

**Statement for the Opening Ceremony of the Training on the Fundamentals of Cybersecurity
Management**

Citadines Roces Quezon City
16 July 2024 8:00AM – 10:00 A.M.

Message from JICA Philippines Office Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema

We gather here today for the opening of the 3-day Training on the Cybersecurity.

Let me begin by congratulating on today's kick-start with all of you.

JICA is here to reaffirm JICA's continued support, with teaming up with relevant agencies, such as DICT and international development partners, to make cyberspace safe.

Here, we have to be frank to admit that, according to a research statistic, the Philippines is the fourth most attacked country in the world, with over 50 million web threat attempts in 2021.

In addition, the Philippines ranked 61st out of 194 countries worldwide in the 2020 Global Cybersecurity Index, placing below major ASEAN countries.

This is the reality.

Consequently, the Philippine government has a clear initiative, aiming to respond to cyber threats and network intrusions and to realize Trusted, Secure and Reliable Cyberspace, in line with the National Cybersecurity Plan (NCSP) 2023-2028.

Based on JICA's previous study for safe and globally-inclusive digital economies, we recognize that the key enabler to promote and cope with digitalization includes

- i) strengthening cybersecurity posture
- ii) nurturing talents, and
- iii) increasing the government's implementation capacity.

Subsequently, JICA immediately decides to extend further support to DICT, that is the dispatch of JICA Experts for a two-year Project on Capacity Development for Cybersecurity.

This is a very timely support in line with Executive Order No. 58 adopting the said NCSP, issued in last April.

The Project aims at the development of DICT's capacity on cybersecurity, thereby, contribute to the enhancement of the country's cybersecurity posture and the achievement of the resiliency for the Philippine cyberspace, including Critical Information Infrastructure.

Now, please allow me to reiterate that we are committed to continue our support to the Philippine government to develop its capacity, particularly on inter-sectoral coordination, and the country's awareness improvement on the importance of taking measures against cyber threat landscape, in addition to nurturing more cyber professionals.

In this context, for the training this time, we have also invited the DFA, DOE, PCG and Supreme Court for their participation in this 3-day training.

Moreover, it is with great honor and pleasure that I would like to share with you that in line with NCSP and JICA's comprehensive approach to the sector, we have decided to accept the first scholar from DICT-NCERT¹ under JICA's training program in Japan, also known as "Knowledge Co-creation Program", for his one-year training program in Japan.

The scholar will hone his talent to obtain master's degree on "Solving Social Challenges by ICT for Promotion of Cybersecurity".

¹ NCERT : National Computer Emergency Response Team

Needless to say, cybersecurity is a rapidly growing concern for the Philippines and the entire world in line with the promotion of digital transformation.

Under such a circumstance, we are very pleased to share our knowledge, experiences and lessons learned with the spirit of *Bayanihan*.

For example, in Japan, Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2021, there were no major incidents that interfered with although there were about 450 million suspicious accesses.

Again, I emphasize that JICA is truly enthusiastic to share our know-how with Filipino friends.

Mutual understanding and close collaboration is our motto.

In this regard, I also point out that today's event is the very momentous action, as we are taking our memorable first step soon after the Trilateral Summit Meeting among Japan, the Philippines and the U.S. in last April in Washington D.C.

Today's cooperation among JICA's DICT and USAID is a great first opportunity to deepen our partnership immediately following the said Trilateral Summit, where the three top leaders confirmed to strengthen cooperation in the field of cyber.

As a closing, may I encourage each of you to fulfill your respective roles toward our common goal.

With cybersecurity threats and data breaches on the rise, we need to seriously and immediately address the concerns, by implementing the most effective measures to combat cyber risks and protect our networks.

Let's jointly pursue to strengthen our collaboration and deepen our partnership to keep up with new threats and combat cyber risks.

Let's do improve sectoral coordination, while creating a positive culture for cybersecurity.

Together, we can achieve our common goal of building a safer cyberspace.

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