Open-Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021-2025 (OEWG)
Second substantive session 28 March – 1 April 2022

“National intervention under agenda item 3: Organization of Work”

Statement by
Kingdom of the Netherlands

NEW YORK, 28 March 2022
Dear Chair,

Distinguished colleagues,

1. At the outset, Chair, allow me to express my appreciation for the way you have guided our discussions on the multi-stakeholder question as well as our substantive deliberations. Please be assured of my delegation’s full support.

2. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Izumi Nakamitsu for sharing her reflections.

Chair,

3. Before I address the organization of work, I would like to make a few remarks on the situation in Ukraine.

4. In this regard, I align myself with the statement delivered by the European Union, and will make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

5. Our shared commitment to the **Charter of the United Nations** has been one of the foundational principles of our discussions on the use of ICTs in the context of international security.

6. The Charter is the backbone of the international rules-based order.

7. It is also very dear to my country. It was signed following two world wars that inflicted unthinkable harm to communities across the world. Harm that did not spare my country.

8. The duty to strengthen the international legal order is enshrined in my country’s constitution.

Chair,

9. While we meet today at UN Headquarters, the **Russian Federation continues to conduct its illegal and unwarranted invasion of Ukraine**; a flagrant violation of the UN Charter.

10. The Netherlands condemns this in the strongest possible terms and stands in solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

11. We are strongly encouraged by the signs of solidarity with Ukraine and support for the international rules-based order coming from so many parts of the world. This was also reflected by the overwhelming majority with which the General Assembly adopted the **resolution titled “Aggression against Ukraine”** at its 11th emergency special session.

Chair,

12. Reports of the use of cyber operations against Ukraine are piling up. Reports of operations aimed at damaging critical infrastructure, disrupting essential services and threatening the safety and wellbeing of Ukrainian citizens.

13. These actions form an integral part of efforts to **undermine the territorial integrity** and political dependence of Ukraine and are not in conformity with the framework for responsible State behavior in cyberspace we all signed up to.

14. And this threat is not limited to Ukraine: it concerns us all. In 2017, **NotPetya** – a crippling malware attack targeting Ukraine – caused unprecedented spill-over effects on hospitals,
ports and supply chains around the world – amounting to an estimated 10 billion US dollars in damages.

15. Currently, we do not know what is yet to come. The threat of further damage and possible spill-over effects looms large.

16. This, Chair, places the crisis in Ukraine squarely within our mandate.

Chair,

17. All of us in this room, as representatives of our countries, carry part of the shared responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

18. That includes the crisis in Ukraine, but there are many other conflicts causing severe human suffering in many different parts of the world.

19. The Netherlands, for its part, remains fully committed to multilateralism, diplomacy and the rules-based international order.

20. In our interventions in the coming days, you can expect that we will reflect on how the war in Ukraine relates to the normative framework for responsible State behavior in cyberspace. And you will hear constructive proposals from our side.

Now, allow me to turn to the organization of work.

21. Over the past months, many States expressed a wish for this process to engage with the multi-stakeholder community in a meaningful way.

22. This approach features prominently in the Secretary-General’s “Our Common Agenda.”

23. To be brief, I would like to echo all that has been said on the importance of involving stakeholders in our discussions.

24. Various proposals have been put on the table, and we thank all delegations who have engaged on them constructively.

25. However, despite our continued willingness to compromise, we have not seen any signs of meaningful reciprocity.

Chair,

26. The Netherlands is not in a position to further compromise on our values of inclusive and constructive multilateralism. While we are grateful to India for its proposal, we cannot accept reverting to the modalities of the previous OEWG at this time.

27. Since we have not yet been able to reach consensus on the organization of work due to such a crucial issue, we consider it appropriate to continue to address the substantive agenda items in informal mode until the modalities have been resolved.