



**Security Council Arria-Formula meeting on
Cyber Stability, Conflict Prevention and Capacity Building**

Statement

by

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Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations**

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I would like to congratulate Estonia on its Presidency of the Security Council and thank the Mission, and the Permanent Missions of Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia and Kenya for this opportunity to discuss cybersecurity, conflict prevention and capacity building.

Mr President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement of the European Union delivered earlier this morning.

Estonia continues to show global leadership in this area, including by making cybersecurity the focus of this meeting during its Presidency. The meeting is timely, taking place as the Covid-19 pandemic highlights our reliance on technology to help reduce the spread of the virus, to remain in contact with distant loved-ones, to maintain our ability to work securely and our economies to function.

Recent months have shown us both the best of humanity and the worst; as healthcare workers on the frontline work selflessly to save lives, malicious actors have used the pandemic to engage in cyberattacks against medical facilities and health services, endangering lives. Others have used the web to exploit vulnerabilities and commit cybercrime, spread disinformation; sowing confusion, distrust and division.

Mr President,

The pandemic has again highlighted the need for states to work together to make our shared cyberspace safer and more secure. The United Nations remains the preeminent forum to address cyber issues which impact on all three pillars of the UN agenda: peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.

Malicious cyber activity erodes trust, destabilises and damages peace, and escalates the risk of conflict. The UN Charter in its entirety, international law (including international humanitarian law) and human rights law provide strong foundations to guide members in ensuring peace and stability in cyberspace.

Human behaviour, rather than the technology itself, remains the core problem. The General Assembly agreed by consensus that all states should be guided in their use of ICTs by the 2015 report of the UNGGE, which delineated eleven norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace.

Mr President,

To promote stability, and avoid the risk of conflict, Ireland has called at the UN OEWG on ICTs for guidance to all states on how these existing norms can be implemented and operationalised.

The UN's work on cyber greatly benefits from the confidence-building measures by regional organisations and multiple state and non-state initiatives including the Paris Call.

Mr President,

Looking beyond the current pandemic, we need to address the global digital divide and build cyber resilience, especially through capacity building, to achieve real and positive change ensuring that the benefits of cyber are shared fairly by all. Improved secure access to cyber will help transform the lives of people and communities worldwide and promote prosperity,

both contributing to and facilitating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including in area of gender.

Regional organisations, civil society, technical experts, academia, the private sector and others have demonstrated their strong willingness to support and work collaboratively with states to build a secure cyberspace for all, and Ireland again calls for a more formalised role for stakeholders at the UN on cyber issues.

Mr. President,

Ireland remains committed at home, through our recently published National Cybersecurity Strategy, and internationally, to promoting efforts to ensure that cyber does not support criminality, chaos and conflict, but rather delivers real benefits to all.

The norms, existing international law, capacity-building initiatives, confidence-building measures and engagement with regional organisations and stakeholders that I have spoken about briefly today are interlinked and form the key elements of the framework to promote responsible behaviour in cyberspace and sustain peace.

Ireland will do all that it can to ensure that states, facilitated by the UN, take the final necessary steps to promote a secure, free, open, and peaceful global cyberspace.

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