Welcome

Joint Statement on U.S.-Germany Cyber Bilateral Meeting

The Governments of the United States and Germany held a Cyber Bilateral Meeting in Washington, DC, on March 22-23, 2016.

This fourth annual U.S.-Germany Cyber Bilateral Meeting once again reinforced our long-standing cooperation on critical global issues by highlighting our decade-long collaboration on key cyber topics and identifying additional areas for awareness and alignment. The U.S.-Germany Cyber Bilateral Meeting continued and further expanded its “whole-of-government” approach, allowing for more in-depth cooperation on a wide range of cyber issues and our increased collaboration on both strategic and operational objectives.

Strategic objectives include affirming common approaches to promoting international cyber security, multistakeholder Internet governance, Internet freedom and the promotion of human rights online; partnering with the private sector to protect critical infrastructure; and pursuing cyber capacity building efforts in third countries.

The discussions of international security in cyberspace focused on how international law applies to cyberspace, the promotion of cyber norms of responsible state behavior, and the implementation of confidence building measures. The United States and Germany welcomed the consensus 2015 UN (United Nations) Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) report affirming the applicability of international law and outlining norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace. They will continue their close cooperation on these issues in bilateral, regional, and multilateral fora, especially as the next GGE is poised to start its work. The two also welcomed the second set of Confidence Building Measures agreed in the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) and discussed Germany’s priorities in the cyber field for its OSCE Chairmanship.
The delegations welcomed the UN (United Nations) General Assembly’s reaffirmation of the multistakeholder model of Internet governance and the continuation of the mandate for the Internet Governance Forum in the outcome document of the 10 year review of the World Summit on the Information Society. And, the delegations agreed to continue efforts toward expanding the Freedom Online Coalition and extending the reach of its work beyond the membership to foster Internet freedom around the world and to realize a global, open, inclusive Internet for all.

Both sides underscore their conviction that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online. These include the right to seek, receive, and impart information, the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and the right to be free from arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy.

The representatives of the United States and Germany discussed cybersecurity of critical infrastructure as well as management and coordination efforts of cyber incidents. The discussion of capacity building focused on coordinating our efforts in various venues, including the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise. The United States and Germany will continue to work closely to enhance cybersecurity of critical infrastructure, improve incident management and coordination, and build cyber capacity of other countries.

Additional objectives comprise bilateral cybersecurity cooperation measures, including exchanging information on cyber issues of mutual concern such as critical infrastructure protection, promoting best practices and international standards, and identifying greater cooperation measures on detecting and mitigating cyber incidents, raising awareness, and implementing the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe)’s confidence-building measures to reduce risk stemming from ICT incidents. The delegations also discussed the variety of diplomatic tools available to address malicious behavior in cyberspace, including the cyber-enabled theft of intellectual property for commercial gain as well as on-going efforts to counter violent extremism online and agreed to continue to work together in international fora toward addressing those issues, including through engagement with non-governmental stakeholders.

The participants also briefed each other on current developments in their respective defense ministries and discussed potential NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)-EU (European Union) cooperation in the context of hybrid threats.

The bilateral meeting was followed by a session with private sector, civil society, technical community, think tank, and academic stakeholders from both sides of the Atlantic to discuss these outcomes of the meeting and to hear their inputs into the planning for the second multistakeholder U.S.-Germany Cyber Dialogue to be held in Washington at a date to be determined in the near future.

The U.S.-Germany Cyber Bilateral Meeting was hosted by the U.S. Department of State’s Coordinator for Cyber Issues, Christopher Painter, and included representatives from the Department of State, the National Security Council, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Federal Trade Commission. Ambassador Thomas Fitschen, the Federal Foreign Office’s Director for International Cyber Policy, led the German delegation which included representatives from the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry of Defense, and the Federal Office for Information Security.

Coordinator Painter and Ambassador Fitschen agreed to hold the next annual Cyber Bilateral Meeting in Berlin, Germany, in 2017.

**Keywords**

- International cyber policy
- Transatlantic relations
- USA

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