United Nations General Assembly

Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021-2025

Dedicated stakeholder session

Statement by the Paris Peace Forum

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- **First intervention: capacity-building**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, honorable delegates,

The Paris Peace Forum has been working closely with stakeholders across the ICT value chain and beyond the industry to foster better norms and efficient capacity-building measure to secure a stable cyberspace in the framework of the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace.

Since 2018, the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace has gathered a coalition of 1200 actors including 80 Governments, 700companies and 350 civil society organizations around 9 core principles to protect and promote a free, open, secure, and stable cyberspace.

As suggested by the Chair, we are happy to address the Open-ended Working Group on best practices and lessons learnt with regard to stakeholder involvement in capacity-building initiatives in the ICT security sphere, and more specifically on efficient stakeholder involvement in capacity-building initiatives. On this important matter and building on our experience, we would like to draw your attention on two general recommendations.

First of all, attention should be given to the clarity on the goals and the limits. No multistakeholder cooperation, especially related to capacity-building issues, can last without a precise definition from the outset of the scope of the cooperation and its intended outputs. This further entails the need to start the cooperation by lifting any possible uncertainty on the limits of each stakeholder's responsibility, especially when it comes to the distribution of State and corporate responsibility.

This recommendation echoes comments made by several delegations on the importance to stick by the mandate of the Open-ended Working Group in your work this week. Such a guideline, which is key to the success of diplomatic negotiations, is also key to the success of any stakeholder involvement in capacity-building initiatives.

Second, attention should be given to the persistence of the engagement with stakeholders. By persistence, I mean that stakeholders need to be involved at all steps of the cooperation in a regular and continuous manner, from the conception to the implementation phase. Without such comprehensive view and understanding of the larger process, stakeholders can't efficiently mobilize their resources and expertise, thus diminishing their capacity to deliver to the best of their ability.

This recommendation doesn't necessarily mean that stakeholders should be involved in every single discussion or step. Some capacity-building issues closely related to international security matters can especially entail matters or steps involving sovereign competence, thus requiring a strictly intergovernmental format. In such case, persistence means that States should maintain a channel of communication with the larger ecosystem and endeavor to provide them with sufficient information to efficiently support the larger process.

We are happy to elaborate on these recommendations with concrete examples of successful stakeholders' involvement in ICT-related issue at the request of any interested delegation.

Thank you.

- **Second intervention: implementation of the action-oriented proposals**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, honorable delegates,

We are happy to address the Open-Ended Working Group with concrete examples on how stakeholders can work with States to contribute to the action-oriented proposals made by States. I would also like to inform delegations that they can find a developed written contribution from the Paris Peace Forum with more detailed propositions related to their work on the website. I will here highlight three main dimensions for a fruitful contribution from stakeholders to the implementation of the action-oriented proposals.

First, Stakeholders can efficiently work with States by informing intergovernmental discussions held in the framework of the Open-Ended Working Group on securing ICTs.

Stakeholders can for instance efficiently contribute to identifying technical and cooperative measures to address existing and potential threats with regard to security in the use of ICTs as mentioned in §7(b) of the revised draft annual progress report, especially those mentioned in point ii, iii, iv, v, viii, ix and x.

Information exchanges on best practices and cooperation mentioned in §8(c) of the draft annual progress report could in the same way be applied to stakeholders by including them through dual-track approaches within intergovernmental channels, when relevant for international security.

Second, Stakeholders can efficiently contribute to international norm-setting discussions on securing ICTs while respecting States exclusive prerogative on the matter.

Should the Open-ended Working Group convene discussions on specific topics related to international law as mentioned in §9(a), the extended inclusion of stakeholders will for instance be especially relevant for discussions related to principles of international humanitarian law as for any discussion involving concrete impacts on individuals and non-state actors' rights and obligations.

In the same way, voluntary contributions by Sates on how international law is applied in the use of ICTs mentioned in §9(b) could also be requested from stakeholders. Although the development of international law remains the exclusive prerogative of States, such contributions could be regarded as subsidiary means to inform States' work in specifying the applicability of international law in cyberspace, building on existing practice in international law to accept non-state actors' contributions as subsidiary means for the determination of rules of law – as for instance enshrined in article 38 (1-d) of the statute of the International Court of Justice.

Finally, stakeholder's involvement could strongly contribute to developing better mutual awareness, trust, and thus efficient collaboration internationally.

Should the OEWG agree to establish a global, inter-governmental, points of contact directory on ICTs at the United Nations as mentioned in §10(a), additional steps could for instance be taken to extend such initiative to stakeholders when relevant to international security.

We remain at the disposal of the delegations to elaborate on these proposals.

Thank you.