German Statement at the March OEWG, Agenda Item 5f
(Confidence Building Measures)

Honorable Chair,

Germany is fully aligned with the statement of the EU and wishes to add the following points in a national capacity.

In cyberspace, the potential deniability, potency and low cost of malicious cyber activities underline the need for CBMs which are specifically tailored to the needs of cyber contexts.

Within the UN GGEs and the previous OEWG, substantial progress has been made over the years to work out CBMs for Cyber Space. It is the conviction of Germany and many other states that further work should be invested to enhance the operationalization of CBMs.

Therefore – as already mentioned by Canada – Germany is working with partners in an open cross-regional group to advance cyber confidence building measures in the OEWG in order to further elaborate cyber CBMs for implementation by UN member states in a voluntary, non-binding manner.

Germany believes that CBMs to be put into action at the UN level can cover a wide range of thematic aspects such as operationalizing a Points of Contacts Network, Sharing of information and best-practices and holding cyber exercises – partners may expand on this further.

A dedicated CBM should be implemented to cover cooperation with the private sector as private IT companies and industry associations can contribute to confidence building via sharing of information on current threats, offering technical analysis and improving standards of training. Germany welcomes India’s recommendations to form public private partnerships.

Germany looks forward to elaborating these ideas further in the OEWG and – in preparation for this – will further substantiate ideas intersessionally within the open cross-regional group to advance cyber
confidence building that was formed. Being open and informal, this working group welcomes any other states wishing to take CBMs to an operational level.

Germany would like to echo some of the remarks made by the US on the importance of identifying the right recurring venues, organizational set-up and incentives to assist UN member states with the implementation of CBMs. These very practical questions should be considered by this group as we deepen our discussion under this agenda item. UNIDIR could play a facilitating role here as suggested by the Republic of Korea and Egypt.

Finally a question to address what may be on the minds of many delegations: is this the right moment in time to consider confidence building measures at the UN level?

An infinite amount of trust has been destroyed over the past weeks by the war on Germany’s home continent, Europe. This very grave course of conflict has reinforced Germany’s conviction that advancing confidence building measures as part of the work of this group is of high relevance and should be further prioritized in view of allowing the OEWG to deliver results with a tangible impact on cyber-stability.