<u>Programme of Action (PoA) to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of ICTs in the context of international security</u>

Austrian submission to the UNSG report mandated by UNGA Resolution 77/37

Austria strongly supports the establishment of a UN Programme of Action (PoA) to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of ICTs in the context of international security. In accordance with paragraph 3 of the resolution 77/37 of the General Assembly, Austria would like to highlight the importance of the following points with a view to the scope, structure and content of the PoA:

1. As a First Committee mechanism, the scope of the PoA should be matters related to the use of ICTs in the context of international peace and security. Its overarching objective would be to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, by preserving an open, stable, secure, accessible and peaceful ICT environment based on the respect of international law and human rights. In our view, the establishment of a PoA as a permanent mechanism would be the most suitable vehicle to achieve this objective.

2. The implementation of the framework of responsible state behaviour by providing and regularly updating sets of actionable recommendations for national implementation efforts should be at the centre of the work of the PoA. As technologies further develop, the PoA should address new threats and challenges as they arise by further developing the framework, if appropriate, or by supporting states in adjusting their response to new threats and challenges.

3. A key priority of the PoA should be to support capacity-building efforts in relation to the implementation of the framework (including by seeking advantage of existing efforts and initiatives), and to enhance multi-stakeholder cooperation in this area as well as coordination with other relevant initiatives.

4. Furthermore, the PoA should advance exchanges on the implementation of specific aspects of the framework (a specific norm or topic, e.g. the establishment of a national CERT, or the protection of critical infrastructure). Regular briefings could also be organised with other organizations (e.g. ITU, World Bank, Cybersecurity Trust Fund) to take into account the activities conducted within their mandates.

5. While emphasising the primary responsibility of States for the maintenance of international peace and security and their central role in the PoA, collaboration with civil society, the private sector, academia and the technical community is essential for States to implement their commitments under the framework. Modalities for the proceedings of PoA meetings should therefore enable all relevant stakeholders to attend formal sessions, deliver statements and provide inputs, as is the case in other First Committee processes where their expertise is useful, such as the GGE on lethal autonomous weapons systems convened within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

6. Stressing the importance of the States' political commitment to the framework for responsible State behaviour in cyber space, the PoA should be based on a political document reaffirming the normative framework as contained in the 2021 UNGGE and OEWG final reports.