Views of the Islamic Republic of Iran on

the landscape of information and communications technologies capacity-building programs and initiatives

Notwithstanding, the conclusion of paragraph 61 of the 2021 OEWG report, which recalls the need for a concrete, action-oriented approach to capacity-building, It is unfortunate that the capacity-building section of the 2022 and 2023 Annual Progress Reports of the OEWG was significantly undermined to mere coordination among existing initiatives.

According to the UN resolution 75/240, the United Nations should play a leading role in supporting capacity-building for the security of and in the use of ICTs, but some States limit the role of the United Nations to just coordination of existing capacity-building efforts that have been undertaken in ICT-related capacity-building by regional and sub-regional bodies. This is even though many countries, in particular developing ones, have underlined in the OEWG discussions the need to establish a specific assistance fund/program for ICTs security within the UN to ensure that assistance is provided on a fair, equal and depoliticized basis.

Taking into account the central role of the UN in the efforts to ensure the security of and in the use of ICTs, existing capacity-building initiatives in this area should complement the work done at the UN, not vice versa.

The idea of establishing a "permanent mechanism for capacity-building program under the auspices of the United Nations" has considerable merits for the following reasons:

- As not all States are members of a regional organization and not all regional organizations have ICT-related capacity-building programs and initiatives in place, the establishment of a specific capacity-building program for ICTs security within the UN provides an opportunity for all States to enjoy the benefits of Capacity-building measures on an equal footing;

- Capacity-building should contribute to transforming the digital divide into digital opportunities. Due to the different situations, capacities, and priorities of States and regions, narrowing digital divides could be addressed more effectively by establishing a global, all-inclusive, and non-

discriminatory capacity-building program under the auspices of the United Nations.

-       Capacity-building programs and initiatives developed within regional and subregional organizations are adapted to their specific circumstances and priorities and could not be appropriate for all states;

-       Restrictive measures against other States in the ICT environment prevent countries from accessing capacity-building programs and initiatives outside of the United Nations and at the global and regional levels. A UN mechanism for capacity-building for ICTs should help all States to benefit from it in a politically neutral, all-inclusive, and transparent manner without any discrimination.

Thank you.