



**Stella Rose | Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Reverse The Trend |
Intervention at the 7th Substantive Session of the OEWG on ICTs**

6 March 2024

Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

My name is Stella Rose and I am a representative of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and youth advisor for Reverse the Trend, a youth initiative of the organization. I am highly concerned about the continued evolution of ICTs and the possibility of cyber attacks of command and control systems for nuclear weapons.

The OEWG must continue to examine the application of the UN Charter and International Humanitarian Law to the possibility of use of ICTs during armed conflicts. We must strive for a shared emphasis on the application of the tenets of international humanitarian law including: the distinction between civilians and combatants, the prohibition to attack those not directly engaged in hostilities, proportionality, and the prohibition to inflict unnecessary suffering.

When ICT networks are the targets of cyberwarfare, the vulnerabilities of security networks, hospitals, schools, water and electricity infrastructure are exploited to threaten civilian lives.

Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

In the nuclear age, cybersecurity is critical—not just for the sake of right to privacy, but for the safeguards of our weapons systems. In this regard, we cannot afford a misstep.

The threat of nuclear war is subject to the sophistication of security systems that protect weapons softwares from hacking. These systems are fallible. Softwares for the most sophisticated institutions have endured continued breaches. Relying on luck to prevent accidental nuclear weapons launches is a strategy which continually threatens our existence.

For the sake of the greater good, we need to approach this challenge with vigilance, accountability and transparency.

Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

As we further examine the importance of international humanitarian law within the cyber domain, the international community needs to take into account the views of young people. Young people, including myself, have grown up in the digital age and have unique skills that can help strengthen our common goal of creating a secure ICTs environment.

In this regard, we are requesting that the Global PoC Directory should include young people who have expertise and are deeply concerned about the potential malicious use of ICTs in armed conflicts. Furthermore, we are proposing capacity building efforts that allow for young people to be involved in enhancing and facilitating a broader understanding and analysis of ICTs challenges. Our inclusion and expertise will ensure a safer future that we will ultimately inherit.

Only by working together can we create a better world, one that keeps humanity safe from existential threats and technological harm in times of war.

Thank you.