Speech minister Cooper

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Guests, members of the press,

I am pleased that you have gathered here today, for the official opening of CARICERT, the Caribbean Cyber Emergency Response Team.

"In 2019 Curaçao is the leading information society in the Caribbean, with a well-developed knowledge economy"

This was stated in the Masterpan Curacao Information Society, developed and pubished in 2009. This masterplan contains a broad vision on Curacao as a knowledge society, in which our economy, our education, healthcare and international trade can grow and excel.

The main item in this masterplan is the use of ICT. The ICT infrastructure is necessary to exchange information between all stakeholders in a society: individuals, businesses and government. We want Curacao to be a future hub in the global value chains, benefiting socially and economically from a community wide pro- active and innovative approach towards ICT.

The Curacao government is working hard to achieve the goals presented. We do this in various ways and on various levels. We aim for the population to use the internet for trading, education, for communication and for social goals. We want children to be educated to work with computers and become modern and efficient workers in the future. We invest a lot in the digital highway, the ICT infrastructure, on Curacao, stimulating our population and our businesses to work on digitalization.

Doing this, we realize there is a downside to the computerization and digitalization of our society. The dependency we create, also incorporates a liability. We are all

aware of the enormous growth of cyber crime throughout the world. On a regular base the news brings us examples of incidents with a large regional, national or even international impacts, related to the internet.

In the industrial sector more and more operational systems are connected to the internet. We call them SCADA or ICS (Industrial Computer Systems). By being connected to the worldwideweb, the chances increase that vital systems (water, energy, finance) will be disrupted because of attacks from the internet or maybe by human mistakes. Also cyber criminals are aiming for vital systems to fail, whether as an act of activism or in order to blackmail.

Not only the vital sectors are the target of cyber criminals. Also the computer user at home is a popular victim. Cyber criminals have different ways to earn money using home computers. One is these tactics is called phishing: approaching home users and convincing them to provide their usernames and passwords to log in on a new and more secure website. In the meanwhile they steel this information and are able to transfer money to their own accounts. Or scamming: promising large amounts of money when a home user will help to transfer money to a certain account. Also there is the tactic of creating botnets: large networks of zombiecomputers, who are used to attack websites or to steal credit card details and sell them underground. The tactics of cyber criminals are advanced and often not recognized by the computer user at home. Also detection is hard, as they work from different countries.

So, is the internet broken? Should we stop the digitalization of Curacao, in order to go back to our writing machine and piece of paper?
This is not an option.

But what we can do, is make the internet safer. That is the reason we are here today. A very effective instrument in the fight against cyber crime is a Cyber Emergency Response Team. With CARICERT, we have this instrument operational now. Mr De Canha will tell you in a minute how CARICERT operates and which services it offers. What I want to emphasize is that this is a big step forward to a saver knowledge based society. Being able to detect and handle cyber related incidents, will increase

the trust in the use of internet and will convince people that they have to make steps in the use of it: e-booking, e-banking, e-trading.

CARICERT will advice and help, but she can not do it alone.
We need all participants in our society, governments, businesses and the Caribbean inhabitants to work together to make and keep the internet a safe place. We all have our responsibility in this and we should take that seriously. To do this the Curacao government will help by providing information, instruction and education. We are planning to start an awareness campaign for the general public. The main target is to make people aware that cyber security is in their own hands and we will give them hands on information on how to do that.
And we will expand Caricert, so it will be ready to face all the challenges the cyberworld will bring in the future.

We should realize that Caricert is just starting, she is the youngest CERT in the world today. The organization will need time to grow, to increase the number of services and to professionalize continuously. I would like to call out for all organizations in the Caribbean to help Caricert with this, by sharing information and by making effort to bring cyber security to the highest possible level.

Thank you