

Aotearoa New Zealand is pleased to be able to join consensus in adopting the first Annual Report of the Open Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021-2025 (the OEWG). We express our gratitude and strong support for the Chair and his inclusive leadership of the process to date and reiterate our support for him as we take this work forward collectively.

We note the OEWG occurs during a time of unprecedented threats to the peace and security of cyberspace, including as cyber capabilities have been used for the first time to support armed conflict. Russian cyber attacks against Ukraine demonstrate a disregard for the rules-based international order and the framework for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace. In this context, we reiterate the importance of protecting and implementing the acqui developed through previous OEWG and GGE Reports.

We strongly align with the statement made by Fiji on behalf of Pacific Islands Forum members with regards to capacity building. Reflecting the importance of this to our region, we welcome the forecast detailed discussion on capacity building in the fourth and fifth sessions. We encourage consideration and alignment with existing capacity building coordination mechanisms in line with best practice and to reduce the compliance burden on all parties. We welcomed the briefings from regional organisations during the third session, which offered valuable insights into unique ways of working across regions.

Aotearoa New Zealand looks forward to a detailed discussion on the application of international law to cyberspace building on the extensive work to date in this area. We support selecting specific international law topics for discussion with a focus on identifying areas of consensus and common understandings to build on the consensus view that international law applies in cyberspace.

Finally, we recognise the valuable contribution made by the multistakeholder community in building peace and security in cyber space. The contribution of stakeholders during the first year of the OEWG, including during both the dedicated discussion and the many side events of the third session, was significant and demonstrated the many tangible benefits of their engagement. We trust that future sessions will build upon this engagement, including by allowing for the participation of additional stakeholders.

He waka eke noa!

*A Māori proverb which means we are all in this together – we rise together, fall together, work together, keep going together.*