Mr. Chairman,

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

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

3. Information and communications technologies (ICTs) should be a tool for the promotion of inclusion, development and peace, and should not be used by State and non-State actors in violation of international or human rights law, any principle of peaceful relations among sovereign nations, or the privacy of citizens.

4. The 2013 UNASUR Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Paramaribo, strongly rejected the interception of telecommunications and espionage actions, 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.

5. In order to address this issue in South America, UNASUR Heads of State and Government 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, as well as to strengthen the development of regional technologies and promote digital inclusion.

Mr. Chairman,
6. Aware of the development of offensive capacities in cyberspace as part of military doctrines, UNASUR Member States share a growing concern with the vulnerability of critical infrastructure and possible conflict escalations prompted by cyber-attacks. In this context, we favor the strengthening of multilateral norms and principles applicable to States in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, while preserving the free flow of information and the right to privacy.

7. UNASUR Member States are following with interest the deliberations within the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, established by General Assembly Resolution 70237. The recognition that international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter apply to the conduct of States in the use of information and telecommunications technology allows us to move towards a stable and peaceful digital environment. The international community should also consider the need to develop specific legally binding norms to meet the challenges of the digital age.

8. Among other specific rules that we must seriously consider, UNASUR Member States propose the adoption of a rule of "no first use" regarding offensive operations using information and telecommunications technologies. In addition to reducing the chances of an arms race, a norm of "no first use" would ensure that these technologies would not be used as instruments of aggression.

9. We regret that the participation of experts from UNASUR countries in the Group has decreased in 2016. This makes it even more urgent that the GGE evolve towards a more inclusive format, open to all United Nations Member States, to allow for the participation of developing countries in these discussions. UNASUR countries concur with the view that international law and, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, is applicable and is essential to
maintaining peace and stability and promoting open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment. Furthermore, we would like to emphasize that effective cooperation among States is essential to reduce threats related to the use of ICTs, including to address the issue of attribution for cybersecurity incidents.

Thank you.