Delegation from The Oriental Republic of Uruguay
Position Paper for the United Nations General Assembly

The issues before the General Assembly of the United Nations are: The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament, Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System and the Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women. Following Article 8 of the Uruguayan Constitution, which says that all persons are equal, the Oriental Republic of Uruguay will lay special focus on the elimination of all violence against women.

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

In the last decades new technologies and above all the Internet have changed the lives of people all over the world and affected them in their everyday life and in other fields. Due to their special importance these technologies, known as information and communications technology (ICT), have become a major topic in the international debate. The Oriental Republic of Uruguay realized this almost three decades ago and has since then already invested large amounts of money in ICT. However, since ICT is not only used for educational or economic purposes, but also plays an important role in international security policy, Uruguay has given itself a new cybersecurity framework last year through its national Agencia de Gobierno electrónico y Sociedad de la Información y del Conocimiento (Agesic). Being ranked first among the Latin American countries in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI), Uruguay strives for greater international cooperation, especially on a regional basis. Only if an intact ICT environment is installed, the international community will be able to face the dangers of the present and the future. Through cooperation, equal standards can be established thereby providing transparency and security.

Uruguay applauds the creation of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) through the General Assembly resolution 58/32 (2003) and the annual extension of this group's mandate until 2016. We emphasize that the respective reports of this group have had a huge impact on the role of ICTs in the debate about international security. We therefore recall GGEs report 65/201 (2010) and its call for a broad international cooperation among states to prevent misperceptions. Uruguay emphasizes the latter, which named the varying degrees of ICT capacity and security among different states as an increasing factor for the vulnerability of the global system. Reiterating the Group's report of 2015 (A/70/174), Uruguay is glad to hear its call for a regular dialogue with broad participation, held under the auspices of the United Nations and through bilateral, regional and multilateral forums, as this is essential to reduce risks for international peace and security. Uruguay is pleased that after a short break in 2018, the GGE was reintroduced in 2019 and the number of experts was increased by the General Assembly resolution 73/266 (2019). Lastly, we express concern about the huge differences between states indicated by the GCI, not just in Latin-America but all over the world as such pose security risks for the global community and to every state.

Following these thoughts, Uruguay proposes to strengthen the dialogue between the member states. In order to be constantly up to date and also to be able to respond to new risk trends, we propose a regular meeting on a regional level, bringing together the ministers from the relevant ministries of the several countries. These meetings should take place every four months at the seat of the respective regional department of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The respective regional office shall be responsible for financing and organization. On an annual conference then – preferably at the ITU headquarter in Geneva, Switzerland –, each regional organization of the ITU will present their results from these meetings to the respective ministers of all ITU members. Together they will work on answers to combat cybercrime and to strengthen international security. In this way, problems that arise nationally can be combated regionally and solved internationally.

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

For the United Nations and the trust placed in it by its member states, but also by the citizens of the world, it is essential that all processes, such as financing, appointments are completely transparent and comprehensible. As a liberal and democratic country, the Oriental Republic of Uruguay fights for the establishment of the highest standards of accountability and transparency not only at home, but also within the United Nations system. Here, whistleblowers are the decisive phenomenon. In contrast to employees who merely report grievances, whistleblowers bring to light the very things that the United Nations want to

combat, such as corruption and human rights violations. One of the great dangers of whistleblowers, however, is the fear of retaliation. In order to encourage whistleblowers, this fear needs to be taken away.

Recalling Article 101 paragraph 3 of the *Charter of the United Nations* and the need of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity within the United Nations system we applaud the establishment of an Ethics Office in 2005 by the Secretary-General's bulletin 2005/22 to foster a culture of ethics, transparency and accountability. Recalling the founding of the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) by General Assembly's resolution 48/218B (1994), we highlight the work of the OIOS publishing more than 200 reports and 800 recommendations on an annual basis. Reiterating General Assembly's resolution 71/283 (2017) and its call for protecting whistleblowers from retaliation and its occurrence, Uruguay is convinced that this is the key measure for encouraging whistleblowers. Finally, we are concerned by the report of Special Rapporteur David Kaye on the promotion and the protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression which highlighted the damage for international organizations caused by retaliatory measures.

Uruguay proposes the establishment of a working group within the OIOS that shall create a catalogue of all retaliatory measures against whistleblowers which must be banned under all circumstances. This will encourage whistleblowers. A letter must then be prepared by the respective working group, addressed to all United Nations staff urging them to contact the OIOS in the event of serious misconduct. The aim is that the catalogue will ensure comprehensive protection. This working group should meet once a year at the UN headquarter in New York City, USA. The financing and the organization of these meetings will be borne by the OIOS, which in turn selects the working group's members. To apply for membership, states have to hand in a proposal on how to solve the problem the group wants to address.

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

For decades the Oriental Republic of Uruguay has been doing its utmost for human rights and a liberal and democratic state and society. Particularly, gender equality has always been a core concern to the Government of Uruguay. The "#MeToo" movement in late 2017 has unfortunately shown us that gender equality and violence against women still remains a big problem in today's society. However, Uruguay believes that this can be improved, if children are taught the meaning of tolerance and gender equality. According to the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGE) by UN-Women in 2017, men, who experienced some form of domestic violence at an early age were significantly more likely to perpetrate intimate partner violence in their adult relationships. Therefore, children should be made aware of this issue from an early age including all genders. This also applies to developing countries.

Uruguay applauds Article 2 of the 1979 *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) and wants to highlight its demand to condemn discrimination against women in all its forms (A/RES/34/180). Uruguay supports the General Assembly resolution 67/144 (2013), recognizing that violence and discrimination against women is a worldwide problem throughout all parts of society. We applaud the creation of UN-Women in 2010 through General Assembly resolution 64/289 as one of the key players in the international debate on women's rights. We highlight the Global Guidance on Addressing School-Related Gender-Based Violence, published by UN-Women in 2016, and its proposal for a better training of educational staff to have more expertise in the work with children. At the same time, however, we are concerned that this only applies to countries in which functioning structures already exist and not to developing countries where such staff often lacks.

We therefore propose that the guidelines of UN-Women should be comprehensively implemented by all United Nations institutions dealing with children, for example the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). Their staff must be trained to recognize early signs of domestic violence against mothers and girls and to seek dialogue with stakeholders. They should also be trained to effectively teach boys and girls about equality and tolerance. This provides a basis to ensure that these children do not become victims of violence or commit violence in the future. The costs and the organization of the training shall be borne by each organization.