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**Speech of the EU ambassador to Ghana
Cyber security Awareness Month
Accra, KAIPTC, 22 October 2018**

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana,
Honourable Minister for Communications,
Members of the Government,
Dear partners, colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the European Union, I am pleased to be here today and share some European views during this event marking the Cyber security awareness month celebrated worldwide.

As we are gathered here today at the Kofi Annan Centre, we should have in our minds the great man for Ghana, Africa and the entire world that was K. Annan, dedicating his life to defending peace and human rights.

Today we are gathered in an era of **technological evolution!** Certainly, technological innovations bring great potential and help us achieve a better future. The benefits of ICT are obvious to all of us: reinforcing economic development, enabling essential services, facilitating social connections, making financial transactions from our living rooms, the list is endless.

Technology also acts as a great global equaliser: internet empowers people in all corners of the world, young and old, rich and poor. The importance of ICT as an enabler for sustainable development and a means for governance accountability has also been confirmed in the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

As we witness countries around the globe rolling out broad ICT strategies in order to reap the digital dividends, we realise that our growing dependence on ICT is also coupled with potential vulnerabilities.

The fast evolution of **criminal behaviours** and patterns, exploiting technology developments and existing legal gaps is omnipresent. We read about it every day in the news.



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It is evident that fighting criminal activity carried out in cyber space is a complex challenge, especially since the threshold for committing cybercrime has decreased immensely in the past few years: it is not difficult to become a cybercriminal!

Even more so, cybercrime ignores borders! Criminals take advantage of the territoriality of legislation to make their crimes harder to investigate and prosecute.

Indeed, **judiciary and law enforcement authorities** are confronted with immense difficulties in delivering their mandate. The traditional law enforcement mechanisms are often rendered ineffective in light of the complex features of cybercrime.

To address these challenges we need in Europe, in Ghana and worldwide:

- To develop relevant domestic legal frameworks implemented by appropriately trained people.
- To devise new ways of monitoring and reporting cybercriminal activity.
- To work together across borders and across society.

At the same time there is a balance to strike, we should not strangle the new technology; we must maximize the benefits of, say, the Internet, while minimizing the attendant risks.

- We must fight cybercrime but without sacrificing the rule of law, including the protection of human rights.
- We must have confidence in each other's ICT systems so that international trade and communications are encouraged.

This important balance is offered by the Budapest Convention. With to date 61 countries having accessed the Convention, notably the United States of America, it is the most important legally binding international agreement on cybercrime. Accession to the Convention sends an important signal about a country's readiness to effectively fight cybercrime, and engage in international cooperation to this end.

Ghana initiated the process of joining the Budapest Convention (not yet ratified), and that has triggered our commitment to support the country in



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implementing the Convention and enhancing the capacities of relevant national institutions' in fighting cybercrime.

Indeed, since 2013 the **European Union** has partnered with the Council of Europe, building on the earlier experience of our cooperation in accession countries we delivered the joint EU-CoE Global Action on Cybercrime-**GLACY** (for a total of €13m in all partner countries, until 2020).

GLACY has offered in particular in **Ghana**:

Technical assistance in harmonisation of legislation and policy in line with the Budapest Convention; ***Judicial training***, providing skills for judges and prosecutors on cases of cybercrime and electronic evidence; ***Law enforcement capacities***, providing specialised skills for investigations of cybercrime and electronic evidence; international cooperation and information sharing.

Interpol joined the initiative on the law enforcement component, as well as several EU Member States.

But on this issue, strong local ownership and commitment is key!

Thus, in order to support an intervention owned by partner countries the EU launched recently a new initiative called **Cyber Resilience for Development** (for a total amount of €11m, to be run till 2020).

This new project will build on GLACY achievements, supporting further the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** (SDGs 9.a and 16.a).

This project – implemented with several active EU Member States – will aim at increasing the security and resilience of critical information infrastructure of partner countries while ***ensuring compliance with human rights and the rule of law***, through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive set of policy, organisational, and technical measures.

Your Excellency the President of the Republic, allow me to reiterate on behalf of the European Union, our commitment to foster the positive work accomplished on this issue over the last decade, and develop further our collaboration in this area of mutual interest and shared values.

I wish you all the best with the events during the week and looking forward to meet you for future engagements on the issue!