Press Corps

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Topic: UNODC/ Addressing Cybercrime to protect election legitimacy

The issue of cybercrime influencing and ruining election legitimacy is one of the multiple problems the UN met to tackle in the NYC 2019 conference. The technological validity of elections is a major issue, and the UNODC committee of the United Nations aimed to solve it. As the Islamic Republic of Pakistan said, "The act of cybercrime can corrupt government, making the country unstable." The delegates expressed that there were many aspects of the topic of election cybersecurity, including why more security would be good, the history of elections, why we should use or not use technology in elections, and solutions to the problem. Election cybercrime is a problematic issue that has many aspects and is very important.

All delegates interviewed expressed the need for increased security during the elections. Egypt, Russia, Kenya, South Africa, Austria, Germany, and the USA all said that elections should be more secure. Germany expressed urgency at this matter when they said that there were 3.2 billion Internet users worldwide. The USA suspects Russian interference in the 2016 election, while Kenya expresses concern at the recent 2017 system hack. Austria also said that they had election problems in the past.

The delegates interviewed had diverse answers when asked the question, "Do you think tech should be used in elections or not…why?" The United States, Egypt, Russia, Kenya, the United Kingdom, and Cameroon stated that in their opinion, technology should be used in elections. While those countries agreed with the idea of tech in elections, some countries did not. Austria and Germany proposed that tech should not be used. The delegate from Germany said, "Tech in elections should not be used because it is easy to hack and when hacked, can and most likely will corrupt the government."

There were many solutions that were discussed by the delegates at the conference with the topic of cybercrime election legitimacy: more punishments, more laws, and more attention and education to the problem at hand were discussed heavily. The United States suggested pre-mandatory checks and a sovereign cloud. Kenya and the UK suggested using blockchain tech. The UK also suggested tracking spikes in votes coming in. Egypt and India were eager to punish and suggested five years in prison minimum for hackers. Germany proposed a UN committee for countries to go to secure and verify elections. South Africa submitted an elaborate plan including a mobile app for voting, a mailed code that would be different for every person who voted. They would submit this code, their social security number, and of course their vote, for maximum security experience.

In conclusion, election legitimacy and security for cybercriminals is crucial for a healthy political landscape. Elections should be more secure due to past events, countries disagreed on whether technology should be used or not, but most agreed that a mix of paper and tech would be good. Every country had an intricate and well thought out plan to eradicate election legitimacy. As Kenya said, "Without fair and free elections, our rights may be compromised."