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**Statement of the Islamic Republic of Iran
At the Organizational meeting of the Open-ended Working
Group on
Security of and in the Use of information and
telecommunications technologies**

New York, 1-2 June 2021

In the name of God, the Compassionate the Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation for your assumption of leadership and extend my gratitude to the Secretariat for its work in organizing this meeting. Today, we start a five-year process, the sustainability and success of which is heavily dependent on thorough and enough planning.

Iran continues to have a well-known position in full favor of this truly inclusive process, consistent with its views and stances in the previous OEWG.

We sincerely hope that during this time and with the necessary political will of the entire membership, this process will lead to a

promising and successful conclusion leaving no one behind. This can be accomplished by accommodating all countries, not just a select set of countries.

Now, we are elated, as are many other member states, to witness the launch of the new Open-Ended Working Group on the security of and in the use of information and telecommunication technologies, based on its founding resolution 75/240 and with a clear mandate and working process.

In our view, among many other factors, the Group's success is contingent on the entire membership consistently respecting and adhering to the mandate assigned to us in the aforementioned resolution. It goes without saying that we remain committed to our stances on major concerns, which we articulated repeatedly during the previous OEWG. Also, it is worth mentioning that the OEWG is an individual body with clear mandate and therefore, we strongly believe that its work should not be referred to any other contentious processes like the GGE.

Returning to the meeting's special task, and keeping in mind the expected outcome of such a meeting, it would be ideal if we could adopt decisions on the election of officers to guide the process

under the supervision of member states, the formation of subgroups, the work program, the provisional agenda, and many other related issues. Meanwhile, it is evident that those decisions could only be made after lengthy dialogue among member states, and we are only at the beginning of that pivotal moment. As such, it appears that we should get down to work right away, and perhaps, in the time between now and the first substantive session of the OEWG, the necessary preparation will be completed successfully for all.

In this regard, I am delighted to share with the Group our perspectives and ideas on the following organizational issues:

1. Deciding on the chairmanship and formation of subgroups seem to be the initial step in the right direction. As a result, while we welcome the nomination of H.E. Borhan Gafour, distinguished Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, a friendly country from the NAM, I'd like to assure him of our complete support and collaboration. While we think that the OEWG may benefit from an expanded bureau that would maximize proper representation in the OEWG's stewardship, we believe that there exists the opportunity to actualize that formula about the subgroups to be established as envisaged in the resolution. Given the six parts of the mandate, we believe it is reasonable to create six subgroups

and elect two co-chairs for each subgroup, one from developed and one from developing nations.

2. I should point out that, due to issues related to visas, subgroup and intercessional meetings should be held in accessible venues other than New York.

3. Given the importance of meaningful involvement by all delegations, the meetings should not be held at the same time.

4. Based on the experience, the OEWG substantive sessions, in particular, should focus on rolling-text-based negotiations rather than purely interactive discussions.

5. All national initiatives should be treated equally, with no one taking precedence over the others. In the same vain, we have observations on the proposed subgroup on Plan of Action and we don't see any possibility to acquire consensus on this proposal.

6. States should decide on the format of the annual and final reports.

7. Consensus is the only method of decision-making in the OEWG, as foreseen in Resolution 75/240, and related document, whether only for a specific meeting or for the whole process, should be consistent with this resolution without allowing any misinterpretation.

8. While especially in the event of the pandemic, hybrid conduct of the business has been one alternative, formal decisions can only be adopted in physical meetings.

9. The remaining issues, including the participation of NGOs and civil society representatives, should be addressed in the same way as the previous OEWG. In our view, the previous modality is enough and there is no need for starting a discussion on this, specially when it is clear from the beginning that there is no consensus about the issue.

Mr. Chair,

We are committed to seizing any chance to ensure safe and secure cyberspace for all, and we look forward to working with you and all other delegations. Against the backdrop of some nations' unacceptable offensive cyber options and also its own terrible experience as a victim of cyberattacks in 2010, the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with a great majority of the international community, calls for the use of ICTs exclusively for peaceful purposes. This OEWG should serve as a vehicle for accomplishing that lofty goal.

I thank you for your attention.