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**First Committee Thematic Debate  
Cluster 5: “Other Disarmament Measures and International Security”**

**Statement by Mr. Sugeeshwara Gunaratna  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
of  
Sri Lanka**

Mr. Chair,

Sri Lanka aligns itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In this inter-connected sphere of the internet, we are equally safe and equally vulnerable, despite our differing capacities.

It is said that technology is a useful servant but a dangerous master. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) were proven to be an essential **development** partner in many sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic. The rapid transformation of education delivery is of special note in this regard, to mitigate any major roll back of achievements in this sector. The global pandemic also transformed the traditional functioning of governments and organizations, permitting services to be provided remotely. Unfortunately, with these developments, cyberattacks have emerged as a leading vulnerability of critical digital infrastructure, resulting in disruptions to the delivery of essential services, theft of sensitive data and fraud.

In order to enable countries to embrace the full potential and benefits of the use of ICTs, Sri Lanka reiterates the importance of taking cooperative measures among all member states to ensure cybersecurity. It is necessary to intensify global efforts to set international standards and develop cyber risk management frameworks to establish good governance and a regulatory environment within cyberspace. In this, Sri Lanka notes with appreciation

the work of the OEWG on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies.

Nationally, Sri Lanka is implementing the nation's first Information and Cybersecurity Strategy, which has identified the importance of establishing a partnership-based approach to ensure cybersecurity. Sri Lanka has continued to strengthen its legal framework to protect computer users, critical national infrastructure, and cyberspace by introducing the Computer Crimes Act, Payment Device Fraud Act, Data Protection Legislation, and the Electronic Transaction Act. Sri Lanka is currently finalizing its Cyber Security Bill.

Mr Chair,

The misuse of ICTs by any actor for any purpose is to be condemned. In the age of information, the misuse of this resource towards malicious ends harms all structures – social, economic and political – and becomes a tool of divisiveness than a bridge that brings the world and our peoples closer. The implementation of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour and **compliance with treaties, agreements, obligations, and commitments** in this field, therefore, is vital to ensure a safe and secure cyberspace and contribute towards international peace and security.

Mr. Chair,

In the context of the deteriorating international security context, we are seeing a reduction of consensus-driven cooperation and direction of future roadmaps in this sphere, which is regrettable, and to the detriment of all states. This will only embolden the **misuse of cyberspace by terrorists, violent extremists** and other malicious actors aiming to disrupt the safety of the users of this space and threaten international peace and stability.

Therefore, Sri Lanka underscores the importance of continued cooperation, sharing of best practices and capacities between countries to effectively address cybersecurity challenges, reduce the digital divide and enable unimpeded economic and social progress. Let us not in our collective failure to come together, bring to life the saying by Albert Einstein, before the internet age, when he said that it has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity.

I thank you Mr. Chair.