

17 December 2021

Excellency,

I have the honour of addressing you in my capacity as Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021-2025 (OEWG), established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 75/240 adopted on 31 December 2020.

The first substantive session of the OEWG successfully concluded its work today, Friday, 17 December 2021. As I indicated in my closing remarks, we had a very fruitful general exchange of views under Agenda Item 4 and constructive and substantive discussions on the various topics under Agenda Item 5. Once again, I thank all delegations for their active participation and thoughtful contributions. Many delegations made concrete proposals that I will study carefully as we prepare for the second substantive session, to be held from 28 March to 1 April 2022 in New York.

You will recall that under Agenda Item 3 “Organisation of Work”, we continued the discussion on the pending issue of modalities for stakeholder participation in the work of the OEWG. As I updated the OEWG this morning, I have engaged in intense informal consultations with all interested delegations throughout the week to try and find a consensus solution. On the basis of these informal consultations, I sent a letter to all Member States on Wednesday, 15 December 2021, to convey my revised proposal on modalities for stakeholder participation.

While we made some progress this week, especially in understanding each other’s positions better, we were not able to adopt a consensus decision on modalities for stakeholder participation at the first substantive session. It is my assessment that some additional time is needed to reach consensus on this important issue. In the meantime, my revised proposal remains on the table and, in my view, offers a clear pathway to a consensus solution. Accordingly, I urge all Member States to carefully reflect on my revised proposal.

It was clear to me during the discussions, both formal and informal, that all Member States attach importance to engaging with stakeholders in the OEWG process. Also, all Member States recognise the need to adopt the modalities in time to enable stakeholders to engage meaningfully in the second substantive session of the OEWG from 28 March to 1 April 2022.

Given the importance of this issue, I intend to adhere to the timeline below for the adoption of a decision on modalities for stakeholder participation ahead of the second substantive session:

- **Between now and mid-January 2022:** I will continue informal intersessional consultations with all interested delegations.
- **13 January 2022:** I will convene an informal, open-ended virtual meeting on the morning of 13 January 2022 (New York time, further details to be transmitted in due course).
- **18 January 2022:** I will circulate to all Member States a Chair's proposal that will be placed under a silence procedure for a week.
- **25 January 2022:** Expiration of the silence procedure. If silence passes, I will work with the UNODA on the process of stakeholder accreditation. If silence is broken, we will have very limited time to try again to reach consensus.

I hope that the spirit of good will and constructive engagement that we have seen this past week will continue to guide us in our future substantive sessions. I reiterate my commitment to an open and transparent process, and my door is always open to any delegation that wishes to meet with me on any issue.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Burhan Gafoor  
Chair  
Open-Ended Working Group on  
security of and in the use of  
information and communications  
technologies 2021-2025

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations  
New York