

FIRST PACIFIC ISLANDS CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON

CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION

PORT VILA, VANUATU

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*KEYNOTE ADDRESS*

SAMEER SHARMA

REGIONAL DIRECTOR A.I.  
INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA-PACIFIC

Mr. George Iapsen, 1<sup>st</sup> Political Advisor to the Prime Minister,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning, olgeta

- It is a great honour to be with you today on the occasion of the First Pacific Islands Capacity Building Workshop on Child Online Protection, in Port Vila, Vanuatu.
- In fact last Friday, ITU-OGCIO jointly organised a very successful national workshop on National Broadband Policy for Vanuatu that would trigger access and adoption of affordable broadband in Vanuatu with the leadership and commitment shown by the Prime Minister who stressed the need for collaboration amongst government, industry and international partners to accelerate the uptake of broadband in Vanuatu.
- On behalf of International Telecommunication Union, I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator of Vanuatu (TRR) and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer of Vanuatu (OGCIO), for their kind support and collaboration.
- I would also like to thank our distinguished partners, the Commonwealth Telecommunication Organization (CTO), the

International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyberthreats (IMPACT) and the Department of Communications, Australian Government for continued support and commitment to the cause of furthering the cybersecurity agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- To begin this workshop, let me offer you some insights and brief background about the topic.
- The Internet has been one of the most powerful forces for learning, enhanced interaction and knowledge sharing. Active use of the Internet and its associated technologies like social media, has greatly expanded the scope for information sharing, research, education, and also elevated the platform for social, developmental and humanitarian activities.
- Further, a new era of communications and service delivery in the Pacific Islands is being boosted by the availability and access of several submarine cable systems.
- Aside from narrowing the digital divide and affording every adult and young person access to the Internet, the submarine cable projects, implemented in several Pacific Island countries such as Vanuatu, Tonga, Samoa, Marshall Islands and others, will improve the Pacific Islands' connectivity to the rest of the world, thereby reducing cost of communication and offering exciting new opportunities at domestic, regional and global level.
- We laud the governments of Vanuatu for their great effort through enacting ICT Policy and Universal Access Policy that would bring connectivity to even the remotest parts of the population with target of access to 98 % by 2018. This would create job opportunities, improving access to remote health services, connecting virtual classrooms, supporting Public Internet Access Points through telecenters, amongst others!
- Countries' growing dependence on ICTs makes their systems and services particularly susceptible to cyber-attacks – and governments (along with critical infrastructure sectors such as mining, oil and gas, and manufacturing) are now among the key sectors that become vulnerable for targeted attacks (Symantec, 2014 Internet Security Threat Report,).
- Today's cybercriminals are just as well funded, organized and ruthless as the most notorious gangsters of earlier times. We're talking about highly organized criminal gangs who are using the Internet for theft, fraud, and the illicit sale of illegal goods and material such as child pornography.

- At the end-user level, cyber-threats are also increasing at an alarming rate, with almost 400 million victims last year – and the number of exposed identities skyrocketed in 2013, up to 552 million, compared to 93 million in 2012. The number of breaches increased by 62% in 2013 and 38% of mobile users experienced mobile cybercrime.
- Every day there is a new innovation which also poses new challenge as well. With the great opportunities presented by the evolution of technology, comes even greater responsibility, more so to the young citizens of the globe.
- We are seeing more kids to go online than ever and the Internet has become a child's digital playground. From the ITU reports on Measuring the Information Society of 2013, out of a world population of 7 billion, 363 million are digital natives and the 30% of the world's youth have been online for at least five years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Let me share some recent statistics on cyber attacks specifically related to children.
  - Over 60% of the world's youth live in Asia-Pacific. This translates into more than 750 million young women and men aged 15 to 24 years.
  - Rate of teenage suicide, depression and incidences of self harm are on the rise in Asia-Pacific due to such social cruelty, victimisation and humiliation that the youths are being subjected to in absence of any specific laws that penalise cyber bullying. A recent survey on the state of cyber bullying done in Asia-Pacific covering around 12,500 kids aged between 8- 17 years, revealed that almost half of teenagers aged 13 -17 report, that they have experienced some sort of cyberbullying in the past year; and three quarters of young people involved in aggressive sexual solicitations in the real world met their aggressors online.
  - And although three quarters of generation respondents do not trust websites to protect personal information – such as credit card and personal contact details – their lack of trust, paradoxically, does not stop them from sharing this information online.
  - We need to address these issues, because in today's world, almost everything depends on ICTs – and particularly on the networks which underpin them.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs is in the core mandate of the ITU and it is widely present in Plenipotentiaries and Conferences' resolutions. In particular WTSA 12, PP 10 and WTDC 14 produced articulated Resolutions (WTSA 12 Res 50, 52, 58, PP Res 130, 174, 179, 181 and WTDC 2014 Res 45, 67 and 69) which touch on the most relevant ICT security related issues, from legal to policy, to technical and organization measures.
- ITU is working with Member States, regions, and in partnership with IMPACT, to deploy capabilities to build capacity at national and regional level through the establishment of National Computer Incident Response Teams (CIRTs). ITU is also organizing cybersecurity training workshops and collaborating with the private sector to expedite dissemination of cyberthreat related reports targeting not only technical people but also decision makers in our Member States community.
- Furthermore, through the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI), ITU and ABI Research will effectively measure each nation state's level of cybersecurity development. The ultimate goal is to help foster a global culture of cybersecurity and its integration at the core of information and communication technologies.
- Moreover, the Child Online Protection Initiative has already made great progress in promoting the need to establish a collaborative and harmonized COP framework at the international level. Together with our partners, ITU is also continuing to assist countries in developing strategies and enhancing capabilities and infrastructure, with the aim to ensure the online protection of children.
- Furthermore, UNICEF and ITU, together with partners of the COP Initiative, have released new updated version Guidelines for Industry on Child Online Protection originally launched in 2008 as a part of a 4 sets of Guidelines: children, parents, guardians and educators, industry, and policy makers. The new version provides guidance on protecting children's rights online for those companies that develop, provide or make use of information technology.

Distinguished participants,

- Before I conclude, I would like to highlight some issues about the PacCERT which was established and has been functioning for some years with support from the University of the South Pacific (USP) in

particular, Pacific Islands Countries and other international organisations. PacCERT has been facing some critically issues relating to its future survival which requires due attention! ITU along with its partner's are making efforts to find solutions for continued functioning of PacCERT. My colleagues are available to discuss with you the issues and possible solutions for the future of PacCERT.

- I also congratulate the government of Vanuatu who has recently released National Cybersecurity Policy that stipulates clear policy measures to address the issues and provides certainty to the industry as well as general public in the course of any eventuality.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- In conclusion, in these next three days, we will discuss the importance of addressing cybersecurity in a holistic manner with the aim to put in place a regional framework for cooperation and collaboration for the Asia-Pacific region.
- For instance, we believe that The Commonwealth National Cybergovernance Model presented by the CTO will share invaluable insights on how to customize the model framework according to the needs of individual countries. Finally, over these days, we will run the CIRT assessment for Vanuatu and we will establish the national framework on Child Online Protection.
- I look forward to engaging with you in what will undoubtedly be a very informative and fruitful discussions and I have the pleasure to welcome eminent experts from and outside our region. I am sure that their contribution will enrich all the participants.
- I thank you once again the host and in particular you all for your participation and look forward to a very interactive and successful workshop.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Cybersafety is our responsibility, and we need to act now. In, ITU, I can reassure you that we will continue to make greatest efforts to reinforcing an international framework on cybersecurity and to improve the lives of all human beings including children, in providing safe and secure online environment.
- I Thank you.