Australia’s comments on Rev.1 of the first annual progress report of the OEWG on security of and in the use of ICTs 2021-2025 – 27 July 2022

These comments build upon Australia’s comments on the zero draft and Australia’s text proposals made 25 July on the introduction, threats and norms chapters.

D. International law

9. Australia supports the proposal by the Netherlands to include reaffirmation of the consensus that international law, in particular the UN Charter, applies drawn from consensus language [2021 OEWG para 34; 2021 GGE para 69].

9(a) Australia supports the proposal by the Netherlands to amend this paragraph with additional text and reordering of text.

Australia supports the proposal by Switzerland, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sweden, to amend the reference to international humanitarian law in this paragraph to be broader than just its principles.

Australia supports the proposal by the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, EU, Italy, Finland, Latvia, Denmark and Mexico to reinsert reference to the International Committee of the Red Cross in the list of expert briefings in this paragraph. In the alternative, and in the spirit of compromise, Australia could also accept the proposal by Costa Rica, Italy, Estonia and Brazil to include ‘entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the work of the General Assembly’ in the list of appropriate expert briefings.

9(b) Australia aligns with Costa Rica, Italy, Ireland and Canada on the value of the retaining reference to the UNIDIR cyber policy portal in this paragraph.

9(c) Australia strongly supports the proposal made by both China and the US to delete the second sentence of this paragraph.

E. Confidence building measures

Australia supports the proposal from Mexico to make reference to the significant number of recommended measures to increase interstate cooperation, transparency, predictability and stability set out in the reports of the GGEs and 2021 OEWG

10(a) – (e) and Recommendations:
Support joint proposal Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Israel, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, and Singapore on amendments to this chapter.

F. Capacity building

11 (a) Australia supports the proposal made by the Pacific Island Forum Member States to amend this para:
The OEWG could encourage the mainstreaming of the principles of ICT capacity-building as adopted in the 2021 OEWG report as well as better integrate ICT capacity-building efforts into the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The Group recognized the different situations, capacities and priorities of States and regions, but also that States have both individual and shared responsibilities in the ICT domain. States concluded that threats may be experienced differently by States according to their levels of digitalisation, capacity, ICT security and resilience, infrastructure and Development

11(b) Australia proposes textual amendments:
OEWG could promote better understanding of the needs of developing States with the aim of
narrowing the digital divide, including the gender digital divide [2021 OEWG report para 12] for
instance through encouraging participation in the discussion of the development and use of
questionnaires; the National Survey of Implementation; the Cybersecurity Capacity Maturity Model;
technical studies; and needs assessment models. Such efforts could also assist in matching needs with
resources and lead to more effective coordination in capacity-building.

11(c) Australia proposes textual amendments:
The OEWG could discuss measures that might-assist States’ to strengthen—and play a role in furthering
capacity-building coordination, and assist States, in particular developing States, to have timely
information and access to such programmes, including by encouraging coordination between online
portals, consolidating and compiling a calendar of capacity-building programmes and developing a
list of regional and sub-regional centres of excellence on security in the use of ICTs to ensure that
States, in particular developing States, have timely information and access to such programmes.

11(d) Australia proposes textual amendments:
States could consider establishing a permanent mechanism for In exchanging views and ideas related
to capacity-building in security of ICTs, States could while taking into account in collaboration and
coordination with other existing initiatives. It was proposed that such a mechanism could be
established within the UN.

11(f) Australia proposes textual amendments:
States could continue to raise awareness of the gender dimensions of ICT security and promote gender
sensitive—integrate gender equality in policy, projects, and capacity building efforts at the policy level
as well as in the selection and operationalisation of projects.

Recommendations:
Australia supports the UK proposal to amend Rec 2 and delete Rec 4.

G. Regular institutional dialogue

12(a) Australia proposes textual amendments:
The OEWG could play a role in raising awareness, building trust and deepening understanding in areas
where no common understanding has yet emerged. Furthermore, each OEWG session should build incrementally on the previous one. States underlined the centrality of the OEWG as the
negotiation mechanism within the United Nations on the security of and in the use of ICTs in the
case of international peace and security. States recalled that the OEWG represents a significant
milestone in international cooperation towards an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT
environment. [2021 OEWG para 7]. The United Nations should continue to play a leading role on
promoting dialogue on the use of ICTs by states [2021 OEWG para 8].

12(b) Australia supports France’s proposed amendments to this paragraph.

Recommendations:
Australia supports France’s proposed amendments to Rec 2.
A. Introduction; B. Threats; C. Norms
Responding to proposals made by States on the introduction, threats and norms chapters of the annual progress report Rev 1, Australia supports:
- The joint proposal by a group of states to add additional text to 7(a) (Australia, Botswana, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Indonesia, Malaysia, Netherlands, UK)
- Switzerland’s proposal to amend paragraphs 7(a) and 7(d)
- India’s proposal to amend paragraph 7(b)(iii), and 7(b)(ix); either the UK or India’s proposal to amend paragraph 7(b)(v); South Africa’s proposal to amend 7(b)(iv)– noting Australia’s proposal to include the proposals listed in 7(b), where they find consensus, under their respective relevant section of the report [set out in Australia’s text proposals made 25 July.
- Finland, the Netherlands and others’ proposal to include a reaffirmation of the norms in para 8 chapeau
- South Africa’s amendment to para 8(d)