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Statement on behalf of the Member States of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR)

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on Other Disarmament Measures and International Security,
in the Thematic Debate of the First Committee,
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30 October 2013
Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Member States of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

UNASUR countries wish to express our position regarding agenda item "Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security".

We thank the Chairperson of the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to Resolution 66/24 for the presentation of the Group's final report.

We welcome the conclusion of the Group that international law and, in particular the United Nations Charter, is applicable and essential to maintaining peace and stability and promoting open, secure, peaceful and accessible information and telecommunications technologies (ICT).

Mr. Chairman,

In our view, ICTs should be a tool for the promotion of inclusion and development, and should not be used by State and non-State actors to violate international or human rights law, any principle of peaceful relations among sovereign nations, or the privacy of citizens.

In this regard, the latest UNASUR Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Paramaribo, on 30 August, strongly rejected the interception of telecommunications and espionage actions in our countries by the national security agency of the United States Government, or whoever may be engaging in such activities, which constitute a threat to security and serious violations of human, civil and political rights, of international law and of national sovereignty, and which damage relations among nations.

Mr. Chairman,

In order to address this issue in South America, UNASUR Heads of State and Government also decided to accelerate the development of projects for cyber defense and safer interconnection of fiber optic networks in our countries. Their aim is to make our telecommunications more secure, strengthen the development of regional technologies and promote digital inclusion.

UNASUR States are encouraged by the recommendation of the Group of Governmental Experts that regular institutional dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations should be strengthened in order to build trust, transparency and
confidence. We also support the call for further international cooperation to build capacity for ICT security.

We are ready to engage in a constructive debate, which highlights the importance of respect for the sovereignty of nations, the right to privacy and the inviolability of official communications.

In this regard, we support the establishment of a new Group of Governmental Experts to further examine these important issues. UNASUR believes that the membership of this GGE should be based on a broad and equitable geographical representation.

Thank you.