Delegation from Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Position Paper for the United Nations General Assembly

The topics before the United Nations General Assembly (GA) are: I. The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament, II. Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System, and III. Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women. Although all topics are important, the elimination of gender-based violence plays a crucial role in developing social and economic stability. Hence, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia would appreciate the committee addressing topic III first, followed by topic I and topic II.

I. The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament

As a focal point of the GA since 1988, the role of emerging technologies in international security is a topic of great relevance. Africa has seen remarkable achievements in expanding its digital infrastructure. In its resolution 58/199 (2004), the GA noted that because of increasing interconnectivity, critical information infrastructures are exposed to threats raising security concerns. Internet access in Ethiopia increased explosively 164 percent from 2000 until 2017, and further growth can be expected. The GA stressed the need for efforts to protect critical information infrastructures by facilitating the transfer of information technology and capacity-building to developing and least developed countries in its resolution 64/211 (2010). In 2014, the *AU Convention on Cyber Security and Data Protection* was adopted, which It requires states to create cybersecurity strategies, while also covering data protection regulations. To facilitate the implementation of the Convention nationally, the *Personal Data Protection Guidelines for Africa* (PDPGA) were developed in 2018 and provide recommendations on capacity-building. Regarding cybersecurity, the Ethiopian National Computer and Information Center and our Telecommunications Agency have been using convenient cybersecurity software and mechanisms to protect the internet infrastructure since the early 2000s. We adopted the *Computer Crime Proclamation No. 958/2016* into our Criminal Code. The law addresses a range of cybercrimes such as hacking, spamming and child pornography and declares specific prosecution measures, ranging from fines to imprisonment. Incident response, policy development and threat analysis ranked high in the National Cyber Security Index for Ethiopia, while professional development and awareness-raising for data use still present a challenge. In accordance with the PDPGA, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia would like to call upon the members of the AU to establish the Africa-Wide Cybersecurity Collaboration and Coordination Committee (ACS3C), to which each state should send one representative. Its mandate should be to advise policymakers in each country on cyber strategies and also communicate on national frameworks and the current state of Personal Data Protection (PDP). The Committee could formulate updated regional goals for AU members until 2030, for example to establish PDP laws and create ICT-related authorities. to receive support, states must send a request to the committee, which would then investigate the needs and calculate the financial support. Based on the requests by the countries, strategies on creating authorities, imposing policies, cybersecurity, as well as training measures for legal and administrative staff shall be designed individually. Every 6 months, the state must present results or report comprehensible challenges in implementation. Further, an annual AU Conference on Cybersecurity and Data Protection shall be held in collaboration with the heads of the 20 most influential private stakeholders and independent organizations in Africa. Also, the AU may create a fund open to voluntary contributions by Member States (MS) to support African countries to create institutions, supply professional training and improve hardware and software for cybersecurity. We are convinced that through the suggested measures, an economically prosperous and safe Africa will exist in the future.

II. Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System

Challenging times require not only challenging leaders, but a reliable and transparent institutional structure. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia therefore considers it important to improve mechanisms for accountability and transparency within the UN system. It his report 64/640, the Secretary General encouraged MS to assist in the application of accountability measures and rewarded outstanding performances according to components such as adherence to the Charter, ethical standards, internal controls and oversight functions. In 1994, the Office of Internal Oversight Services was established under GA resolution 48/218B to help the Secretary General with audits. Ethiopia takes the publishing of reports and recommendations as a serious matter as in 2016, 78% of audits were rated “Partially Satisfactory”, among them the UN Environment Program. In its resolution 71/283 (2017), the

GA stressed that oversight bodies must undergo audit reviews and that full and timely implementation of recommendations must occur. We are looking towards the highest amount of transparency and accountability possible, which we implemented by decentralizing governments to *kebeles* with managers to ensure upward mobility. Not only does the Constitution establish several principles of intergovernmental fiscal relations, but our government is also launching efforts to modernize legal, fiscal and administrative systems for assigning local governments adequate responsibility and fighting corruption. Although the UN have auditing bodies, reporting agencies and created the UN Ethics Office in 2006 under GA resolution 60/248, we think that there is more room for improvement in promoting transparency and accountability among employees. In fact, accountability and transparency start at basic levels, meaning the staff, who is responsible for efficient work within the bodies and as a result, the whole institution. The UN must take prevention measures and educate their staff already in recruitment phases. We suggest that moral competence and accountability become factors as equally important as professional qualifications in the UN Human Resources assessment process. So far, suitability to a position was assessed on the basis of position requirements, as well as knowledge and skills relevant to the position by eligibility screening and substantive tests. Consequently, we propose UN Human Resources to design a thorough test in cooperation with the UN Ethics Office which simulates moral dilemmas in the workplace for applicants. While competence-based qualifications are a prerequisite for being considered for a position, the performance on this test should have a deciding impact on becoming employed. However, we are open to transition measures to evoke immediate effects, such as enhancing positive psychology through rewards for outstanding performances in internal controls. We are confident that by enhancing accountability and transparency in the UN system, starting at the smallest unit, professional misconduct can be prevented and the efficiency of the work of the UN can be improved.

III. Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women

Although the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* affirms that women and men have equal rights since 1948, according to Lakshmi Puri, 7 in 10 women report having experienced violence at some point in their life today. Therefore, intensifying efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women is indispensable for the UN. Equality and women's empowerment are integral to achieving each of the 17 *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) (GA resolution 70/1 (2015)), and more precisely SDG 5.3. Only by ensuring them, we will have social and economic stability. The GA recognized violence against women as a major impediment to achieving development and urged states to adopt measures to educate against sociocultural patterns of superiority of males (resolution 67/144 (2013)). The 2003 *Protocol of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa* called attention to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and acknowledged it to be a harmful human rights violation with far-reaching disadvantages for women in society. In resolution 69/150 (2014), "Intensifying global efforts for the elimination of FGM", the GA called upon MS to develop educational campaigns. According to the UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), there has been a decline in FGM in the last decade; but with the population growth, the number of FGM will rise significantly over the next 15 years. The Ethiopian national legislation criminalizes the performance, arrangement, and assistance of FGM. Still, reported cases remain scarce, and there is work to do in breaking long-lasting attitudes. Most women from 15 to 49 in favor of continuing FGM in Ethiopia suffer from poverty and lack education. The local NGO Kembatti Mentti Gezzima Tope (KMG) contributed to less acceptance of FGM in Kembatti from 97 to 5 percent in 20 years by practical assistance and community conversations. However, FGM is still predominant in Somali and Afar. In his report *A/69/211*, the Secretary General was deeply concerned about the tremendous gap in resources which limits programs. In the past, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) UNICEF Joint Program to Eliminate FGM achieved steps in combating harmful practices, for example by providing health services to affected women. The third phase of the program again relies on donations to reach a target of USD 77 million. Considering that there are 29 countries in which FGM is still regularly practiced, and that at the same time, these countries are developing countries, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia encourages the UN to increase the budget of the joint program to a grand total of USD 120 million to intensify the efforts on violence against women by all means. Within the program, staff communicated with local governments, religious leaders, NGOs (among them KMG) and communities. In Ethiopia, We would like to encourage the UN to maintain cooperation with local organizations based in Africa and to enhance their capacity. Prevention measures can be taken before females are mutilated. With resources provided by the UNICEF and UNFPA and expertise by both groups, the achievements that have been made locally can be enhanced. Ethiopia hopes that through awareness for the injustices which women face and multilateral cooperation, the future generations can be saved from all forms of gender-based violence.