Regional Parliamentary Webinars to Promote Universality and Implementation of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime

**A series of Webinars
Jointly organized by
the Council of Europe and
Parliamentarians for Global Action**

July 2021 - January 2022

Background and Justification

As the world evolves towards digitalization, the use of and reliance on information technology has become more and more pervasive in society. Targeting and illegally exploiting computer systems and data have also become increasingly common.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has spurred an unprecedented increase in cyber-based illegal activities. Offences involving computers have grown rapidly both in number and in sophistication, and even more alarmingly since the beginning of the pandemic.

Developing effective countermeasures has proven to be challenging in the global context, as well as aligning legislation, strategies and policies in a consistent and harmonized manner. Heterogeneous legal frameworks, lack of national strategies, limited criminal justice capacities to counter cybercrime and secure electronic evidence, and information infrastructures that are still scarcely secured in a number of countries, has made societies worldwide vulnerable targets for cybercrime. Moreover, governments struggle in reconciling effective responses to cybercrime with human rights and rule of law requirements online.

The action that the Council of Europe has been developing to tackle these issues is based on strengthening capacities of criminal justice authorities worldwide on the basis of the *Budapest Convention on Cybercrime*, which is the only binding international instrument on this issue that provides consistent definitions of conducts to be criminalized, procedural powers for investigations and prosecutions, and provisions for international cooperation.

The Convention with already 66 Parties serves as a guideline for any country developing comprehensive national legislation against cybercrime and as a framework for international cooperation between States Parties to this treaty.

The formula of the Budapest Convention as the common standard backed up by the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) and capacity building through Cybercrime Programme Office (C-PROC) continues to ensure impact. With the future Second Additional Protocol on enhanced cooperation and disclosure of electronic evidence, the mechanism of the Budapest Convention is likely to remain the most relevant international standard for years to come.

Parliamentarians, both as advocates and as lawmakers, fully mobilized, can make a substantive and decisive impact in promoting universality and implementation of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and its First Additional Protocol on Xenophobia and Racism, as well as generating wider awareness of the forthcoming Second Additional Protocol, accompanied by necessary safeguards to ensure adequate privacy and data protections, as appropriate.

Parliamentarians for Global Action, GLACY+ project and Octopus Project of the Council of Europe are joining efforts to co-organise a series of thematic webinars to promote the importance of the universality and implementation of the Budapest Convention and its Protocol/s to ensure an effective and coordinated approach to tackle cybercrime, a threat to human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Objective and expected Outcomes

This series of webinars is intended to provide Parliamentarians and other relevant policy makers with a platform for identifying effective approaches to countering cybercrime in their respective countries, and how to make use of the opportunities offered by the mechanism of the Budapest Convention.

As a result of these thematic webinars, it is expected that participants will:

- Become more familiar with the main attributes of the Budapest Convention as a guideline for domestic cybercrime legislation, including legal tools to get access to e-evidence as well as a framework for international cooperation

- Be better equipped to promote universality and implementation of the Budapest Convention, as appropriate, in their respective countries

- Be better informed regarding related capacity building programmes organized by the Council of Europe

Participants

Parliamentarians and other relevant policy makers from countries in Africa, the Caribbean region, Asia/Pacific and Latin America will be invited to participate in these thematic webinars.

Planning July 2021 – January 2022

Date	Region
13 July 2021	African Region
15 September 2021	Caribbean Region
9 November 2021	Asia/Pacific Region
18 January 2022	Latin America

Agenda for First Webinar

UTC	First webinar
12.00 pm	**Welcome and Opening** • Parliamentarians for Global Action, *Peter BARCROFT, Senior Director, Intl. Peace & Security Program PGA* • Council of Europe *Virgil Spiridon, Head of Operations, CoE Cybercrime Programme Office (C-PROC)*
12:15 pm	**The mechanism of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime** • Overview of the Convention and its Protocols • Impact, Benefits and Effective Criminal Justice Response *Betty SHAVE, Council of Europe expert* **The Role of Parliamentarians in promoting Universality and Implementation of the Budapest Convention** *Peter BARCROFT, Senior Director, Intl. Peace & Security Program PGA* *Facilitated by Council of Europe experts and the Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC) and PGA*
12:45 pm	**Questions and Answers session** *Facilitated by the Council of Europe and the Parliamentarians for Global Action*
13:00 pm	**Countering cybercrime in Africa: Experiences** • Cybercrime challenges in the region • Impact of the Budapest Convention and capacity building in practice *Interventions by:* *Dr. Albert ANTWI-BOASIAKO, National Cybersecurity Advisor, Ghana* *T. George-Maria TYENDEZWA, Assistant Director, Federal Ministry of Justice, Nigeria*

13:30 pm	**Questions and Answers session** *Facilitated by the Council of Europe and the Parliamentarians for Global Action*
13:45 pm	**Conclusions and Key Takeaways** • Council of Europe *Virgil Spiridon, Head of Operations, CoE Cybercrime Programme Office (C-PROC)* • Parliamentarians for Global Action *Peter BARCROFT, Senior Director, Intl. Peace & Security Program PGA*
14:00 pm	**Close of Webinar**

Contacts

Council of Europe:

Virgil SPIRIDON
Head of Operations
Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC)
Bucharest, Romania
Virgil.SPIRIDON@coe.int

Catalina STROE
Project Manager
Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC)
Bucharest, Romania
Catalina.STROE@coe.int

Nina LICHTNER
Programme Officer
Cybercrime Division
Council of Europe
Strasbourg, France
Nina.LICHTNER@coe.int

Parliamentarians for Global Action:

Peter BARCROFT
Senior Director
Intl. Peace & Security Program PGA
New York, USA
Peter.BARCROFT@pgaction.org

Florian DELSERT
Program Associate
Intl. Peace & Security Program PGA
New York, USA
Florian.DELSERT@pgaction.org