

**Open-Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and
communications technologies 2021-2025**

Informal inter-sessional meeting

View on the confidence-building measures and capacity building

Contribution by DiploFoundation

6 December 2022

Good afternoon Mr Chair, distinguished delegates, and colleagues,

My name is Pavlina Ittelson. I will be speaking on behalf of DiploFoundation, a nonprofit organisation that for the last 20 years has provided capacity building support to small and developing countries to represent themselves and to meaningfully contribute to international fora. Over the years, we have provided neutral, unbiased capacity building in internet governance and cyber to almost all countries worldwide, as well as international and regional organisations.

Mr Chair, first, we would like to express our appreciation for your continuous efforts to ensure the participation of all interested stakeholders in the work of the OEWG, and especially in this session.

As a capacity building nonprofit, we will reflect on confidence-building measures, UN points of contact, and the relevance of capacity building.

The initiative to establish a directory of global points of contact at the UN is extremely important for the timely reaction to incidents with broader geographical, political, social, and economic impact.

In establishing this directory – and a possible future operational and political/diplomatic network under the auspices of the UN – the OEWG can benefit from the vast experience of the non-state stakeholders – the technical community, the private sector, and civil society in this field.

Involving these players in the UN Point of Contact directory would be of particular relevance in relation to vulnerability treatment, early warnings about critical cyber incidents, and information sharing and cooperation, as well as training, simulations, and capacity building in general.

The UN Points of Contact directory is not only relevant to the states themselves in addressing critical cyber incidents, but serves as a significant confidence-building measure itself.

The directory should therefore be publicly available on the website, which will contribute to the transparency and accountability of the directory and strengthen its role as a confidence-building measure.

In addition, it would benefit the OEWG process by providing periodic accounts of the work of the UN Points of Contact and the state of cybersecurity resilience, contributing to better-informed discussions within the OEWG process and identifying emerging trends in cybersecurity.

It is of utmost relevance when establishing the UN Points of Contact to take advantage of existing structures, best practices, and lessons learned, not only from international, regional, and subregional organisations but also from other stakeholders.

In our view, the UN Points of Contact directory and the to-be-created UN Point of Contact network should not be structured with a reactive approach to cybersecurity but a proactive, scaleable, holistic approach to achieving effective cyber resilience.

We also urge the OEWG to consider the capacity of small and developing countries and Small Island Developing States in deciding on the number and structure of the UN Points of Contact. Many states need capacity-building support for the development and necessary expertise for their Points of Contact, as it will be the first time they will put such a structure in place.

Since cyber issues are fundamental to other thematic areas that may impact international peace and security (such as cybercrime, health, energy, space, and lethal autonomous weapons systems), there is a need to enhance the mapping of relevant capacity-building initiatives in these fields.

The mapping of relevant capacity building initiatives would ensure a holistic approach to capacity-building and the cross-pollination of knowledge and experience across thematic and organisational silos. It is important that the OEWG not duplicate the role of any existing regional and global capacity-building mechanisms and programmes, but rather enhance their outreach and assist with better coordination of donors and implementers.

The OEWG initiative will play a role in encouraging cooperation between online portals and compiling a calendar and offers of capacity-building programmes, as well as the list of implementing organisations, rather than only centres of excellence.

Such capacity-building support will allow expanding and strengthening of cyber risk management, asset and change management, incident response, and the meaningful involvement of the points of contact. This is particularly relevant for countries with limited resources.

Thank you for this opportunity, Mr. Chair.