Statement by Mr. AKAHORI Takeshi, Ambassador for Cyber Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, on the occasion of the virtual informal meeting of the OEWG on ICTs (December 2020)

【Regular Institutional Dialogue】

I would like to start by reiterating Japan’s full support to the Chair’s intention, expressed again today, and efforts to achieve an outcome which will contribute to increased international cybersecurity. Let us continue to engage in substantive discussions and do our best to join hands and wisdom in successfully producing a consensus report reflecting the long hours we have spent together and will be spending together till the end of the mandate of the current OEWG.

On the topic of regular institutional dialogue, Japan stresses the importance of implementing achievements on norms, international law, CBMs and capacity-building. Achievements are not limited to those in past GGE reports but include those which we will be in the report of our current OEWG.

Japan is a cosponsor of the Programme of Action initiated by France in cooperation with Egypt among others. Activities in cyberspace involve not only the government but also private sector, academia, NGOs and individuals. Therefore, a multi-stakeholder approach is essential. The PoA will institutionalize a regular multi-stakeholder dialogue. The dialogue will be action oriented. It is an institutionalized action platform.

My answer to the Chair’s question on recommendations that should be made regarding the establishment of institutional dialogue is simple. As Egypt and France explained, the co-sponsors of the PoA will be tabling draft
language to be included in the OEWG report on the establishment of the PoA. Japan hopes that the proposal will be accepted by all and will remain as a recommendation by the current OEWG.

Whether the establishment of a new OEWG is necessary should be discussed after the conclusion of the current OEWG and in relation to the final content of the report we are preparing to produce. While recognizing that a resolution establishing a new OEWG was already adopted, Japan urges delegations to continue discussing till the end of the current OEWG the best way to institutionally follow-up the achievements. We should concentrate on agreeing on the content of the report.

I have a specific comment on paragraph 66, which refers to a mechanism for negotiation of a binding instrument. Japan does not see the need for a new legally binding instrument on cybersecurity. It is more important to prioritize the implementation of existing norms and to continue dialogue on how international law applies in cyberspace. There is no agreement in the OEWG on negotiations for a binding instrument. Please do not mention new binding instruments in the draft. If that seems difficult, and if it is judged necessary to reflect all the positions expressed, please explicitly mention that many delegations opposed to the idea of having meetings leading to negotiations of a binding instrument.

I thank you, Chair.