

WORKSHOP

CYBER SECURITY AND CYBERCRIME POLICIES FOR AFRICAN DIPLOMATS

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INTRODUCTION

- The Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) is a Unit in the Office of the Chairperson of the AU Commission charged with coordinating, reporting and advising the Chairperson on security threats to the continent.
- The security threats facing the continent include political instability, transnational organized crimes, environmental issues and other issues including cybercrime that could have ramifications on the well being of the peoples and government of Africa.
- In doing its duties, the ISC relies on regional mechanisms such as;
 - Regional Economic Communities
 - Regional Police Cooperation mechanisms
 - INTERPOL
 - CISSA
 - ETC
- The ISC also tries to provide platforms for these institutions to interact and exchange intelligence

THE TREND OF CYBERCRIME IN AFRICA

- The Internet is changing people's lives and transforming economic sectors such as agriculture, banking and transportation among others
- The rapid spread of smartphones has made Africa become the global leader in internet penetration growth
- Digital connectivity in Africa increased from 167.3 million in 2012 to 412 million at the end of 2017 and with prospects to further growth
- Africa's digital revolution is not just about connectivity, it is also about implementing policies that allow for the participation of the people of the continent in the new economy
- But Africa's cyberspace has become a hot bed of risks (as explained by the delegate from Ghana yesterday
- The whole sphere is affected by sophisticated malware intrusions, financial cybercrime, phishing and mass surveillance
- Financial losses because of cybercrime in the continent was estimated at \$3.5 billion in 2016, rising from the estimated \$ billion in 2015
- This figure is expected to continue to grow because of the lack of technology and skills to fend off such attacks
- Internet scams on the continent has moved beyond the notorious 419 Nigerian email scams
- Social media has emerged to become the favored method used by scammers as criminals use fake Links, fake news, phishing etc to try to dupe potential victims
- This is becoming common as internet penetration is increasing in Africa, 32.5% at the end of 2017
- 13.7% of the population now use social media in several transactions
- 177 million people across the continent are on Facebook at the end of 2017
- About 94% of them use mobile device to access social network

AFRICA'S ATTEMPT AT COMBATING CYBERCRIME

- Africa's cyberspace remains one of the most vulnerable in the world
- Many African countries have weak infrastructure and responses against cybercrime
- Just about 20% of African countries have put in place legal framework for cybersecurity
- Only 11 countries have adopted substantive laws on cybercrime
- Even where laws and procedures exist, the systems lag behind the rapid pace of innovation in the digital development
- However, in 2014, the African Union took an important step to greater digital safety by adopting a cybersecurity convention that addressed issues from cybercrime to personal data protection and e-commerce
- It wasn't an easy process as the AU engaged all the Member States and REC's to achieve this
- Despite this breakthrough, a vast majority of AU Member States are yet to sign the Convention

WAY FORWARD

- A resilient cyberspace is vital to fulfilling Africa's potentials and meeting society's rising expectations. This demands pragmatic political action, good cyber governance and smart regulation system
- The AU should therefore continue to use its resources and expertise to mobilize its Member States to implement best digital best practices and stay up to date with innovations
- Providing compatible laws within each REC would likely improve matters
- Exchange and sharing of information, experience and good practices among AU Member States

CONCLUSION

- With a young population that is rapidly adopting new technologies, Africa is on the verge of an internet boom.
- The current cyber threat landscape in Africa shows that users are being impacted both by threats that are trending globally as well as some that more specific to the region.
- To keep pace, Africa needs to urgently address efforts to combat cybercrime and improve its cyber security posture.
- It will take a concerted effort from international governments, industry, and civil society to fight cybercrime and improve cyber security so that Africa can reach its full potential and stay on track to derive maximum benefit in the expanding global economy

THANK YOU