Opening Address for the Asia-Pacific Regional Cybercrime Workshop

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- Swaadee Khrub and Good Morning to all.

- There are almost 900 million internet users in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific - that's almost 25% of the total population of this region. Indeed, in today's world and on current internet use growth rates, your average internet user is more likely to be in a developing country than a developed country. And is more likely to use a mobile device to access the internet than a fixed line broadband subscription.

- I don't need to tell you that the great opportunity that such connectivity offers for economic and social development also opens up opportunities for misuse of ICT and criminal activity.

- Online revenue lost by merchants making use of e-Commerce for example is estimated at around 1% of total revenue. In a survey of almost 20,000 individuals globally, 58 percent reported ever having experienced a virus or malware attack. Such attacks are more than a mere nuisance. Research on just one botnet showed that malware installed on around a million personal computers collected, in just 10 days, online banking details and credit card information with a potential value up to 8m USD.

- The combined result of online criminal actions has a significant impact on victims. Individuals, companies and governments all risk exposure to monetary or material loss, invasion of privacy and exposure to harmful content.

- And yet there is no reason why online space should be the 'wild west' it is often portrayed to be. Raising user awareness of risks (just as in 'real world' crime prevention), developing technical tools for preventing and investigating criminal actions in cyberspace, and providing the right legislative frameworks, law enforcement and criminal justice capacity, and international cooperation mechanisms are all important steps that can be taken to prevent online harms and bring to justice those who seek to misuse such technology.

- Still, however, globally, we need a better understanding of the phenomenon of cybercrime and the most effective ways in which it can be prevented and combatted.

- This workshop is about supporting you to share your experience in this respect - both with each other and with us. My colleagues will shortly tell you more about the global study on cybercrime. In brief, however, the study aims to provide a global snapshot of the problem of cybercrime and the response to it. Only armed with such information can the international community develop a coherent and effective response to this global challenge.

- We are delighted that you are a part of that and look forward to fruitful discussions over the next days.