Mr. Chairman,

It is in the interest of all States to promote the use of ICTs for peaceful purposes and to prevent conflict arising from their use, as these technologies contribute to higher levels of economic and social inclusion, provide new channels among citizens, businesses and governments to share and access knowledge, as well as to participate in decisions that affect their lives and work.

However, as a growing number of countries have been investing in offensive and defensive capabilities of a military nature in the use of ICTs, there is a risk that the militarization of these technologies and the emergence of new systems of ICT-related weapons might lead to an arms race, increasing the risk of escalation and conflict.

To ensure the exclusively peaceful uses of these technologies, Brazil favors the strengthening of multilateral norms and principles applicable to the conduct of States in the field of information and telecommunications technologies in the context of international security. This, however, cannot take place at the expense of the free flow of information and the respect for human rights, particularly the right to privacy.

The recognition that international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations apply to State behavior in their use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) paves the way for a peaceful and stable digital environment. In
addition, the international community must examine the need to develop a specific legal framework.

Among other functions, such a framework will be important to introduce a list of proscribed behaviors which should include, inter alia, offensive first use; tampering with the supply chain, intentionally introducing vulnerabilities in systems or networks, and compromising the information security of other States.

Brazil encourages Member States to consider the adoption of a "no-first-use" norm with regards to offensive operations using ICTs. Such a norm will reduce the chances of a global ICT-related arms race, and reassure the international community that ICTs will not be used as tools of aggression. In addition, confidence-building measures and increased international assistance and cooperation are important to achieve an open, secure, peaceful and accessible ICT environment.

Brazil has been an active participant in almost all the Groups of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. A Brazilian expert chaired the GGE established by Resolution 68/243. We regret that the GGE established by General Assembly Resolution 70/237 was unable to reach consensus on substantive recommendations that would have deepened and expanded those contained in the report of the previous Group. This highlights the urgency for the GGE format to evolve to a more inclusive one, open to all United Nations Member States, to allow for the adequate participation of all countries, including developing ones, in these discussions.

ICTs must remain inclusive, development-oriented and peace-oriented, where everyone can create, access, use and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting sustainable development and improving their quality of life, with full respect of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We look forward to continuing our contribution to the achievement of this goal within the UN framework.

Thank you.