
Agenda item: PL 1.1 iv)

Document C14/68-E
24 April 2014
Original: English

Note by the Secretary-General

CONTRIBUTION FROM CUBA

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF ITU IN BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND
SECURITY IN THE USE OF ICTS

I have the honour to transmit to the Member States of the Council a contribution received from **Cuba**.

Dr Hamadoun I. TOURE
Secretary-General

Contribution from Cuba

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF ITU IN BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY IN THE USE OF ICTS

Last April 4, the Associated Press (AP) published the article “US Secretly Built ‘Cuban Twitter’ To Stir Unrest”. In this regard, and in order to bring one additional faithful example of the necessity to continue our discussions and deliberations on the use of ICTs, Cuba respectfully would like to call the attention of ITU Member States to the following facts:

- 1 The project denounced by AP was planned, financed and implemented by a Member State of ITU, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).
- 2 The scheme consisted in the development of a communication network using cell phone text messaging.
- 3 The services to become subscribers to this network were offered free of charge to Cuban cell phone users.
- 4 In order to do this, the operators of the project illegally obtained the Cuban Telecommunications Company (ETECSA) numbers database.
- 5 The network was active for two years up to 2012 reaching around 40 thousands subscribers.
- 6 The Member State of ITU directly involved in this programme made extraordinary efforts to conceal its involvement in the project through a complex of shell companies and bank accounts in third countries.
- 7 The subscribers never knew that the service was created by the foreign government.
- 8 Personal data of the Cuban users were gathered without their consent, with the aim of creating profiles to be used for political purposes, contrary to International Law, and specifically against the United Nations Charter.
- 9 The project operators sent unsolicited political messages to the subscribers of this network.
- 10 This project, called ZunZuneo, is not the only platform created with these characteristics by a Member State of ITU to promote subversion and destabilization of internal order in another Member State. There are others in operation such as a social network called Piramideo and news-platforms *Martí Noticias*, *Diario de Cuba* and *Cubasincensura*, among others.

The example of ZunZuneo raised the debate on the use of ICTs while respecting International Agreements. Once again, Cuba denounces the hostile use of telecommunications by the Government of the United States to undermine the socio-economic and political order freely established by the Cuban people and to provoke a “change regime”, in a clear violation to the International Law and in particular the Charter of the United Nations.

Cuba reminds also the Council the necessity to cover in its debate that the sending of unsolicited messages is a clear violation to more than 11 ITU Resolutions and Recommendations, including the Resolutions 132 and 174 of Guadalajara Plenipotentiary Conference.

At the same time, this kind of aggressions shows the necessity to further strengthen the international regulatory framework on the use of ICTs, a purpose on which Cuba is fully committed, within the ITU as well as in the UN system.
