



Statement of the Republic of Estonia
Thematic Debate of Other Disarmament Measures and International Security
UNGA 77th Session of the First Committee
New York, 24 October 2022

Estonia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. In addition, we would like to highlight some points on the issue of cybersecurity in our national capacity.

Mr Chair,

Estonia considers efforts to prevent and manage threats to international peace and security emanating from the malicious use of cyberspace to be of utmost importance.

Since February we have witnessed Russia's brutal aggression against Ukraine that alongside its kinetic warfare has been using malicious cyber operations against Ukraine's critical infrastructure and essential services as well as disinformation campaigns. Russia's malicious cyber operation against the satellite KA-SAT network caused significant impact by means of indiscriminate communication outages and disruptions across private and public entities in Ukraine. The attack also affected several third countries, demonstrating the dangerous spill-over effect of cyber attacks.

Estonia strongly condemns such malicious cyber operations and sees them as a deliberate disregard of the United Nations framework of responsible State behavior. In this regard, we reiterate that international law – including the UN Charter in its entirety, international human rights law, and international humanitarian law – is fully applicable to State behaviour in cyberspace. As reflected in the Open-Ended Working Group 2021 consensus report which was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 76/135, the Member States have agreed that States should not conduct or knowingly support ICT activity contrary to their obligations under international law that intentionally damages critical infrastructure or otherwise impairs the use and operation of critical infrastructure to provide services to the public.



Estonia values highly the work of the Open-Ended Working Group and welcomes the adoption of its Annual Progress Report in July 2022. Despite the severe geopolitical situation, the Annual Progress Report sends an important signal on the need and willingness of the UN membership to further discuss the development and application of norms of responsible State behaviour. We encourage States to continue constructive discussions towards a mutual understanding on how to effectively mitigate cyber threats and contribute to building global cyber resilience.

In order to move forward with discussions on the implementation of the agreed framework of responsible State behavior in cyberspace and support capacity building efforts, Estonia expresses its strong support to the establishment of a permanent, inclusive and action-oriented Programme of Action. We, therefore, support the respective draft resolution presented to UNGA First Committee that aims to start the work of the PoA after the end of the mandate of the OEWG in 2025 and build on the latter's as well as the previous OEWG and GGEs work.

Finally, we underline the inherent multistakeholder nature of cyberspace and welcome further cooperation with the private sector and civil society. The high level of expertise and the diverse views of different stakeholders allow discussions on cybersecurity in the United Nations to be better informed. Estonia deems it essential that the multistakeholder community is given an adequate opportunity to express their opinion during the upcoming OEWG discussions.

I thank you.