

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. EDGARS RINKĒVIČS**

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Arria-formula meeting of the Security Council on cyber stability,  
conflict prevention and capacity building

22 May 2020

Mr. President,

Let me extend my gratitude to hosts of this informal UN Security Council meeting for a timely discussion on cyber stability and conflict prevention.

As it has been recognised by the UN General Assembly resolutions, the existing and potential threats in the sphere of cyber security are among the most serious of the twenty-first century.

Under the lock-down of Covid-19 pandemic, the cyber space has suddenly become the primary habitat for every connected person, workspace, state and international organisation. Cyber space also has countless hidden vulnerabilities, which, when exploited maliciously by state actors or their proxies, can cause damage and potentially catastrophic results.

It is quite symbolic that our meeting on promotion of stability in cyberspace takes place virtually. It demonstrates that the multilateral dialogue itself relies upon safe and secure cyber environment. This reinforces the significance of more than a decade long efforts of the UN and its member states in promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment.

We need to continue to build upon the groundwork of principles agreed and shared by the UN General Assembly. In this context, Latvia welcomes the diligent work of Group of Governmental Experts<sup>1</sup> and the inclusivity of reinforcing Open Ended Working Group<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> GGE (Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security)

<sup>2</sup> OEWG (Open-ended working group)

Discussions within both groups offer an opportunity to strengthen common understanding and support for further implementation of norms, rules and principles as endorsed by General Assembly.

Now it is important to universally apply the commonly shared and accepted norms, basic principles and recommendations. This will foster preservation of cyberspace as a single, neutral, and un-fragmented network of networks where principles of universal human rights and freedoms apply.

Furthermore, productive implementation needs the engagement of a range of non-state actors like private sector, civil society and academia.

Since the last informal debate in Security Council on the topic in 2016, Latvia has paid particular attention to strengthening domestic resilience in the cyber domain. The Latvian Government has boosted digital skills for all groups of population, including on disinformation. We have also successfully worked to protect critical infrastructure from malign interference, including election infrastructure, as well as engaged in bilateral capacity building activities in around ten countries.

Finally, I would like to re-emphasize that states guided by international law bear the primary responsibility for orderly cyberspace. Active and good-will cooperation at the UN, regional organisations or through bilateral collaboration among countries is necessary in order to foster stability in cyberspace.