



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Welcome Remarks

by

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At

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IEEE ETAP Forum, Safari Conference Centre, 30 May 2017

Dr. Maike Luiken, Vice-Chair, Policy Track, IEEE Internet Initiative

James Wendorf, Ph.D., IEEE Internet Initiative Program Director

Paul Cunningham, President IEEE SSIT, IST-Africa Coordinator

Prof. Basie von Solms, Centre for Cyber Security, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Ms. Elizabeth Kamutuezu, Acting Deputy Director: IPRM, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Namibia

Dr. Towela Nyirenda-Jere, Principal Programme Officer, NEPAD Agency, South Africa

Mr. Njei Check, Agence Nationale des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication, Cameroon

Participants from Education and Research, Industry, Not-for-Profits, Funding Organisations as well as Government Ministries, Offices and Agencies;

Distinguished Invited Guests,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Namibia and to open the first public event within IST-Africa Week 2017.

It is extremely timely that IST-Africa cooperated with IEEE to organise the first IEEE Experts in Technology and Policy (ETAP) Forum on Cyber Security to take place in Africa. This has facilitated the participation of over 70 participants from the public, private, education and research and societal sector organisations across 26 countries to share knowledge, experiences and initiate working groups focused on priority issues.

To emphasise the relevance of today's programme let me echo the following remarks by Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda & recipient of the 2006 ICT Award by International Telecommunication Union (ITU);

“It has become abundantly clear to us in Africa that ICT is an indispensable tool in the achievement of our development outcomes, as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (...) The challenge for us, in the developing world, is how best to apply ICT to provide more leverage in our fight against poverty, disease, illiteracy, lack of information and skilled workforce”.

However, while we embrace the open ecosystem of the internet, we should also be cautious that it gives powers to cybercriminals, hence the potential consequences of a realised cyber threat are extensive, and that has catapulted cybersecurity into the boardroom, thus the rationale for this Forum today. According to the International Telecoms Union (ITU), Cyber Security is focused on reducing the impact of malicious use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) on individuals and organisations.

With the wider uptake of online activities by individual and organisations in the public, private, education and research, societal and funding sectors and the steady increase in Internet and mobile penetration around the world, cyber security is becoming an important issue that must be addressed in a holistic way. This requires a strong focus on educating the public and a requirement for coordination between all key stakeholder groups around the world.

We are very fortunate today to have experts from Namibia, South Africa, Cameroon and NEPAD Agency to share experiences on the current state of play and lessons learnt to date.

Significant progress has been made in Africa over the last seven years in increasing Cyber Security awareness and putting the necessary legal and implementation frameworks in place. AfriCERT was established in 2011 to enhance the cyber security of African countries through effective collaboration and communication with all stakeholders concerned across Africa. In 2012, the African Union Commission prepared a draft Convention on the Establishment of a Legal Framework Conducive to Cyber Security in Africa, which was adopted in 2014. African Regional Economic Communities (including ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC) have prepared frameworks to assist their Member States to address the pressing issues related to cyber security and cyber crime over the past six years.

Cyber Security Policies and Computer Incident Response Teams (CIRTs) are already in place in Cameroon, Uganda, South Africa, Mauritania, Egypt, Mauritius and Kenya. ITU has been supporting both Lesotho and Burundi to set up a national CIRT (Computer Incident Response Team) since 2014. In the case of Namibia, as my colleague from the Ministry of ICT will share ECOWAS legislation is being transposed into Namibian legal system with specific legislation related to cybercrime incorporated into Use of Electronic Transaction and Communication Act and Cybercrime bill. The Ministry of ICT has instigated Committees on Internet Governance and Cyber Security and a CIRT committee has been established with stakeholders from a range of organisations. Some of the CIRT committee members are here with us today.

It is my honour again to welcome you as the host country and I wish you good deliberations and successful outputs from this forum.

Thank you