

Statement by H.E. Mr. Yutaka Arima, Ambassador in charge of Cyber Policy,

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

**At the Open-Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and
communications technologies 2021-2025**

14 December 2021

I would like to begin by congratulating Ambassador and Permanent Representative Burhan Gafoor for his election as Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group. Japan looks forward to working closely with the Chair for the success of the Working Group. I would also like to thank the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs for their efforts in convening this session, and in particular High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, H.E. Ambassador Jurg Lauber and H.E. Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota for their comprehensive and constructive opening statement. Japan has contributed to the work of the OEWG and GGE that culminated in the two reports this spring and looks forward to working with other delegations in this OEWG to achieve the common goal of realizing a free, fair and secure cyberspace.

Cyberspace has become an indispensable economic and social infrastructure for all activities, or a "public space" for all citizens to participate in. This economic and societal transformation has also made us vulnerable to cyberattacks which pose a major security risk, as the world recently observed in the Colonial Pipeline case this May or the Microsoft Exchange case earlier this year. From a national security standpoint, we are particularly concerned about malicious cyber activities emanating from other States, whether supported by these States or not, damaging critical infrastructures.

It is difficult for any one country to respond to these cybersecurity threats alone. Cooperation and collaboration with our ally and like-minded countries are paramount to protect and enhance free, open and secure cyberspace.

On the issue of how international law applies to the use of ICTs by States, Japan's position is clear: existing international law applies in cyberspace. We also strongly support the development of voluntary norms of responsible state behavior.

As an action-oriented process, it is important for the OEWG to achieve concrete results based on the work so far including the GGE and OEWG reports. We should utilize the annual reports to memorialize the achievements of each year's discussion. Any agreements reached in the discussions should be included in the annual report. Japan also believes the annual report could be used to compile the information related to ICT policies of member states that are shared within the OEWG. Such information could include how the 11 norms of the GGE report is reflected in domestic measures and capacity building and confidence building measures of each member state. By continuing these efforts for five years, it will be possible to understand the progress of each country's efforts, which in of itself will be a comprehensive confidence building measure.

At the OEWG, as an urgent matter, we must express our strong will to resolutely denounce and oppose cyberattacks by ransomware. Some countries have suffered damage to their critical infrastructures with ransomware attacks. In addition to taking technical measures, it is important to share the efforts including best practices of each country to counter ransomware and send a clear message that the international community is against ransomware.

In the OEWG of 2019-2021, the multi-stakeholder approach that included not only State actors but also NGOs and academia enriched the discussions. This OEWG of 2021-2025 should take the

same multi-stakeholder approach. One good example of effective implementation of a multi-stakeholder approach in the last OEWG was "Let's talk cyber" in December 2020. This was an online event to provide an opportunity for non-state stakeholders to talk about the agenda of the OEWG.

We believe that the accumulation of past discussions including past GGEs and the last OEWG have contributed to the stability and security of cyberspace, and will provide the indispensable basis for discussions in this OEWG. Japan hopes that our work here will bear positive fruit, consistent with the mandate of UN Resolution 75/240. Japan supports a consensus approach in the work of the OEWG. We count on the leadership of the Chair to encourage all the participants to be engaged in the discussions, and to take into account all the views and opinions expressed in the meetings in the annual and final reports. An inclusive approach will produce the best results. Please rest assured that Japan will actively participate in the discussion and will support the Chair in close cooperation with other participants to improve global cybersecurity.

Thank you.

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