Statement by Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran To the Second Substantive Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of information and telecommunications technologies

New York, 28 March – 1 April 2022

Program of Work

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Chair,
At the outset, I would like to welcome you on your return to the helm of this global, democratic, and inclusive process focused on security and in the use of information and telecommunications technologies.
My country has been supporting this process with the hope that a professional and not-politicized approach would lead us to safe and secure cyberspace.

However, it is regretful to see that this august body, for the time being, is getting distracted from meeting its real mandate. We agree with your guidance and view to focus only on the assigned job to this OEWG and also your call to all delegations to do so aiming at reaching a balanced solution on substantial issues through negotiations and accommodating views of the whole membership.
Concerning the question on the program of work, we have already raised some observations on that, especially about the suggested meeting with the stakeholders on 31st of March. While the modalities for the participation of the stakeholders have not been finalized and in this case, it is the practice that the previous modalities should be in place, we do not object to the proposed meeting, with the understanding that this will not set a precedent for future. As a principled position, we value the interaction with the stakeholders on an informal basis and have already expressed our support for the Indian proposal to continue the practice. We hope that this period will allow all delegations to have a realistic assessment of the situation rather than speculations under a politicized perspective. We are confident that applying this approach will be satisfactory to all.

Having said that, it is a regret to learn that the Host Country did not issue visas for the capital delegates of some member states including mine. It is obvious that this goes against the clear obligations of the Host Country and also the UN principle of the equal footing of the member states as well as the required inclusivity of this process. Mr. Chair, we appreciate your efforts to follow up on the visa issue and urge the Host country to honor its legal obligations and issue visas in a prompt manner and without any politicized approach. Inclusivity should be realized especially on this matter as a priority because this process is state-driven. In addition, it is not acceptable to take the process hostage of inconsistent and politicized requests either about the program of work or the participation of the stakeholders.
Also, concerning the idea of convening the current substantive session as informal, we would like to highlight that this suggestion definitely can undermine the status of the process and is in clear contrast with the program and budget allocated to this process. We have not gathered here to spend the UN resources on an informal business. Furthermore, it will have implications on the annual report of the Group that should be discussed and prepared in the next substantive session per your guidance. Also broadcasting the discussions on the UN webtv will not compensate the required efficiency of the delegations who have faced the unacceptable issue of visa by the Host Country.

My delegation is ready to play its constructive role and expects to start the substantial work of the OEWG formally and as soon as possible.