General statement on A/C.1/66/L.30, “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to make the following general statement with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/66/L.30, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”. This statement is made on behalf of Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Switzerland, and my own country, Sweden.

We join the consensus on draft resolution on L.30. However, owing to recent developments in this field we would like to stress some – in our view - particularly relevant aspects in relation to internet governance and related issues.

One of the starting points for our delegations regarding the key features of the internet is that it should remain open and free. For us, one principle is very basic: The same universal rights that individuals enjoy “offline” – such as freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek information, freedom of assembly and association – must also be upheld and protected online.

We agree that the role of the internet in society to a great extent is a very positive one, and recognise that people all over the world use the internet and ICT to seek and share information, as well as to engage in political activities. Many human rights violations would most likely never have been reported, had there not been the internet and ICT.

Our delegations have consistently been advocating that human rights aspects should permeate all issues of internet governance. This means that a human rights perspective should be applied, including for cyber security issues. However, the current text includes no direct references to a human rights based approach.

Another fundamental position for our delegations is that governance of the internet should be based on a multi-stakeholder approach, i.e. including private sector and civil society actors. This is particularly important in guaranteeing human rights aspects in discussions on norms or rules of behaviour for the internet.

We are looking forward to taking active part in the emerging international dialogue to address internet governance and other related issues, while underlining the fundamental importance of giving clear prominence to human rights and broad participation aspects in this context.

Thank you.