Input by South Africa for the background paper on a Points of Contact Directory in accordance with document A/77/275 (Annual Progress Report of the Open-Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies (2021-2025))

South Africa views the establishment of a points of contact (PoC) directory with the objective to facilitate communication among the different PoC networks, cooperation with other United Nations Member States as well as the timely and reliable reporting to the Secretariat on matters pertaining to the implementation of ICT security measures, as a significant confidence-building measure (CBM). To this end, South Africa believes that the PoC directory should be established for both technical and diplomatic purposes.

South Africa supports the recommendation in the OEWG Annual Progress Report of 2022, to establish and build on the work already done at the regional level by establishing a global, inter-governmental PoC directory at the United Nations (UN). We would welcome a discussion on this PoC directory at the intersessional meetings as well as at the fourth and fifth OEWG sessions. Such discussions could consider the kind of information to be contained in the directory and how the PoC directory, once established, will be maintained and secured. To speed up the process of providing the requested information, consideration may also be given to developing standardised templates.

South Africa further supports the establishment of a UN Cyber PoC Network as both a CBM and a practical measure, that would allow States to interact efficiently with each other and share information on emerging cyber threats. Regular contact between Member States’ PoCs would also support capacity-building efforts by each Member State.

South Africa supports the establishment of such a directory under the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA) and encourages Member States to nominate national PoCs once the directory is established. Member States could agree on the level at which the PoC directory would become operational. The PoCs would be available for receiving and sharing of information.

South Africa also believes that there is merit in establishing a Global Cyber Security Cooperation Portal (GCSCP) within the UN system for cooperation and information sharing on matters pertaining to security of ICTs as contained in India’s proposal.

South Africa is of the view that regular exchanges of information, including those facilitated by a PoC network and/or a GCSCP, could lead to a better understanding of
the gaps and challenges that should be addressed in order to build a more durable cybersecurity infrastructure.

South Africa prefers a coordinated approach to ICT security where Member States could assist each other in attaining a suitable level of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace. We look forward to further discussions in the OEWG on measures to facilitate international cooperation in this regard.