Remarks at the Launch of the Digital Peace Campaign

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His Excellency Mr. Jean-Yves Le Drian,
Mr. Smith,
Mr. Blinken,
Mr. Maurer,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here today at the launch of the Digital Peace Campaign led by Microsoft.

All of us realize that ICT technology has overwhelming benefits for humanity. But we are also increasingly aware of the risks posed by technology.

We have seen a rise in the frequency of malicious cyber incidents in recent years. Just as worrying, these incidents have become increasingly severe and destabilizing, and they have come in many forms, from disinformation to the disruption of computer networks. Such acts are contributing to a diminishing trust among States.

The challenges related to cybersecurity has become a top priority for Secretary-General Guterres. As you are all aware, he has established the High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation. He has also identified the promotion of the peaceful use of ICT technologies as a key area requiring urgent action in his comprehensive Agenda for Disarmament.

I would like to stress the importance of three things today in this environment of diminishing trust in the international community.

First, is the importance of multilateralism. Given the nature of the challenges in front of us, no single government will be able to find an effective solution. UN member states have been making efforts to identify key issues and to develop norms to ensure peaceful and stable cyberspace. The 11 norms of responsible State behavior agreed by the Group of Governmental Experts in 2015 and endorsed by the General Assembly by consensus in the same year, will provide good starting point for going forward with the further development of norms. I know that member states are engaged in consultations to establish a new GGE, and I am committed to work with governments to make further advances in this important work.

Second is the importance of multi-stakeholder approach. No one knows the "ins" and "outs" of cyber security issues better than industry actors and researchers who are confronted with them on a daily basis.

We therefore need to do much better collectively is in the area of public-private sector cooperation. While States have a primary responsibility for maintaining a secure and peaceful ICT environment, the private sector, as well as academia and civil society have a central role to play. Take for example, the important achievement of the Cybersecurity Tech Accord. The principles of the Accord and the 11 voluntary norms of the 2015 are mutually reinforcing, and can be seen as two sides of the same coin. In order to achieve a peaceful cyber space, we need both these dimensions.

<u>The third is the importance of urgency of our work together, and the need for creative, non-traditional and multi-faceted approaches in working together.</u> You will all agree that we cannot wait until a "Titanic moment" or major catastrophe to happen before taking actions. On the need to be more creative, you will also agree that there is no single action or solution to the complex challenges. We have to continue to work on international norm development, implementation of those norms, capacity building to equip governments with better cyber security capabilities, legislative frameworks and sound polities, perhaps achieving industry standardization, education and training of young scientists and engineers for responsible innovation and application of technologies, and so on. We are fully aware that a traditional international negotiation will not suffice in achieving security and stability in cyberspace.

I am therefore very heartened by the way Microsoft is taking the lead not only to engage other industry actors in formulating cybersecurity principles but also to reach out to States and to International Organizations, including the United Nations, to raise awareness of the challenges facing us and to encourage action towards digital peace. It is my hope that the Digital Peace Campaign will help to foster a more holistic approach to cybersecurity through genuine cooperation and collaboration. In the same vein, I am impressed by the Paris Roadmap for Trust and Security in Cyberspace. These efforts will no doubt greatly contribute to open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful cyberspace.

I end my remark by emphasizing that the United Nations is fully committed to do it's share, and I very much look forward to working very closely with you to that end. Thank you.