

**Statement by the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
at the First Committee's Thematic Discussion on  
“other Disarmament Measures and International Security”**

**24 October 2016**

*In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful*

**Mr. Chairman,**

I associate myself with the statement by Indonesia on behalf of NAM.

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) provide immense opportunities and are crucial resources for the wealth and prosperity of societies. Therefore, every effort should be made to provide the opportunity for the broadest possible use of ICT by all nations. To achieve this objective, ensuring constant availability, reliability, integrity and security of information and building a safe and secure IT environment are crucial.

The sovereign right of all States in the field of ICT, which includes right to the development, acquisition, use, import and export of, and access to, ICT and related know-how, means and services without any restriction or discrimination should be fully respected.

To strengthen the security of ICT and to prevent the use of ICT and related means for illegal purposes requires that all appropriate infrastructural, legal and technical measures be taken at the national level.

Taking national measures are necessary but not enough. International cooperation is essential for ensuring the ICT security, owing to the complex nature and unique features of ICT and related means and rapid technological advances in this field as well as the increasing interconnection between the underlying networks of IT.

The General Assembly in resolution 70/237 stresses the need for promoting common understandings of the issue and challenges relevant to information security. We believe that such an understanding cannot be emerged and adequately promoted through the indefinite work of a GGE and repeatedly asking the written assessment of Member States about findings and recommendations of such GGE.

For that reason, in our view, the time is ripe now to engage all States in an open, inclusive and interactive debate, through elevating the discussions from an initial and exclusive setting of a GGE to a broad-based setting of an Open-Ended Working Group.

A OEWG provides the most effective mechanism for building common understandings of related concepts and notions, and how international law can apply to State behaviour and the use of ICTs by States. Such an OEWG enables us to build upon the work already done to date and to discuss issues related to the ICT security, the nature, scope and severity of threats to the ICT, and threats emanating from the ICT, and finding the ways and means to prevent those threats.

In the long run, the OEWG can be mandated to prepare the grounds for developing an international strategy or a programme of action containing the necessary measures by States. Such an instrument can be considered and adopted by an international conferences and reviewed every five years to ensure its continued relevance.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Islamic Republic of Iran underlines that, consideration of the issues related to the developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, regardless of its venue, should be carried out on the basis of the following principles and elements:

(a) As a general principle, international law is applicable and therefore should be applied to the use of ICT and related means by States. For that reason, in their use of these technologies and means, States must observe the purposes and principles of the UN and their obligations under its Charter, in particular settling international disputes by peaceful means, the prohibition of the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN, as well as the prohibition of intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States;

(b) Nothing shall affect the sovereign right of States in the field of ICT, including the development, acquisition, use, import and export of, and access to, information and telecommunications know-how, technologies and means as well as all related services, without restriction or discrimination. Accordingly, States should seriously refrain from adopting any measures to deny or restrict the transfer of advanced information and telecommunications know-how, technologies and means, as well as the provision of information and telecommunications services, to developing countries;

(c) Ensuring the ICT security at the national level is exclusively the responsibility of individual States. However, owing to the global nature of ICT, States should be encouraged to cooperate with each other in preventing the threats resulting from the malicious use of the ICT and related means;

(d) The right to freedom of expression should fully be respected. At the same time, this right, in no case, should be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the UN, national laws and the principles of protection of national security, public order, public health or morals and decency;

(e) States are responsible for their internationally wrongful activities using ICT and related means that is clearly attributable to them;

(f) Building a safe and secure ICT environment for the benefit of all nations should be the main guiding principle and, therefore, States should refrain, under all circumstances, from the use of ICT and related means for hostile, restrictive or other illegal purposes, including the development and use of information weapons; to undermine or destabilize political, economic or social systems of other States or to erode their cultural, moral, ethical or religious values; and the transboundary dissemination of information in contravention of international law, including the Constitution and regulations of the International Telecommunication Union, or national legislation of targeted countries;

(g) States should raise awareness, at the national and international levels, about the need to preserve and improve the ICT security through the responsible use of relevant technologies and means, aimed at developing an international common culture of the ICT security.

I would like to conclude that given the rapid changes in the ICT, we need to keep pace with its development through a continues process and progressive development of required norms.

Securing a conducive environment for the broadest possible use of ICT by all nations and preventing their use for illegal purposes is indeed an indispensable responsibility.

***I thank you Mr. Chairman.***