The following statement was released by the Government of the United States of America and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The United States and the Kingdom of the Netherlands held their inaugural Cyber Dialogue May 20, launching a bilateral cyber coordination initiative on a range of cyber and digital topics. The two countries reaffirmed their strong partnership and shared vision of a global, open, stable and secure cyberspace, and committed to continued cooperation to support this vision.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Rob Strayer and U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands Peter Hoekstra led the U.S. delegation. Ambassador for Security Policy and Cyber Timo Koster led for the Netherlands. The initiative follows discussions
on shared cyber priorities between President Trump and Prime Minister Rutte at their July 2018 meeting.

“We, the United States, the Netherlands and many other governments – share a common vision for a secure and open cyberspace,” said Strayer. “Now more than ever, we need to defend this vision. I look forward to continuing our work with the Dutch to promote responsible State behavior in cyberspace and ensure accountability for those who behave irresponsibly.”

“Cybersecurity is a complex transnational issue, and one that cuts across all functions of government,” said Hoekstra. “The United States and the Netherlands are very like-minded on a range of cyber and digital topics, both in the political and economic domains. This collaboration initiative will help bring all partners to the table to identify opportunities, share priorities, and drive solutions – both in policy and in practice – to help support cyber security goals of both our governments.”

“As our societies are becoming increasingly digitalized, we must work together to reap the benefits of the Internet and stand up against malicious cyber activities,” said Koster. “The Netherlands and the United States share many interests in that regard and the cyber coordination initiative shows the excellent cooperation between our countries, complementing our efforts within the EU context. We are committed to promoting a free, open, and secure cyber space.”

The United States and the Netherlands discussed a range of cyber priorities, including cyber deterrence and response, Internet governance, telecommunications and supply chain security, multilateral and bilateral law enforcement cooperation, joint attribution of cyber incidents, and upcoming cyber-related UN processes. The two countries reaffirmed their strong commitment to protecting online the same human rights and fundamental freedoms individuals have offline and their continued support for the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance. Both sides welcomed the increased global resolve to confront malicious cyber activity, including through the imposition of consequences as well as efforts to further responsible State behavior in cyberspace, and committed to champion further cooperation in this regard.

Participants in the dialogue included representatives from the U.S. Departments of Justice, Homeland Security, and State, who were joined by counterparts from the Dutch Ministries of Justice and Security, Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, and Foreign
Affairs. The interagency focus is a goal of the dialogue, to ensure strong cross-government bilateral collaboration and visibility on a range of cyber topics.

The two countries also affirmed the importance of securing 5G networks for future prosperity, discussed the importance of cyber resilience to critical infrastructure protection, and highlighted the need for continued work on areas critical to democracy in the digital age, such as societal resilience to disinformation, and enhancing cybersecurity defenses within election systems.

The United States and the Netherlands also pledged to contribute constructively to the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) and UN Open Ended Work Group on cyber issues. Both countries’ objectives, along with those of other like-minded partners, are to enhance the international community’s adherence to and implementation of the recommendations contained in the existing consensus GGE reports regarding the applicability of international law to cyberspace. The two countries also affirmed their support for non-binding norms of responsible State behavior in cyberspace during peacetime, to which all UN member states have previously committed.
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