Distinguished delegates, I would like to share some concluding reflections from the podium. I do not want to summarise what has been a very rich, substantive, and I would venture to say, productive and meaningful week for all of us here.

Firstly, my overall assessment is that we have had a very productive and substantive session. We succeeded in addressing all of the items on the agenda including all items in Agenda Item 5. The discussion on Agenda Item 5 indicates quite clearly that we have made a good start on substantive issues, and that there is a lot of political commitment to begin and continue the substantive work of this working group.

Second, there has been a lot of interest and participation in this working group. I am very gratified by that. As our colleague from Australia mentioned, over the last week, we have heard more than 200 statements from more than 80 delegations on the various sub-items in Agenda Item 5. Furthermore, more than 80 of those statements were delivered by female representatives. I thank very much Australia and Mexico’s leadership in supporting the Women in Cyber Fellows. I also thank all the sponsoring countries for this initiative. I think this week has been a good week from the gender dimension.

Third, I would say that the tone of the discussion throughout the week has been constructive. It has been a little tense sometimes, but it has been fundamentally constructive and positive. My sense is that there has been and there continues to be a willingness to engage on details – not simply repeating statements from the last Open Ended Working Group (OEWG), but to instead go into an additional level of detail. I was struck by how thoughtful and detailed the statements have been prepared. It is quite clear from the very specific ideas and concrete proposals put forward that delegations and officials in capital have given a lot of thought to this process. This high level of interest shows the importance of the issues that we are dealing with in the OEWG. For me this week has clearly shown all of us that there is a need for a process like the OEWG. The OEWG is not only useful and relevant but necessary and critical in building understanding and trust as well as in strengthening international cooperation on this very important issue.
Fourth, I mentioned at the beginning of the week that the OEWG is itself a Confidence-Building Measure (CBM). Beyond listening to each other in the formal meetings, I know that delegations have been reaching out and talking to each other. This is very good, and very much needed. Of course, talking to each other does not mean we will agree with each other all the time. Nonetheless, this dialogue and understanding gives me hope that we will continue the positive momentum that we have started at this first OEWG. I hope that all delegations will see the value of this working group as a confidence and trust building exercise as we continue to listen to each other and work with each other.

The fifth observation or reflection I would like to share is that the very high level of interest comes with an attendant high level of expectation in terms of what the working group can deliver in terms of outcomes and results. This week I have heard many concrete and useful suggestions. This has convinced me that there is a lot of productive work ahead of us. Many ideas have been put forward, including (a) many references to how we can further strengthen the national Points of Contact (POC) network, (b) Table-Top Exercises (TTX) for POCs, (c) the idea of a UN Cyber Fellowship Programme, (d) further strengthening the UNIDIR cyber policy portal, (e) looking at new norms and clarifying existing norms. This shows that there has been a lot of thought and reflection since the work of the last OEWG. But this also shows that members have very high expectations in terms of results. I am confident that given the commitment and the political will that I sense, we can show some early results in the OEWG. We can demonstrate that we can produce outcomes, sooner rather than later. As I said at the beginning of this week, if we do not deliver early results, we will rapidly lose the participation and engagement of many delegations who are looking to this process for results.

My sixth point relates to stakeholders. I have already made my views very clear this morning and I am very encouraged by all that I have heard. I know that all delegations are also reflecting on this very important issue. I have had intensive consultations throughout the week and I know that in a process that involves 193 countries it is normal that we do not have a consensus instantaneously. That is what the UN is about, and that is what multilateralism is about. In order to go far, we need to go together, and that sometimes takes time. But I am confident and cautiously optimistic that a consensus solution is possible.

My seventh and last point is that this week may have felt like a long journey. It certainly has for me. But we have only taken the first step in a long journey. There is a Chinese saying that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step. It has been in my view a meaningful step and a fairly substantive one. I said on Monday that this is a five-year process, and it is therefore important to adopt a longer-term perspective of our work in this process. To put it differently,
the OEWG is not a sprint, but a marathon. And in a marathon, what is important is not how fast you run the first mile, but how strong you finish the last mile. If this point does not resonate with you, do sign up for a marathon. This week I think we ran a good first mile. But we have many more miles to go. To go far, we need to go together. We need to run this marathon together so that we finish strong and in a very meaningful and substantive way, not only for our own countries but also for so many people around the world and our own citizens.

9 With those comments, I would like to conclude the session by thanking all of you, especially those of you who have travelled from afar. I will go through all the statements that I have heard, as well all the statements that have been uploaded on the eStatements portal. I will already start preparing for and thinking about the second substantive session, particularly in terms of how we can structure and organise our work. I will also circulate the logistical arrangements as soon as possible, possibly about a month before the second substantive session.

10 Before I end, on behalf of all in my team, I thank you all for the support that you have given the Chair. Your support, help and guidance will continue to be needed. I wish all of you a very happy holiday season. Merry Christmas to those who celebrate, and a Happy New Year to all. I look forward to our continuous engagement and to seeing you all at our next substantive session. Have a safe journey home. The meeting is adjourned. I thank you.