

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Takeshi Akahori, Ambassador in charge of Cyber Policy,
Deputy Assistant Minister,
Foreign Policy Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan,**

At the Open Ended Working Group on Information and Communications

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I would like to begin by congratulating Ambassador Jürg Lauber 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 Izumi Nakamitsu for her comprehensive and constructive opening statement. Japan will work actively and constructively in both the working group and the GGE to achieve the common goal of free, fair and secure cyberspace.

Cyberspace has continued to expand and develop globally through autonomous efforts by various actors, with the private sector playing a central role. Cyberspace is a place where we can freely create and share a wide variety of information and data across borders, regardless of location and time constraints. Anyone who is active in this space can create new value, freely interacting with other entities.

As a result of these characteristics, cyberspace has become a place where intellectual assets, such as technological innovation and new business models, are created every day. Cyberspace is a frontier where we can discuss ideas freely and produce infinite value that supports liberalism, democracy, and cultural development through innovation.

However, the threat of cyberattacks has been rapidly increasing in recent years as the flip side of the convenience of and our growing dependence on cyberspace. We witnessed the ransomware WannaCry striking hospitals and threatening the lives of many ordinary citizens. Central banks have also been attacked, causing huge losses of their funds. In Japan, we have experienced serious cyberattacks such as information

leaks due to unauthorized access and the theft of large amounts of cryptocurrency through cyberspace. Cyber security is in the interest of every single Member State.

It is difficult for any single country to respond to these threats alone. Cooperation with private actors is also essential. Last week, Japan held a session of the Turtle Bay Security Roundtable here in New York to provide an opportunity for UN diplomats to hear industry perspectives on the challenges related to cybersecurity.

At the international level, Japan has been deepening its efforts to strengthen cooperation with other countries focusing on three fields in particular: **promotion of the rule of law, confidence-building measures, and capacity-building.**

Regarding the **rule of law**, Japan has been contributing to the discussions at the UNGGE. Japan's position is clear: existing international law applies in cyberspace. Who could object that internationally wrongful acts by States are governed by international law on State responsibility? We also support the development of voluntary norms of responsible state behavior. The OEWG should not reopen the norms agreed in the GGE, and confirmed by the General Assembly. On the domestic front, we have a robust national cyber policy which is a good basis for steady implementation of the results of these discussions.

Confidence-building measures are also an important pillar. Activities in cyberspace are highly anonymous and cross borders instantly. In order to prevent unforeseen circumstances that originate in cyber activities, we should increase transparency, predictability and stability by deepening our understanding of each other's national laws, regulations, policies, strategies and ideas, and by improving mutual trust among us. Based on this idea, Japan conducts a string of bilateral discussions on cybersecurity with a number of countries. Japan additionally took the initiative to establish the intersessional meeting on cybersecurity in the ASEAN Regional Forum, together with Singapore and Malaysia, where we have proposed a set of concrete measures to build confidence in cyberspace.

Capacity-building is also indispensable. In the interconnected cyberspace, cooperation and assistance are essential for international security. One example is the decade-long cooperative relationship between Japan and ASEAN countries in cyber capacity-

building. We are committed to continuing international collaboration on capacity-building through bilateral and multilateral formats.

These themes have been discussed in past GGEs by experts from various countries including Japan. We believe that the accumulation of such discussions has contributed to the stability and security of cyberspace, and will provide the indispensable basis for the discussions here at the Open-ended Working Group. Japan hopes that our work here will bear positive fruit, following consensus procedure and consistent with the mandate of UN Resolution 73/27, working in a constructive and complementary manner with the upcoming GGE. We count on the leadership of the Chair to encourage all the participants to be involved in the discussions, and to fairly take into account the views and opinions expressed in the meetings in the final report.

Please count on Japan's active participation and support to the Chair in close cooperation with our international partners to improve global cybersecurity.

Thank you.

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