



The OSCE Chair-in-Office, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta Ian Borg, addresses annual OSCE conference on Cyber/ICT Security, Valletta, 15 July 2024. (Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta)

PRESS RELEASE

Annual OSCE-wide Conference on Cyber/ICT Security underscores the importance of strengthening national cyber resilience

VALLETTA, 16 July 2024 – The annual OSCE-wide Conference on Cyber/ICT Security, organized by the Maltese OSCE Chairpersonship, titled "Strengthening National Cyber Resilience", was held from 15 to 16 July in Malta.

The two-day conference gathered senior governmental experts, relevant State agencies and cyber policymakers to engage in wide-ranging discussions on enhancing cyber resilience. Topics included the impact of cyberspace misuse on societies, governments, critical infrastructure, and international peace and security. Participants underlined that collaborative efforts between governments, industry,

academia, and civil society are crucial for addressing these challenges.

The Chair-in-Office of the OSCE, Minister Ian Borg, highlighted the urgency of the issue, stating, "Cyber threats are now a feature of efforts to destabilize states in the OSCE region. Malicious cyber activities including the spread of disinformation, undermine democratic processes and increase tensions within our societies. Such activities can also be used to disrupt relations between countries. Recent conflicts in our region, most notably Russia's war against Ukraine, demonstrate how the misuse of cyber technologies can precipitate conflict or exacerbate its impact."

"As our reliance on technology increases, cybersecurity has become an indispensable necessity of our everyday lives. The rise of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, makes protecting our networks and citizens an ever more complex challenge. It is imperative that we continue to build capacities and strengthen national resilience," said OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria in her opening remarks.

This year's conference focused on two rapidly evolving challenges in cyber security: the advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and countering targeted disinformation. Participants emphasized the need to address AI's vulnerabilities and prevent its malicious use while leveraging it to enhance cybersecurity. The conference also addressed the risks posed by disinformation, exploring the connection between cyber/ICT security and information integrity.

Discussions shed light on these vulnerabilities and risks, while also highlighting the efforts of the OSCE and participating States to counter them within the framework of their commitments to freedom of expression and media freedom.

Over the past decade, recognizing the critical threats posed to cyberspace, the OSCE has developed a comprehensive set of [Confidence-Building Measures](#) (CBMs) to support national resilience against cybersecurity risks. The CBMs are designed to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the misuse of cyberspace, complementing the United Nations framework for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace. The event underscored the importance of using the CBMs to bolster resilience in these critical areas.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit:

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