21 July 2022

Remarks by the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), S Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) to the UN OEWG ICTs 2021-2025 Informal dialogue with stakeholders- Thurs, 21 July, 9am-12pm EST [Hybrid]

1. We thank the Chair for convening this very important meeting and for his efforts in trying to include non-government stakeholders in the formal processes of the OEWG as well as continuing the conversation informally to include those who were not accredited for this session.

2. CENS is an independent policy research think tank from Singapore, based at the RSIS graduate school, focused on national security issues. We would like to respond to the first set of questions posed by the chair on capacity building.

3. CENS has provided trainers for the UNSCP (UN Singapore Cyber Program) capacity building programme for ASEAN, and other initiatives for capacity building in ASEAN. We also contributed content to the UN Cyber Diplomacy online course which is available to all interested States and stakeholders.

4. We want to share three observations from our experience conducting interactive sessions for delegates from ASEAN nations on, among other things, the meaning of the Norms, and the development of the Norms Implementation Checklist, which we have expanded to other interested States:

   a. Participants are very eager to learn. Every state is at different level of cyber maturity, but over time, they have taken what they have learned, back to their respective states, and when they return in the following years, are able to report progress. This is to encourage all stakeholders who are supportive of capacity building to continue to do so. It is also very beneficial for state participants to share openly their experiences and challenges.

   b. A multi-stakeholder approach to capacity building, with academia providing frameworks, industry providing technical expertise, and state participants frankly sharing their experiences and challenges, have also been instrumental in delivering value and holistic capacity to participants. This is much better than a siloed approach where the proposed academic or policy frameworks are not...
technically feasible or technical proposals are blind to public and private interests.

c. We share your concerns over a program for sustained and substantive capacity building that is inclusive and builds confidence among states. A UN-based permanent mechanism may assuage fears that cyber capacity building measures are being politicised and inaccessible to only those who are invited.

5. We encourage states to continue working with stakeholders, and stakeholders to continue engaging with states, on capacity building and other issues relating to ICT security, regardless of whether the stakeholders are accredited or not. It is in the interest of the global community that we find ways to cooperate even when it is inconvenient to do so and look forward for ways to deepen capacity building measures to ensure security and stability in the use of ICT.

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