Open-ended Working Group on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, Informal virtual meeting (18, 19 and 22 February 2021)

Slovenia, Statement

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues,

First and foremost, I would like to thank you, Ambassador Lauber for your continuous dedication and commitment as a Chair of this Group to work in truly inclusive and transparent manner. I also want to express our appreciation for the process and to thank you and your team for the Zero draft report.

Chair, Ambassador Lauber,

Slovenia **fully aligns itself with the Statement of the European Union which will be delivered later**. At the same time, we would like to share some of our national views.

The Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) has become a **historic venue where for the first time we could all participate, express our views and learn about the concerns of others**. An **invaluable dialogue** that will **hopefully result in a consensual report and encourage further cooperation among States and other stakeholders** in promoting global, open, free, stable and secure ICT environment.

We appreciate the <u>structure of the report</u>, the <u>efforts to balance the discussion</u> and **especially the focus on the areas of convergence**. We share the opinion of many states who sees and appreciates the Zero Draft as a good basis for consensus outcome.

Please allow us to point out some of the <u>elements from the report</u> that we attach a great importance.:

- We welcome the **reference to the consensual UN GGE reports as a foundation of our work**. We would agree with many states who expressed that this should be further emphasised in conclusions and recommendations.

- On the "**existing and potential threats**:" We welcome the reference to the technology-neutral approach and a strong appeal for strengthened cooperation. In discussion part, we miss the reference <u>to the concerns expressed by some countries with regard to the intellectual property theft and election interference</u>.

- On the **"international law and norms**": these two parts of the report are some of the most challenging ones; but the current text is a good basis for further work.

Let me repeat, Slovenia firmly believes that the cyberspace should be governed with the full respect of the existing international law, particularly the UN Charter in its entirety, the international humanitarian law and human rights, as well as the implementation of the norms and rules for responsible state behaviour.

We support efforts to further increase clarity and foster shared understanding on how existing international law, as well as norms apply in cyber space as an important element of building trust and reducing uncertainty. We welcome Canada's contribution in this regard.

We would also like to **support the calls made by the Netherlands for greater emphasis on the protection of the public core of the internet.**

Additionally, Slovenia would like to support inclusion of the reference on the survey into the Zero Draft as expressed yesterday by South Africa and other delegations.

- We also welcome the conclusions and recommendations on "**confidence building measures**". We agree that the OEWG in itself became a CBM – and thus an important reference point for global CBMs and the role of the UN. We support the proposed way forward and stress the need to foster synergies with regional organisations, such as the OSCE.

- One of the main highlights of this report **are the principles and recommendations on "cyber capacity building":** Bridging the development gap and strengthening global cyber resilience is an important element of increased cyber security and risk reduction. Here we would like to point out two specific aspects:

  - First, like Canada, we appreciate a **strong emphasis on the importance of women and gender in the context of international security** throughout the report. **Inclusiveness and promotion of**

diversity are also important elements of talent management and retention, as well as innovation.

- o Second, **multiple references to the role and the need to engage with the multi-stakeholder community in the report are highly appreciated**. Although, the importance of multi-stakeholder involvement in cyber capacity building conclusions could be even stronger.

- And last but not least, on the *"regular institutional dialogue":* *While we* appreciate the reference to the PoA and a desire to return to a single process based on consensus in the zero draft, we would also **encourage to have PoA in the recommendation part.** It is important to continue the work on the basis of the GGE reports, the areas of convergence in the OEWG, and contributions of various stakeholders from private sector, academia and civil society. There is a historic opportunity that the OEWG offers in terms of strengthening the international peace and security.

- The Republic of Slovenia remains committed to contributing constructively and works on our joint efforts for a consensual report.

Thank you.