



## Opening Remarks 4 June 2009

### ITU Regional Cybersecurity Forum for Africa and Arab States<sup>1</sup>

**“Connecting the World Responsibly”**

**Tunis, Tunisia  
4-5 June 2009**

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*(Delivered in Arabic)*

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chargée de l'informatique, de l'internet et des logiciels libres

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

Good morning.

I am honoured to be providing these opening remarks on behalf of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau's Director, Mr. Sami Al-Basheer at this **ITU Regional Cybersecurity Forum for Africa and Arab States** dedicated to the theme of “Connecting the World Responsibly”.

Cybersecurity issues are a complex mix of technological, political, and cultural challenges. With the number of mobile cellular subscribers having reached 4 billion and the mobile

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<sup>1</sup> See the ITU Regional Cybersecurity Forum for Africa and Arab States website at: [www.itu.int/ITU-D/cyb/events/2009/tunis/](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/cyb/events/2009/tunis/)

penetration rate estimated at 61 per cent by the end of 2008, I hardly need to remind you of the key role that Information and Communication Technologies play in our lives. Access to ICTs has become essential for social and economic development and ICTs have provided solutions to a wide range of everyday problems, sometimes in unexpected ways. Today's new generation take for granted the role that ICTs play in their education and their private lives, welcoming the new technologies that are appearing at an impressive rate.

However, as new technologies are developed and access to ICTs expands, threats to their security are also developing and expanding. These threats are global in nature, with attacks in one country having an impact on another, while the individual generating the attack could be sitting physically in a third country. Therefore, to safeguard our cybersecurity we have to take a global approach and come to a common understanding on how we can address the needs of all countries, including least developed, developing and developed countries. **Only by working together to elaborate strategies and identify best practices, can we address these global challenges.**

During these two days here in beautiful Tunisia we will have a number of speakers presenting on national, regional and international initiatives and partnerships, as well as tools and practical ways to move forward on building confidence and security in the use of ICTs, and thus ensure that the benefits of ICTs will reach people in all parts of the world. This event also serves to follow up on the activities initiated at last year's **ITU Regional Cybersecurity Forum for Eastern and Southern Africa** held in Lusaka, Zambia (25-28 August 2008)<sup>2</sup> and the associated **ITU Regional Workshop on Frameworks for Cybersecurity and Critical Information Infrastructure Protection (CIIP) for Arab States** held in Doha, Qatar (18-21 February 2008)<sup>3</sup>.

I want to emphasise that cybersecurity is increasingly important in our regions, and governments need to be well coordinated on this. We hope that the presentations provided during these two days will provide a good foundation on which to further discuss these

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<sup>2</sup> See the website for the ITU Regional Cybersecurity Forum for Eastern and Southern Africa held in Lusaka, Zambia (25-28 August 2008) at: [www.itu.int/ITU-D/cyb/events/2008/lusaka/](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/cyb/events/2008/lusaka/)

<sup>3</sup> See the website for the ITU Regional Workshop on Frameworks for Cybersecurity and Critical Information Infrastructure Protection (CIIP) for Arab States held in Doha, Qatar (18-21 February 2008) at: [www.itu.int/ITU-D/cyb/events/2008/doha/](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/cyb/events/2008/doha/)

important issues amongst the different stakeholder from countries in Africa and the Arab States present here this week.

I just want to share with you a brief overview of some of the activities that the International Telecommunication Union, its different Sectors and Regional and Area Offices around the world are working on to help ensure that all parties, countries and private sector participants, academia and civil society, work together on fighting cybercrime and improving cybersecurity for all.

To put the activities and initiatives that ITU is working on in the area of cybersecurity, cybercrime and child online protection into context, two years ago in May 2007, ITU launched the **Global Cybersecurity Agenda (GCA)**. Designed as a mechanism and framework for international cooperation and response, the GCA focuses on fostering synergies and building partnerships and collaboration between all relevant parties in the fight against cyber-threats within five main work areas, which are the following:

1. Legal Measures; 2. Technical and Procedural Measures; 3. Organizational Structures, and cross-cutting 4. Capacity Building and 5. International Cooperation.

Since the launch of the GCA, and as part of the efforts mentioned earlier, ITU has been working hard on developing practical tools and resources that can be of use to ITU Member States looking to build cybersecurity capacity.

The recently launched **ITU Toolkit for Cybercrime Legislation** and the **ITU publication “Understanding Cybercrime: A Guide for Developing Countries”**, which you will be hearing more about, as a set of dedicated cybercrime legislation resources, aim to help countries better understanding the legal aspects of cybersecurity and the need to harmonize legal frameworks in order to combat cybercrime and facilitate international cooperation.

We also have other tools, such as the **ITU National Cybersecurity/CIIP Self-Assessment Tool**, which has recently been revised based on input received while undertaking cybersecurity self-assessments in countries around the world with the different national stakeholders. Furthermore, together with other stakeholders and experts, many of you here today, ITU is working on establishing close partnerships with regional and international organizations, private sector companies, associations, etc. in order to be able to provide ITU

Member States with the support and assistance that countries are increasingly requesting from us.

We are very pleased with the progress made on making the collaborative IMPACT Alliance services, such as the Global Response Center (GRC) services, available to ITU Member States. We have colleagues from IMPACT, the International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber Threats, with us here in Tunis this week, who will be sharing with us more information on some of these services that are being made available to ITU 191 Member States. This is just an example of some of the many activities developed together by countries and other stakeholders that are aimed at building global solutions to address cyber-threats.

For example, to show how diverse our cybersecurity activities really are, to encourage young students and professionals to learn more about what the ITU is doing in areas that relate to cybersecurity, child online protection, e-government, e-health, e-environment and other ICT applications, ITU has launched its **2009 Cybersecurity and ICT Applications Essay Competition**. The purpose of the essay competition is to increase awareness of cybersecurity and the potential of ICT applications, and give young people, especially from developing countries, exposure to the main issues related to these topics and to ITU's ongoing work in these areas. I encourage you to visit the ITU website, which has more information on the competition and our other initiatives. The deadline is 15 June so young people in your countries still have time to apply!

With this I will conclude my opening remarks. I want to thank you all in advance for your participation and contributions to making this Regional Cybersecurity Forum happen here in Tunisia.

I also want to express our thanks and appreciation to H.E. Lamia Sghair Chaffai, Secretary of State for Informatics, Internet and Open Source, Tunisia/ Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du ministre des technologies de la communication chargée de l'informatique, de l'internet et des logiciels libres, the Tunisian Ministry of Communication Technologies and especially the National Agency for Computer Security (ANSI) for their generosity and kind hospitality.

Thank you.