



**Event** : Stratbase ADR Institute "Establishing a Strong and Credible Cyber Defense Posture in the Philippines"  
**Date** : October 25, 2022, 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM  
**Venue** : Rizal Room, Manila House Private Club, 8/F Seven/NEO Building (formerly Net Park), 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, BGC  
**Speaker** : Usec. Paul Joseph V. Mercado

### OPENING REMARKS

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To our fellow public servants, / partners from the private sector, / civil society groups, technology experts, / and to all present here with us today, / I would like to express my warmest regards / and to greet everyone a pleasant morning. / On behalf of the DICT, / I am truly humbled and honored to open today's event.

We are all gathered here today / in celebration of the Cybersecurity Awareness Month. / This is an opportune event / where we can improve the level of cybersecurity awareness / as we guide our digital citizens in the safe use of cyberspace. As we move towards technological advancements, / an era where everyone is racing for bigger, faster, and smarter things, / we cannot simply turn a blind eye to cybersecurity / -- especially now that we find ourselves / increasingly shifting our daily activities online, / as seen in the



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growing number of digital citizens at an unprecedented rate. / This has been possible due to our collective efforts / in bringing ICT and connectivity closer / and more accessible to our people. /

Unfortunately, / this does not come without a price. With the rise of digital citizens / comes the rise of cybercriminals who are constantly on standby, / waiting to prey on the vulnerabilities of our digital citizens in cyberspace, / thus causing unwanted losses and damages. Such activities include / online hacking, / ransomware, / data breaches, / phishing, / and online scams, to name a few. These cybercriminals seem to always be one step ahead of the game / with their techniques and methods / becoming more devious and sophisticated, / as we improve our cybersecurity measures. But all hope in this battle is not lost. With emerging technologies, / such as the Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence / that continuously develop through machine learning with data and algorithms, / we might soon have the upper hand against these cyber criminals / by putting a stop / to their illegal activities before they can even harm our digital citizens.

According to a report by Secure Connections in March 2022, cybersecurity needs to be a key priority of the Philippines / if it intends to participate more meaningfully in, / and benefit from, the fast-growing / global digital economy. As we continue to undertake



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interventions that will enable the country to be more engaged / and to participate in the digital economy, we / at the DICT / are determined to establish a strong / and secure cyberspace for everyone / as we venture into the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The first step in solving a problem / is to acknowledge that it exists. We acknowledge / that the cybersecurity issue / is a global concern. Through our information dissemination programs, / we aim to raise awareness / on how to mitigate cybersecurity risks and threats / as more and more people rely on ICT. Furthermore, to educate our citizens regarding the proper and safe use / of online platforms and resources, our Cybersecurity Bureau / is continuously conducting / cyber-related training and webinars to the general public / in order to equip Filipinos with the necessary information / and skills / to be responsible and safe digital users. Recently, / text scams have been causing unwanted nuisance to our mobile phone users / and concerns on the security of their personal information have been raised. / To address these issues, / President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed into law / **the SIM Card Registration Act**, / requiring mobile phone users to register their SIM cards. / Lastly, / as we navigate the new normal / where hybrid work and learning arrangements are being implemented, the DICT also regularly conducts its **CybersafePH Campaign** / that provides practical tips / to keep individuals safe when using online platforms / and to keep online private data secured.



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I truly believe that we, as decision-makers, enablers, and leaders in the ICT industry, have been given a noble mission– **to provide a safe / and secure cyberspace to our digital citizens / where they can harness the full potential of ICT**, that will ultimately lead to improved quality of life / and attainment of personal goals / and dreams.

Again, on behalf of the DICT, Happy Cybersecurity Awareness Month to each and every one of you. May we all continue to serve our digital citizens / and ensure their utmost safety in cyberspace!