

## Remarks by Ambassador Cavendish

### PGA REGIONAL CARIBBEAN WORKSHOP ON ENGAGING FEMALE AND MALE PARLIAMENTARIANS IN PROMOTING (I) UNIVERSALITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BUDAPEST CONVENTION ON CYBERCRIME AND ITS TWO ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS AND (II) RAISING AWARENESS ON THE DIFFERENTIATED IMPACT OF CYBER INCIDENTS ON THE BASIS OF GENDER

PORT-OF-SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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It is indeed my pleasure to welcome everyone here today to Trinidad and Tobago in general and specifically, to this workshop.

Let me express my appreciation to the organisers - the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) International Peace and Security Program, in cooperation with the PGA National Group in the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, with the kind support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands - for hosting such an important and timely workshop.

In the next few minutes, I hope to share information, or at least remind you of the importance of the Budapest Convention, which is widely used across the European Union as a tool for addressing cybersecurity.

The Budapest Convention on Cybercrime is the most relevant international agreement on cybercrime and electronic evidence. It provides for the criminalisation of offences against and by means of computers, procedural law tools to secure electronic evidence, and for international co-operation among Parties.

In a 2020 publication, the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) documented the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime's benefits and impact, based on information provided by practitioners in Parties to this treaty. Some of those noted benefits and impact include:

- **Support to domestic legislation on cybercrime and electronic evidence:** As an example, the Dominican Republic is among the few countries in Latin America and the Caribbean with an independent law to investigate, prosecute and sanction cybercrime.
- **International cooperation**, including serious and organised cases of cybercrime
- **Strengthening criminal justice capacities** of practitioners to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cybercrime and other

Ladies and gentlemen, we know that a large proportion of cybercrime cases involve violence committed in the digital realm. The data indicate that women are disproportionately subjected to various forms of such attacks, which stem from the same mechanism of power and control that manifests itself in violence against women in the offline world. Here, the Budapest Convention can also be used to help address online and technology-facilitated violence against women through co-ordinated policies, prevention, protection, prosecution and international co-operation.

Unfortunately, the cybercrime field is, to this day, still largely gender neutral, to the extent that crimes against women perpetrated online are still not taken into account in cybercrime frameworks.

Women have a crucial role to play in effective criminal justice responses to cybercrime, but further action is needed to strengthen the involvement of women as policymakers or legislators developing and adopting legislation on cybercrime, or as law enforcement, prosecutorial or judicial practitioners investigating and prosecuting such offences.

Concerted efforts are also required to enhance the criminal justice response to cybercrimes that target women, and to ensure that women can access justice when they do become victims of cybercrime

Ladies and gentlemen, within the context of a solid partnership on cybersecurity between the EU and the Caribbean, you should know that we are supporting other initiatives, as well. I will just mention three other examples:

- The CARICOM project, '(Capacity Development for CARIFORUM Member States on Asset Recovery and Cybercrime) supports the detection and investigation of cybercrimes in CARIFORUM Member States by raising awareness of the Caribbean Cybersecurity Action Plan (CCSCAP) and strengthening the regional response mechanism to deal with cyber incidents.
- The European Union - Latin America and the Caribbean Digital Alliance, constitutes a comprehensive political and cooperation framework for digital engagement with the region. Digital is one of the new pillars of support of the EU with partner countries. Cooperation on digital technologies is a priority in the effort, given the region's need for greater connectivity.
- Finally, Trinidad and Tobago is one of five countries chosen to become a Partner State in the UNOCT-INTERPOL initiative – "CT TECH". This joint UNOCT-INTERPOL initiative is implemented under the Global Counter-Terrorism Program on Cybersecurity and New Technologies of the United Nations Counter Terrorism Center (UNCCT) of UNOCT.

The objective of this CT TECH initiative is to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement and criminal justice authorities and enable them to counter the exploitation of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes. This initiative will also support the leveraging of new and emerging technologies in the fight against terrorism.

I am looking forward to seeing a number of CARICOM member states signing on to, and reaping the benefits of, the Budapest Convention.

On behalf of the EU, we look forward to continuing our engagement with you, our partners, to effectively address cybersecurity.

And we offer our best wishes for a productive workshop.