

Chair, Secretary-General, Distinguished Colleagues,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Albania, Austria, Australia, Andorra, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Georgia, Ireland, Italy, Iceland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Kingdom of the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and my own country, Denmark, and further request that this statement be included into the record of the meeting.

We stand together in strong and unequivocal condemnation of the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. We deplore the resulting loss of life, suffering, and widespread destruction, particularly the damage inflicted on Ukraine's critical digital and telecommunications infrastructure, which has had profound and long-lasting effects on civilians.

The Ukrainian people continue to suffer from the Russian Federation's indiscriminate attacks damaging towns and cities as well as Ukraine's critical telecommunications infrastructure, disrupting services and the quality of fixed and mobile communications, television and radio broadcasting, and emergency communications. In the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, the Russian Federation's actions have had a devastating impact on the exercise of Ukraine's sovereign right to regulate telecommunications within its internationally recognized territory.

Ukraine's cyberspace remains a key target in Russia's war of aggression. Since the full-scale invasion, cyberattacks have steadily increased, hitting government bodies, defense and security sectors, critical infrastructure, financial institutions, and businesses. According to the Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (4th edition), Russia's actions have caused over \$2.24 billion in damage and \$2.38 billion in losses to Ukraine's telecommunications, digital, and media sectors. Recovery needs are estimated at \$5.86 billion over the next decade.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine not only violates international law, it also jeopardizes the harmonious development of the ICT sector worldwide and stands in clear contradiction to the ITU's mission to promote digital connectivity for sustainable development and the fundamental principles enshrined in the ITU Constitution. Consequently, Russia cannot presently be considered a credible partner in ITU activities, nor can it credibly claim to uphold the values and responsibilities associated with ITU membership.

We call for the Russian Federation to immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine and to unconditionally withdraw its military forces from Ukrainian territory within its internationally recognized borders. Russia must fully respect its international obligations and commitments, including those arising from its membership in the ITU.

The UN Charter applies to all UN members, and it is our duty to defend its principles. We will continue to support Ukraine in exercising its right to restore its territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and protect its existence as an independent and sovereign country.

I thank you