



**STATEMENT BY THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC ON  
REGULAR INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE (MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2024)**

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Mr. Chair,

At the beginning let me also recognize and celebrate the important role that women play in our work here in the UN. Thank you for your contributions and Happy International Women's Day! 🌸

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union, France and other co-sponsors of the Programme of Action (PoA) to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of ICT. Nevertheless, Slovakia wishes to make its own contribution and add its voice to some of the points that have already been made by other distinguished delegates.

Since 2020, when the Programme of Action was presented as a vision for a seamless, permanent and action-oriented continuation of the OEWSG, the cross-regional group of countries has stressed the importance of step-by-step approach to building the structure and content of the PoA. Now, Slovakia appreciates the pragmatic approach of this group and welcomes the Chair's discussion paper on the proposed common elements for the future mechanism to complement the 2nd Annual Progress Report as well as the proposal of France for future mechanism.

Preserving stable, secure and predictable cyberspace seems to be the bottom-line of all interventions we have heard here so far. Following the discussions on the desired features and functions of the regular institutional dialogue upon conclusion of the OEWSG, it is clear to our delegation that the future mechanism ought to: first, support States in their capacity-building efforts to implement the framework of responsible State behaviour to the best of their abilities; second, offer a platform to deeper common understanding of agreed norms and potential obligations; and third, include relevant voices, also from the stakeholder community, to contribute to our discussions moving forward.

Importantly, since the PoA aims at comprising existing practical initiatives agreed under the OEWSG, such as the Global PoC Directory and relevant CBMs, the substantive discussions on the Programme's modalities could certainly build on these further. To similarly draw on the recently published draft Norms implementation checklist, the goal is also to encourage States to report on their implementation progress – or needs that could be addressed via the Programme of Action.

As for the structure, there is a need to emphasise that the PoA's nature would not be static but dynamic, flexible and receptive to the changing security environment in cyberspace. Therefore, the PoA could establish regular review conferences to touch upon, for instance, the evolving cyber threat landscape. Some of these activities shall require specific expertise, oftentimes of technical and/or legislative nature, which then could be utilised during respective PoA's working groups' meetings whose frequency would be decided at a later stage depending on the topic's urgency.

As a co-sponsor of the Programme of Action, Slovakia does not perceive the discussions on the PoA as contradicting the OEWG's mandate. On the contrary, we see the debates on the Programme of Action's future scope and modalities as a wish of all UN Member States to further develop existing initiatives while elaborating on them post-2025 in a more suitable format.

Mr. Chair, while the overwhelming support of the UN Member States for the recent resolution 78/16 serves as a testament to the desire to establish the Programme of Action under the auspices of the United Nations no later than 2026, we are nowhere near the finish line. While expecting more detailed discussions on the regular institutional dialogue, Slovakia would like to express our appreciation for the work carried out by your team and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and would like to offer our continued support and cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.