

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

-I am honored to open today's event on behalf of RCC, an intergovernmental organization that works on enhancing regional cooperation and supporting the EU integration processes in the SEE. We are overwhelmed both by the impressive turnout and interest and the highest level support of both our host country and ITU. This most vividly confirms how relevant and dated cybersecurity challenges are. It also confirms the necessity of forging regional and international partnerships to address the safety and security challenges of a shared cyberspace and to keep the capacities of our cybersecurity teams in a pristine form.

-RCC and ITU's long-standing collaboration has been recently elevated to a practical partnership in furthering the 'digital' capacities in our SEE region. In this regard, in a very short period we have been partnering on building the region's skills on digital ecosystems and cybersecurity.

-RCC's core work is guided by the regional development strategy – the SEE2020 Strategy which mirrors the EU2020 Strategy, rightly recognizes the significance of endogenous and long-term drivers of growth and to this end entails a prominent digital society dimension.

-In addition to the high relevance of the workshop for the implementation of the digital dimension of SEE2020, the direct rationale for RCC's support for the capacity building event stems from the Multi-annual Action Plan on Regional Economic Area in Western Balkans Six (WB6), an ambitious action plan on regional economic integration, endorsed by the WB6 Prime Ministers at the occasion of the Trieste Western Balkans Six Summit of the Berlin Process this July.

-4th Annual Berlin process Summit in Trieste has been historic as digital integration in WB6 was prioritized as a cornerstone of economic growth and prosperity and for the first time integrated within the highest regional political process. It brought digital agenda aspects to the forefront of regional political dialogue, agenda and processes.

-The digital agenda within MAP aims at: digital infrastructure development and improved regional connectivity; harmonized spectrum policies; coordinated roaming policies towards a roaming free region; enhanced cyber security, trust services and data protection; cooperation in policies that stimulate data economy; upgraded digital skills and accelerated digitization and uptake of smart technologies in our region.

-The cyber-drill is directly relevant for the regionally prioritized measures on digital trust and security which received highest level political buy in within the MAP. The measures, endorsed

by the Prime Ministers, even explicitly call for: Setting up a regional dialogue and information exchange platform among WB6 CSIRTs (Computer Security Incident Response Teams), advancing CSIRTs' capacities and strengthening institutional links with EU CSIRTs. On this note, we have enabled the participation and later today we'll have a focused side meeting of WB6 CSIRTs – trying to assess the current status quo, challenges and prospects for regional cooperation.

-MAP will guide RCC's agenda in the future as we work to deliver progress across its measures together with governments, EC, and the relevant stakeholders. A flagship event from the MAP will be the organization of next year's WB6 Digital Summit that should kick-start a continuous and cooperative dialogue on the digital transformation challenges and prospects in WB and cybersecurity is expected to be a prominent part of it.

-Dear all, I am wishing all of us a productive and memorable training and I am calling upon of all of us to use both the capacity-building and networking opportunities that this cyber-drill will offer.