Thank you Chair.

Finland fully aligns itself with the statements by the European Union and the statement by Czech Republic on stakeholder participation delivered yesterday, and wishes to make few additional remarks in our national capacity.

To begin with, we welcome the revised draft report and view that it provides a good start for discussions on the first annual progress report of the OEWG.

With regard to threats, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has profoundly changed the security environment in Europe and thus, affects our discussions here in the Open-ended Working Group.

This invasion is a grave breach of international law and a violation of the UN Charter, and needs to be reflected in the section regarding the existing and potential threats landscape.

Regarding section C. on Rules, Norms and Principles of Responsible State Behavior:

Alike several delegations earlier, we attach great importance of the annual progress report clearly reaffirming the existing acquis on international law, as well as rules, norms and principles.

There should be no confusion about the repeated consensus support for the UN framework of responsible State behaviour. It is of utmost importance of not giving an impression that adhering to international legal obligations would be voluntary for States.

We therefore see that paragraph 8 in the draft report should contain a clear reference to the existing norms of responsible State behaviour, as agreed by all UN Member States. These should serve as a basis for further work and our discussions in the OEWG.

We are also firmly of the view that the key focus and priority of the current OEWG should be given to the furthering our common understanding on the concrete implementation of the already existing eleven norms of responsible State behavior.
11. We therefore support the proposal to merge the two recommendations (2 and 3) in order to combine providing norms guidance and exchanging best practices as regards their implementation with the view of enhancing common understanding.

12. In this vein, we welcome working papers by interested stakeholders, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, to facilitate more focused and in-depth exchange of views at the OEWG. These could prove instrumental in our common endeavor to advance effective implementation of rules, norms and principles envisaged.

13. We also welcome voluntary reporting on national implementation of rules, norms and principles of responsible State behavior as a useful tool in our efforts to enhance transparency and common understanding.

14. Regarding section D. on International Law:

15. My delegation is of the view that, also here, the acquis must serve as the starting point for the work of the Open-ended Working Group. Consequently, we do not see any legal gaps that would need to be filled with additional legally binding obligations. The key focus should be in further developing common understandings on how international law, including international humanitarian law, applies in the cyber context and in the use of ICTs. In this regards, we would like to express our support to the statement delivered by Switzerland earlier on behalf of a group of states.

16. Moreover, convening focused discussions on specific topics related to international law would serve well the purpose.

17. Such discussions are being facilitated by the efforts of many States that have shared voluntarily their national views and assessments on international law in the cyber context. My delegation takes this opportunity to encourage all remaining States to share their positions and practices.

18. On Capacity-Building:

19. The revised draft report contains several recommendations regarding capacity-building that provide good basis for further elaboration.

20. As stated in section F and the recommendation 2 of the draft report, we share the view that States need to engage in focused discussions in order to enhance coordination and integration of cyber capacity-building issues with larger development programmes and multi-donor trust funds.

21. It has become increasingly clear that a coordinated effort at the global level is needed to better ensure complementarity, sustainability and reduction of unnecessary duplications in cyber capacity-building efforts.

22. At the same time, however, we remain yet to be convinced of the added value of creating a permanent mechanism to this end. More systematic, coherent coordination within the existing avenues would suffice, in our view, to achieve the same effect. We need to avoid creating duplication, and instead, focus on strengthening
complementarity between existing processes and mechanisms, including international and regional level.

23. Many of the existing platforms within the United Nations system need to be better utilized to share national practices on capacity-building, to share lessons-learned and experiences of capacity-building support as well as to support the mobilization of resources and pairing of available resources with demand for capacity-building assistance.

24. In this regard, we see also great value in the Programme of Action serving as an action-oriented basis to advance coordination, sustainability and coherence in our capacity-building efforts.

25. There is a clear need for a further, broad-based, regular dialogue between relevant stakeholders in order to foster a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges related to global capacity building.

26. Against this backdrop, we are supportive of the recommendation to arrange to have regular, multi-stakeholder-based discussions as a part of the work programme of this working group for stimulating exchange of views on best practices and lessons-learnt on public-private partnerships in cyber realm.

27. Correspondingly, we see great merit in engaging in focused discussions on the gender dimensions of the use of ICTs and on the good practices on ways and means for incorporating gender dimension in the use of ICTs in the context of peace and security. For us, it also is of utmost importance to keep the references to narrowing gender digital divide and gender parity in paragraph 5.

28. In our view, a regular, broad-based interactive dialogues as part of agenda item could provide valuable insights that could serve to achieve the overarching goals of this working group.

29. I thank you Chair.