Statement by Bangladesh delegation at the Open-ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021-2025

Item: General exchange of views

13 December 2021

Mr. Chair,

I would like to join other delegations in congratulating you on your election as the chair of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on security of and in the use of information and communication technologies. I am confident that under your able stewardship, this process will generate substantive outcomes, including practical and concrete way forward. I assure you of my delegation’s full support during the process.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of NAM.

ICT is a key driver of global sustainable development efforts and is extrinsically linked to every aspect of our lives. The pandemic has further accelerated our dependence on digital technologies. While human life is being revolutionized by digital connectivity, the risks posed by this on international peace and security cannot be underestimated. We must, therefore, remain alert in detecting malicious use of technologies that could jeopardize our security.

Mr. Chair,

According to an estimate, by 2022, 28.5 billion digital devices will be connected to the internet, which is more than three times that of the global population. To take advantage of the enormous benefits of digital technologies, the international community must develop a secure, safe, trusted and open ICT environment underpinned by applicability of international
law to cyberspace, well-defined norms of responsible State behavior, robust Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and coordinated capacity building.

The UN Secretary-General prioritized this issue and identified cyber warfare as a key strategic risk in his recently released ‘Our Common Agenda’. We appreciate his suggestion to ban cyberattacks against critical civilian infrastructure and de-escalating cyber-related risks and tensions as possible elements of a new peace agenda.

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh is committed to promote a global culture of safe and secured ICT environment. We support the UN's role in developing rules, norms, and principles of responsible State behavior in cyberspace. Bangladesh considers the OEWG as an important mechanism for inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder consultations on the security of and in the use of ICT. In this regard, we welcome the consensus reports of the previous OEWG, as the first inclusive mechanism, in the field of ICTs in the context of international security. We also take note of the report of sixth GGE.

While we look forward to the OEWG for a consensus-based approach to ensure peaceful cyberspace, let me highlight some specific points in this regard:

First: The consensus adoption of UNGA resolution A/ 76/19 titled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security” creates a positive momentum within the UN around cyber peace and security discourse. With this momentum, the Member States must demonstrate strong political resolve to the work of the OEWG with a view to creating a secure, safe, peaceful, inclusive and accessible ICT for our future generations.

Second: The cyberspace must be considered as a global public good that should benefit everyone, everywhere without any discrimination. In the absence of a globally accepted
norms, the principles of the UN Charter and relevant international laws should apply to the cyberspace without any reservation.

**Third:** No single government can manage its ICT security environment on its own. Our only hope for a free, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment is through multilateralism. In the work of the OEWG, an inclusive and transparent negotiation with participation of all Member States must be ensured. States must work together to overcome trust deficits by investing more on Confidence Building Measures (CBM). *In this regard, there should be regular, institutional dialogue with the broad participation of States under the auspices of UN.*

**Fourth:** International cooperation in capacity building for security of and in the use of ICT must be given priority. Development partners should consider specific supports to technologically less advanced countries in the areas of defending cyber-attacks, creating awareness, and developing reliable early-warning systems through information sharing across Governments and major Tech firms.

**Fifth:** We reiterate the importance of making sure that any international legal framework to address issues related to the use of ICTs are universal, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. We must preserve peaceful, people-centered, and development-oriented focus of ICT so that it can be used as a positive force in achieving sustainable development goals.

**Finally:** Mr. Chair, let me reassure you that my delegation will continue to engage constructively towards a successful and fruitful OEWG process ahead.

I thank you.