**IL – UK statement**

Chair, in adopting by consensus the report of the OEWG all Member States reaffirmed that international law, and in particular the Charter of the United Nations, is applicable and essential to maintaining peace and stability and promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment.

From here the departure point for our discussions must be elaborating how existing international law applies to State activity in cyberspace, in order to build a deeper, clearer and more practical understanding.

In May this year fifteen States participating the Group of Governmental Experts process took the step of putting forward their national views on how international law applies to state activity in cyberspace to be published as part of an annex to our consensus report.

The UK published our own national statement through this process. Other States took the opportunity to build on their participation in the 2019-2021 Open Ended Working Group to publish their own positions.

We welcome all these statements and thank those States both for furthering the discussion on how international law applies in this context, but also for actively sharing their views to enhance transparency, predictability and stability as the key to strengthening international peace and security in cyberspace.

As we heard in the OEWG last year, other States are still developing their own positions on this issue. We must ensure that these and future publications contributing to the development of this debate are readily accessible to those States as they develop their thinking.

To realise our commitment to promoting the important work of encouraging all States to develop and publish their national positions, we are pleased to announce that the UK and close partners France, Italy, Germany, the US, Canada and Japan will support a package of development for UNIDIR’s Policy Portal, increasing inclusivity and transparency and enabling it to act as a repository for national positions on the application of International Law to state behaviour in cyberspace.

This support will migrate the Portal to a more advanced Content Management System, build basic content search functionality and the development of a searchable database, and allow for translation of both the portal’s interface and content into other UN official languages.

This will foster transparency, confidence- and capacity-building for all through ensuring that the Portal remains widely recognised as the primary digital platform for sharing information on the national policies and laws regarding Cybersecurity.

We will continue to welcome the sharing of national views on this crucial issue as the most practical way to build consensus on how international law applies to State activities in cyberspace. In this regard we encourage States to action the recommendation from para 50 of the consensus OEWG report that ‘States voluntarily engage in transparency measures by sharing relevant information and lessons in their chosen format and fora, as appropriate, including through the Cyber Policy Portal of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research’. But we recognise that some States are not yet in a position to develop and share such positions. Generating one requires careful consideration of a States wide-ranging interests, from economic to security, from legal to policy, from human to technical. We note that para 39 of the GGE report recommends that ‘States in a position to do so continue to support, in a
neutral and objective manner, additional efforts to build capacity, ..., in the areas of international law, national legislation and policy'.

Alongside supporting States in developing human capacity to participate in these conversations – as the UK does through the Women In Cyber Fellowship - we recognise the importance of supporting States to improve their understandings of the key differences of opinion in this area.

In this regard the OEWG can action paragraph 39 of the OEWG report and continue discussions of specific rules and principles of international law and how they apply in this context in order to raise awareness of and support the development of national positions.

Issues of particular importance to the UK include building upon the work of the UNGGE and developing a deeper understanding between States on how international humanitarian law and international human rights law apply to State activities in the cyber domain.