

Statements by the Republic of Finland
**Open-Ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and
Telecommunications in the Context of International Security**
Virtual Informal Consultations 19 June and 2 July 2020

Statement 1 delivered 19 June 2020

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I wish to join others in thanking you for convening these informal meetings and your relentless efforts to lead the work of this group towards a successful completion of its mandate.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement by the European Union. In addition, we have few general remarks relating to the way forward and the report.

As many other delegates before me, I wish to express my delegation's full support for the Chair's work plan for our way forward. We think the work plan is realistic in light of the serious impact the ongoing pandemic continues to have, almost in every country around the globe. The plan as proposed by the Chair will help us to adapt our work to these exceptional circumstances in so as to bring our mandate to successful completion.

We are also very much supportive of the pre-draft from the Chair. We believe the draft provides a solid basis for further deliberation by this Working Group. As several delegates have suggested, we also see some merit in clarifying some of the formulations in the draft report in order to clearly reflect the convergence or divergence of States' views expressed during our discussions in the Working Group.

As for the question on whether the current global situation revealed additional or amplified existing threats, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us of the pressing need to strengthen global cooperation to enhance global cyber resilience in order to prevent malicious behavior and advance stability in cyberspace and beyond. After all, chain is no stronger than its weakest link in the interconnected cyber domain.

There has been a worrisome surge in malicious cyber activities taking advantage of the vulnerabilities in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, targeting critical infrastructures including the healthcare sector. Such malicious activities may not only put people's lives at risk but, if left unabated, also undermine and threaten security and stability of the global community.

Against this backdrop, we are supportive of the suggestion by Czech Republic and several other delegations to attach special attention to various threat and protective aspects of critical infrastructures highlighted by the current situation in the final report. Any attempt to disrupt and

impair the functioning of critical infrastructures is unacceptable in all circumstance, at all time, and it is in clear conflict with the agreed norms of responsible State behavior.

We also put a high value on the exchanges of views that took place during the first multi-stakeholder meeting last year. It served to underscore the importance of involving all stakeholders in this debate.

Lastly, my delegation shares the concern expressed earlier by the Czech Republic about the human rights implications of measures taken to contain the pandemic, including by the use of ICT. Like many others before me, my delegation would also like to underline the importance of a human rights- based approach in our endeavor to promote freedom, openness, security and stability in cyberspace. I thank you, Mr chairman.

Statement 2 delivered 2 July 2020

Mr. Chair, at the outset, my delegation aligns itself with the statement by the EU.

Mr. Chaiman, we welcome the consensus-based approach reflected in the approach to draft the report. In our view, there are no immediate gaps to be filled in existing international law. Notwithstanding this, we do recognize that there is still room for strengthening the common understanding on *how* existing international law applies in cyber domain.

Against this backdrop, we wish to lend our support to the previous interventions by New Zealand and others that maintain that a key emphasis in the report should be placed on strong and concrete commitment towards implementations of existing voluntary norms, endorsed by all UN Member States. We fully subscribe to the view that the pivotal role of implementation of norms in the 2015 GGE report would merit to be specifically emphasized in the report.

We also wish to lend our strong support to the proposal made by the Netherlands on the protection of integrity and availability of the public core of the internet and its concrete suggestions regarding the scope of the critical infrastructure norms (13f and 13g).

We would also like to underscore that voluntary norms do not replace obligations under international law and we welcome that this is made clear in the draft report. It goes without saying that mandatory language should only be used to describe legally binding state obligations, in so as not to create confusion that adhering to international legal obligations would be voluntary for states.

We would also like to lend our support to the proposals submitted by Canada, as we see clear added value to the substance of the report. Lastly, we wish to underscore the need for human-rights-based approach and gender perspective in the implementation of the norms. I thank you, Mr chairman.

