STATEMENT BY

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On the occasion of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, First
Committee,

Thematic Debate on Other Disarmament Measures and International
Security

NEW YORK, 28 October 2014
Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the statement of the European Union, please allow me to make the following remarks.

Mr. Chairman,

The increase in internet use has been astounding. Where there were only 1 million users in 1992, there are almost 3 billion nowadays. Cyberspace unlocks enormous potential gains in wealth and welfare in an ever more connected society. Bill Gates has therefore stressed that the "internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow".

In order to continue to benefit from the internet as a driver for development and innovation, we must ensure that we develop safer ways to do business online, we need to protect people from threats to exercise their online freedoms and from crime related activities, and we must promote international stability and security in the cyber domain.

The cyber domain can be used by both states and non-state actors to threaten international security. For example, digital attacks on a nation’s critical infrastructure, like the power supply network and air- and seaports, are these days a realistic threat. Cybersecurity and promoting international peace and stability in the cyber domain are therefore essential themes. In order to reduce the risks posed by insufficient security within the cyber domain, many ongoing bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives are contributing to increased transparency, confidence and stability in the cyber domain. These confidence building measures are of the greatest importance, and should be further enhanced.

The Netherlands is of the opinion that a theme like cybersecurity cannot be addressed in isolation. It needs to be considered in conjunction with themes like freedom and the potentials of economic growth online. Only by working together globally and in a multistakeholder setting can we guarantee that the most crucial piece of societal infrastructure of the 21st century will remain secure, free and open.

It is for this reason that the Netherlands will host the Global Conference on Cyberspace 2015 (GCCS 2015) on 16 and 17 April 2015 in The Hague, as a follow-up to the Conferences on Cyberspace held in London, Budapest and Seoul. This conference will bring all relevant stakeholders from various backgrounds (governments, private sector, civil society) together to discuss these challenges in a comprehensive manner. Its objective is to guarantee that the most crucial piece of societal infrastructure of the 21st century will remain free, open and secure. The conference intends to be a platform for exchanging knowledge and ideas on strategic cyberspace issues and by discussing concrete dilemmas between security, freedom and economic growth online.

The Netherlands has introduced the Global Conference on Cyberspace 2015 during a side-event on October the 24th. An interactive discussion on several cyber dilemmas – including those that affect international peace and security – took place, which has proven valuable insight in the most pressing issues to be included in the agenda of the conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by once again stating the firm commitment of the Netherlands to work together globally to unlock the enormous potential gains in wealth and welfare and keep cyberspace - our “town square of the global village of tomorrow” - secure, free and open.

I thank you for your attention.