



UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (UNCSW)

POSITION PAPER

Agenda:

Deliberating the Human Rights Implications of Mass Digital Surveillance During Political Protests and Civil Unrest

Country: Kingdom of Denmark

I. INTRODUCTION

The Kingdom of Denmark firmly believes that the protection of human rights and democratic freedoms must remain paramount in an increasingly digital world. While technological advancements have significantly improved public safety and national security, they must never come at the expense of fundamental freedoms such as the right to privacy, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and access to information. Digital surveillance, if left unchecked, risks creating an atmosphere of fear that discourages civic participation, particularly among women, journalists, and human rights defenders.

As one of the world's leading democracies, Denmark advocates for a balanced framework where legitimate security concerns coexist with robust legal safeguards, transparency, and accountability.

II. COUNTRY'S POSITION

Denmark recognizes that governments have a legitimate responsibility to maintain public order during political protests and periods of civil unrest. However, any form of digital surveillance must strictly comply with international human rights law, particularly the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, and judicial oversight.

The delegation of Denmark strongly opposes indiscriminate mass surveillance, unauthorized collection of personal data, and the misuse of facial recognition technologies against peaceful protesters. Such practices undermine democratic institutions and disproportionately affect women, minorities, civil society organizations, and vulnerable communities.

Denmark further emphasizes that digital technologies should empower citizens rather than suppress dissent.

III. POLICIES AND MEASURES TAKEN BY DENMARK

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Danish Data Protection Act provide strong safeguards for the protection of personal information and ensure responsible data processing.
- The Danish Data Protection Agency (Datatilsynet) independently supervises compliance with privacy laws and investigates violations of data protection rights.
- Denmark maintains an independent judiciary that authorizes surveillance activities only under clearly defined legal circumstances.
- The government has implemented the National Cyber and Information Security Strategy, strengthening cybersecurity while respecting civil liberties and democratic values.
- Denmark actively promotes digital literacy, responsible technology governance, and ethical use of artificial intelligence.
- The country consistently supports international cooperation through the United Nations and European institutions to establish global standards for digital governance.

IV. IMPACT OF DENMARK'S APPROACH

Denmark's balanced approach has strengthened public trust in governmental institutions while maintaining one of the world's highest standards of digital governance.

By ensuring judicial oversight, transparency, and accountability, Denmark has successfully protected both national security and individual freedoms. Its policies have contributed to greater public confidence, higher levels of civic participation, stronger democratic institutions, and improved protection for journalists, women activists, and human rights defenders operating in digital spaces.

Denmark believes that safeguarding privacy is not an obstacle to security—it is a foundation of democratic resilience.

V. PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

1. Establish internationally recognized guidelines regulating the use of digital surveillance technologies during political protests.
2. Ensure that all surveillance measures are subject to judicial authorization and independent oversight.
3. Prohibit arbitrary mass surveillance and unlawful biometric data collection of peaceful demonstrators.
4. Strengthen international cooperation to promote transparency, accountability, and responsible digital governance.
5. Encourage Member States to adopt comprehensive data protection legislation consistent with international human rights standards.
6. Promote digital literacy and cybersecurity awareness, particularly among women and marginalized communities.
7. Develop ethical standards for the deployment of artificial intelligence and facial recognition technologies in law enforcement.
8. Strengthen protections for journalists, civil society organizations, whistleblowers, and human rights defenders operating online.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Kingdom of Denmark reaffirms its unwavering commitment to protecting democracy, human dignity, and fundamental freedoms in the digital age. Effective governance requires that security measures remain firmly grounded in the rule of law, transparency, and respect for human rights.

Denmark calls upon all Member States to work collectively toward establishing an international framework that prevents the misuse of digital surveillance technologies while preserving the rights of individuals to peacefully assemble, express their opinions, and participate in democratic processes without fear of unlawful monitoring or intimidation.

Only through responsible innovation, international cooperation, and respect for human rights can the global community ensure that technological progress serves humanity rather than undermining it.