mr Moi's participation in the final session of the Ad Hoc Committee on Cybercrime was sponsored by the Council of Europe and arranged through the PNG Department of Justice & Attorney-General with the support of the PNG Department of Foreign Affairs.

The text of the Convention is now being discussed by the Ad Hoc Committee chaired by Her Excellency Ms. Faouzia Boumaiza Mebarki, Ambassador of Algeria to the United Nations in Vienna, Austria.

If the delegations of the UN Member States that are attending the Ad Hoc Committee's concluding session reach consensus on the final text by 9 February 2024, the Convention will make it to the UN General Assembly with a resolution for its adoption in 2024.

The main objective of the Ad Hoc Committee is to deliver an instrument to the UN General Assembly to help Member States counter the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes.

Information and communications technologies, while they have a major potential for the development of UN Member States, create new opportunities for cybercrime if left in the wrong hands.

The potential risk for misuse of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence is well recognized globally and the importance of appropriately addressing the emerging issues cannot be overstated.

The proposed Convention is also intended to deal effectively with concerns over the increase in the rate and diversity of crimes committed in the digital world and their impact on the stability of critical infrastructures of UN Member States and enterprises and on the well-being of individuals.

This Convention will enhance coordination and cooperation among UN Member States in combating the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes, including by providing technical assistance to developing countries, upon their request, to improve national legislation and frameworks and build the capacity of national authorities to deal with such use in all its forms, including its prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution.

The work of the Ad Hoc Committee started in May 2021 following the UN General Assembly's decision taken on 27 December 2019.

The Ad Hoc Committee has had six previous formal meetings and intersessional meetings, which were alternated between New York, United States and Vienna, Austria, given that not all UN Member States have physical diplomatic presence in Vienna, where the UN's international crime-related disarmament work is based.

There is excitement in the air amongst participating delegations and the drive is there to try and finalize and approve, in principle, the draft text of the Convention by 9 February 2024.

If this happens, the text of the draft Convention will be submitted under a draft resolution to the UN General Assembly to adopt later this year.

The Convention is highly important for PNG as it will have serious implications for the country if PNG were to sign and ratify it in the future. The PNG Medium Term Development Plan IV issued by the Marape-Rosso Government under Strategic Priority Area 8 on "Digital Government, National Statistics and Public Service Governance" rightly gives prominence and importance for the country's development and national security and combating cybercrime within and outside PNG's borders is part of that strategic priority area.

Papua New Guinea's attendance at the final round of negotiations and as part of the Ad Hoc Committee is also significant because PNG has the Papua New Guinea Cybercrime Policy 2014 and the Cybercrime Code Act 2016 in place. The Cybercrime Code Act 2016 currently addresses cybercrime issues in the country, and it will need to be reviewed if the UN passes the Convention this year and the PNG government did make a decision to ratify it.

Since 2021, PNG has been mulling the prospect of acceding to the Budapest Convention, which is currently the only convention in place in the world that addresses cybercrime.

Relevant authorities in PNG including DICT, PNG National Information & Communications Technology Authority, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and Department of Foreign Affairs will need to further assess the merits of the Budapest Convention and the proposed UN convention, in the PNG context to decide which of these two international conventions are suitable for the country before making proposals to recommend to the PNG Cabinet to make a final decision for PNG to sign and ratify either one of the conventions or both of them or none of them.

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Authorized for release by:

Steven Matainaho
Secretary

Editor's note:

For more background information on the work leading up to the 'International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes', please go to https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/cybercrime/ad_hoc_committee/home#About

For information on the Concluding Session, please go to https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/cybercrime/ad_hoc_committee/ahc_concluding_session/main

For a copy of the revised draft text of the proposed UN Convention, go to <https://www.undocs.org/A/AC.291/22/Rev.1>

For a copy of the draft resolution for consideration by the UN General Assembly, please go to <https://www.undocs.org/A/AC.291/25>

For information on the Budapest Convention, go to <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cybercrime/home>

For a copy of the Budapest Convention, go to <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cybercrime/the-budapest-convention>

To download a copy of PNG's Cybercrime Code Act 2016, go to https://www.parliament.gov.pg/uploads/acts/16A_35.pdf

To download a copy of the PNG Cybercrime Policy 2014, go to <https://www.nicta.gov.pg/download/cybercrime-policy-2014/?tmstv=1706708915>

For news on cybercrime meetings held in PNG in the past 2 years, go to <https://www.ict.gov.pg/cybercrime-a-priority-issue-for-dict/>