Mr. Chair,

Let me start my statement by thanking you and your team for sharing the Rev2 document. India appreciates the Chair for his sincere and timely efforts in drafting the latest document and trying to build consensus.

Mr. Chair,

As you mentioned yesterday, the consensus around the annual progress report is built from bottom top. Such consensus derives from the diverse views of the Member States. India appreciates the Chair’s efforts in bridging the ‘views divide’ we have in the OEWG. After reviewing the latest draft, India understands that we need to start on consolidated priorities on all six-pillars of the OEWG mandate that are of importance to all member States with varying levels of interest.

I take this opportunity to share our views on the latest draft that are of importance not just to India but to all the small and developing countries who have been taking an active part in the OEWG process and have been investing their limited resources in this process.

Mr. Chair,

In Rev1 of the draft annual progress report, there was point (d) that reads as “States could consider establishing a permanent mechanism for exchanging views and ideas related to capacity building in ICTs in collaboration and coordination with other existing initiatives.” It is in the larger interests of the small and developing countries that such a permanent mechanism be established under the United Nations to focus on capacity building measures and prepare an action-oriented programme for the countries to develop their ICT capabilities that help positively in economic and social development of the member States.

The revised Point (d) in the latest draft report, omits this important recommendation of the Member States who expressed such proposal in the last two substantive sessions and in the current one. Even point C in its latest form does not address this need of the small and developing countries. It reads as “The OEWG could promote better understanding of the needs of developing States with the aim of narrowing the digital divide through tailored capacity building efforts, so as to work towards ensuring that all States have the necessary capacity to observe and implement the initial framework for responsible State behaviour in the use of ICTs”.
Mr. Chair,

I would like to stress here that the capacity building efforts to bridge the digital divide are completely different from the capacity building needs to observe and implement the initial framework for responsible State behaviour in the use of ICTs.” There is a disconnect between bridging digital divide and implementation of the normative framework. We request reinsertion of the sentence “States could consider establishing a permanent mechanism”. We suggest the same with respect to point 2 in the recommendations segment. Point (b) may read as “a permanent mechanism, potentially within the UN, and in collaboration and coordination with other existing initiatives…”

Mr. Chair,

Under the CBM section, as mentioned by South Africa, we welcome the retention of the PoCs directory wording in the latest draft and we see merit for the countries in sharing such PoCs, especially in times of emergencies.

India will continue to engage constructively and hope for a consensus report tomorrow.

Thank you.