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CONTRIBUTION BY AGENCY FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS/NATIONAL CIRT/ REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

TITLE: Proposal for activities to enhance trust and confidence in the use of ICT with focus on CSIRTs capacity building and regional cooperation

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Europe Regional Initiative: EUR4: Enhancing trust and confidence in the use of information and communication technologies

Year(s) of implementation: 2019, 2020

Background

The National Centre for Computer Incident Response (MKD-CIRT) is set up within the Agency for Electronic Communications as a separate organizational unit. MKD-CIRT is the official national point of contact and coordination in dealing with security incidents in networks and information systems, and that identifies and responds to security incidents and risks. MKD-CIRT is the National CIRT of the Republic of North Macedonia and was established in 2016 after a study conducted with support from ITU and it is following ITU's recommended three-phase development approach for establishing and developing a National CIRT.

Constituents of MKD-CIRT are all ministries, public administration, and services of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, operators of critical infrastructure in the country, and large organizations in the banking, transport, communications, health, energy and other strategic sectors in the country.

Services provided by MKD-CIRT include notifications and alerts, Incident response, Vulnerability response, and Awareness, education and training.

MKD-CIRT is an accredited member of Trusted Introducer and has established connections with other CSIRTs. Among other activities, MKD-CIRT attended the ITU Regional Cyberdrill in 2017 and 2018.

Proposal 1: For MKD-CIRT, participation in the ITU Regional Cyberdrill in the last two years has been of great importance. These events have helped us in developing our team's capacity and expertise, as well as with establishing regional and international cooperation and information exchange with other CSIRTs. The Agency for Electronic Communications and MKD-CIRT propose to host the 2020

ITU Regional Cyberdrill in Skopje, last week of May, first or second week of June, or October-November 2020.

Proposal 2: On 5-6 June 2019, MKD-CIRT will organize the second Cyber Security Conference in Ohrid, Republic of North Macedonia. The overarching theme of this event will be CSIRTs activities and Building Cyber Resilience. The event will gather 70 representatives from national CSIRTs in the Western Balkan region as well as representatives from international organizations and cyber security practitioners. It is expected that at this events, different topics will be discussed regarding protection and building resilient critical information infrastructure, role of CSIRTs and importance of regional and international cooperation in protecting CII from cyber-attacks and building more resilient society. Support and participation from ITU at this event would be of great significance and benefit for all participants including MKD-CIRT.

Proposal 3: In October 2019, MKD-CIRT will organize the first National Cyber Security competition in Macedonia. It will be a month-long event focusing on raising awareness and education of young people on the importance of cyber security. The competition is planned to be conducted in three stages: Online Pre-selection, Online Semi-final challenge, and onsite Finals. The last part of the competition would be a two-day event in Skopje at the end of October 2019, for the final stage of the competition, that will include hands-on scenarios and will be aimed at around 50 people for team and individual competition. The concept of this competition will be built upon a competence-based model using pre-built scenarios with virtual machines, where participants are scored against specific learning objectives, which are in turn mapped to specific professional profiles (Ethical Hacking, Cyber Protection and Computer Forensics). The competition is expected to provide useful insight into the country's level of competence, to identify specific gaps and to identify particular talents. Support from ITU for organizing this event is of great importance and would help MKD-CIRT and Macedonia in the success of the competition. It would be also beneficial if with support from ITU, this competition can become a regional event gathering in Skopje the best teams and individual winners from similar national competitions in the Western Balkan region, in cases where other countries are organizing similar competitions at national level.

MKD-CIRT believes that conducting above stated proposed activities will have great impact on building the capacity and expertise of the national CSIRT, will support our efforts on providing cybersecurity awareness in the country, and will further improve and strengthen regional and international cooperation.