



Secretary General

WELCOME ADDRESS

Dato' Suriani binti Dato' Ahmad, Secretary General, Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia,

Distinguished guests, speakers and participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning!

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the APT Symposium on Cybersecurity 2019 here in Kuala Lumpur, the vibrant capital city of Malaysia.

On behalf of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and all the delegates here, I would like to convey my sincere appreciation to Dato' Suriani Dato' Ahmad, Secretary-General, Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia, for making time to deliver an inaugural address at this Symposium today.

I would like to extend my grateful thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia (MCOMM) and Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), for kindly hosting this symposium and for the warm hospitality extended to all of us.

I would also like to thank the Department of Communications and the Arts, Australian Government, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, for the support through their Extra-Budgetary Contributions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, cybersecurity is on the top agenda of countries and organizations. Many countries invest a huge amount of money and effort to strengthen their cybersecurity. Cybersecurity is a rapidly changing battlefield, which calls for timely shift of strategies to keep up and leave no room for staying passive. Chasing after yesterday's attack is not an effective approach. We need to be proactive, not reactive, in our approach to address the issue. And as cybersecurity is cross-border issue, this requires international collaboration and engagement of all stakeholders on all levels to protect our cyberspace.

Recognizing the importance of cybersecurity, APT members had embraced the issue as one of the strategic pillars in the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020 under Strategic Pillar C – **Trust: Promoting security and resilience through ICT.**

In addition, the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting 2019, which was held from 25 to 26 June 2019 in Singapore, adopted the Singapore Statement on Co-creating Connected Digital Future in the Asia-Pacific.

The Singapore Statement provides strategic guidance and the pathways to the development of telecommunication/ICT in the Asia-Pacific region for the next five years. Among the five Strategic Goals of Singapore Statement, **Digital Trust** aims to promote increased cybersecurity vigilance and foster a trusted and secure cyberspace.

The APT Symposium on Cybersecurity 2019 is, therefore, designed to be result-oriented and capture relevant topics in line with both the Strategic Plan for 2018-2020 and the Singapore Statement.

The overall objective of this Symposium is to bring the APT members to a common platform for a dialogue on cybersecurity and data protection issues and to provide an opportunity to share and address key issues of concern, as well as to facilitate intra-regional collaboration on policy and regulatory issues as required. Industry leaders and other key stakeholders will also share their views on various cybersecurity issues facing the sector.

Cybersecurity requires engagement from both public and private sector. Cyber-legislation, and policy and regulatory initiatives from public sector and initiatives from private sector must go hand-in-hand to make up a holistic approach. Information on these initiatives will be shared and discussed at this Symposium.

Our world becomes more connected through various technologies such as in smart cities, cloud service, and IoT. Interconnectivity and new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning have improved our quality of life. At the same time, they open doors for the attacks and vulnerability. These recent developments in cyber threats and measures will be highlighted. Blockchain with its decentralized nature is the potential technology to strengthen cybersecurity. The topic has also been rightly captured in our programme.

The Symposium will also touch on Data Privacy and Free and Secure Flow of Information which is the topic close to everyone's heart, Digital Identity and the emerging issue of identity theft which is important to digital economy. Critical Information Infrastructures Protection is another important topic. Are we doing enough to protect our critical infrastructure? We will be hearing from expert panelists on these issues.

Best Practice/ Guidelines/ Awareness Raising on Cybersecurity are straightforward but effective approach to address cybersecurity from human aspect. There will also be a session to share stories on this.

More importantly, there will also be a Panel Discussion on National and International Collaborative Effort towards Cybersecurity which aims to stimulate regional collaborative effort in addressing cybersecurity threats.

For this Symposium, we have lined up highly qualified speakers with expertise in the field of cybersecurity from APT member countries, organizations, and industry sectors. I firmly believe this Symposium will be a productive platform that provides you with the insights into cybersecurity issues and possible solutions. I also hope that information, experiences, and knowledge learned from the Symposium will help strengthen cybersecurity capacity in your

countries. This will eventually contribute to the safe and trusted environment for the Asia-Pacific region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that this year, the APT is celebrating the 40th Anniversary of its establishment. All events including this Symposium join the celebration. The Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting 2019 in June was also to commemorate the 40th Anniversary. The APT is committed to continue serving and facilitating its members to meet the objectives of being the telecommunity.

On that note, I wish to express my grateful thanks once again to the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia and Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission for hosting this event and for the excellent preparations and arrangements.

I wish you very successful deliberations and fruitful discussion.

Thank you.