Delegation from the Kingdom of Denmark
Position Paper for the General Assembly

The topics before the General Assembly (GA) of the United Nations (UN) are: The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament; Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System; and Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women. The Kingdom of Denmark (Denmark) recognizes the need for strong multilateral cooperation and is looking forward to discussing these important topics at the upcoming conference.

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

While our understanding of emerging technologies is subjected to constant changes, for the last decades emerging technologies have always presented a risk and an opportunity to global peace and international security. There is still a need to address nuclear technology, space technology, materials technology and biotechnology, as developments in these fields continue to pose severe threats to international stability. At the same time Denmark realizes the enormous potential of information technologies. If used right, these technologies can improve economic opportunities and be a driving force to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) fostering stability and security. These technologies are also used by states and non-state actors to promote terrorism, attack critical infrastructure and erode public trust in democratic institutions. Furthermore, the rights to privacy and freedom of expression as set out in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) are often violated by surveillance and censorship. On a global scale these technologies can be an equalizer or exacerbate inequalities. Labour markets and traditional taxation models are challenged by automatization and digital business models. The question is not if there will be disruption, but how to best facilitate these changes in an interconnected world maintaining social stability and national sovereignty.

The Kingdom of Denmark can be a role model when it comes to answering this question. We have always believed in an innovative and open approach including not only states and international organizations such as the *European Union* (EU), the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (NATO) and the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD), but also relevant parties from the private sector and civil society. In close cooperation with the EU Denmark has developed one of the most progressive cybersecurity strategies and we fully support the UN Secretary-General's (SG) *High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation* not least by our financial contribution of DKK 2 million. Denmark is proud to be the first nation to appoint an ambassador for technology and digitization, because we have realized that our relations to the tech industry are equally important to those with fellow Member States. We stand by our vote in favor of resolution A/RES/58/199 in 2004 on the "Creation of a global culture of cybersecurity and the protection of critical information infrastructures" and consistently follow a "light but right"-approach when it comes to international regulations and cybersecurity.

While not neglecting the more traditional fields of nuclear technology, space technology, materials technology and biotechnology Denmark believes that we as an international community should pay closer attention to the field of cybersecurity. The SG's plan to commission a tech envoy is one step in this direction, furthering this Assembly's engagement in the matter could be another one. We believe in a human centric approach, combatting the digital divide and using the advancements in digital technologies to achieve the ambitious SDG, because social peace and equality of opportunities are at the foundation of international peace. We encourage this Assembly and all Member States to work towards digital disarmament. We need better mechanisms to prevent the use of digital technologies by terrorists and those wishing to destabilize sovereign countries, democracies and their institutions. We also ask all Member States to end pervasive surveillance and censorship. Furthermore, the work of the *UN Office for Disarmament Affairs* (UNODA) in general and the work of the *International Telecommunication Union* (ITU) in particular should receive more attention by the international community. In an interconnected world, multilateralism should be our answer.

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

Denmark recognizes that the UN System is often too bureaucratic, too ineffective and not transparent enough. While this needs to change, our first and foremost concern is the security of our staff and the UN staff in general. Still too often we have to be ashamed and appalled by workplace harassment, discrimination, violence and abuse of authority within UN institutions that should serve as a role

model. It is especially women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people and people with disabilities that find themselves subjected to these gross violations against human rights and dignity. While these catastrophic failures to adhere to our ethical obligations have been addressed multiple times, there is still a lack of reporting, prosecution, accountability and transparency. As pointed out by the UN Ethics Office multiple times, the situation is particularly severe within the *Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO),* the *Department of Field Support (DFS)* and the peacekeeping and special political missions.

Denmark has always been a strong voice for equality and non-discrimination. Within our divers staff, we have introduced strong reporting mechanisms and regulations against workplace harassment of all kinds. Raising awareness on these issues is part of our vocational training. We have supported the establishment of the UN Ethics Office through resolution 60/248 (2006) and the offices work to create the *Guide for UN Staff* (2012). We also highly welcome the many SG's bulletins on this issue especially "Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority" (2008), "Status, basic rights and duties of United Nations staff members" (2012) and "Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations" (2018).

While most of the needed formal guidelines and mechanisms are in place, they remain underutilized. To change this, we encourage Member States to make anti-discrimination and harassment awareness a priority within their staff and educate about reporting procedures. We suggest to the UN Ethics Office to include gender identity as a designation criteria for discrimination within their *Guide for UN Staff*. We further encourage an increased focus on the discrimination of transgender and intersex people within the armed personal. We invite all Member States to engage in sharing best practices and collectively enhancing transparency and accountability. Denmark offers its strong support to the international community on this issue and reaffirms its belief, that within an international organization, multilateralism should always be our answer.

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

Gender equality and equal opportunities are not only a fundamental human right, they are a precondition for development, for peace and for prosperity. They are threatened by constant and ongoing violence against women. This includes physical, sexual and mental violence, social oppression and the exclusion from political and economic processes. It is not limited to women, who are too often subjected to discrimination, sexual violence and economic oppression because of their specific reproductive organs, but also affects transgender women disproportionately. Out of ten women worldwide seven have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. And while the international community has discussed this topic on multiple occasions and has implemented many much needed measures against these forms of violence, sexual and gender based violence against women continues to cause harm and suffering worldwide.

Denmark has been at the forefront of battling violence against women for many decades. We provide immense funding to *UN Women*, are one of the few countries reaching for more than 40 consecutive years the UN target of delivering 0,7% of gross national income (GNI) in official development assistance and are proud to have helped create the *She Decides Initiative*. With the *Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (2011)* by the European Council Denmark gave a promise to protect, prevent, prosecute, and eliminate violence against women, to create policies and measures for the protection of and assistance to all victims, to promote international cooperation and to provide support and assistance to organizations and law enforcement agencies. Denmark, having introduced the Danish Act on Gender Equality, is proud to deliver on this promise.

Denmark encourages all Member States to value the consensus on eliminating violence against women expressed most prominently in the UDHR, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR), the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* and SDG number five. Reaffirming our support for the 0,7% target, Denmark hopes to see more Member States join us in our commitment. Since education on gender based violence is key to ending it, we ask Member States to increase their focus on education and support of education through development assistance. Furthermore, we encourage the international community to support womanhood in all its forms, including transgender persons. We believe that a respect for cultural diversity and for human rights should go hand in hand and that international exchange of ideas, close cooperation and the sharing of best practices are fundamental to achieving gender equality. It is only united that we can face the horrors of violence against women globally; multilateralism should be our answer to this serious problem.