Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC) in Bucharest, Romania

Launching ceremony
Monday, 2 June 2014, 17h00 – 18h30
Transilvania Room of Victoria Palace

Speaking points
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Introduction

Dear Prime Minister, dear Vice-Prime Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

One year ago, in March and in April 2013, the Prime Minister of Romania and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe met twice.

Among other things, they agreed that further international efforts were required to meet the challenge of cybercrime. The Prime Minister offered to host a Council of Europe Office to this effect here in Bucharest.

The Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC) that has now been established is the tangible outcome of their deliberations.

I would like to thank the Prime Minister for his bold proposal that has now become a reality.

The objective of the Council of Europe is to strengthen human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Cybercrime undermines these objectives. And therefore protecting you and your rights in cyberspace is a priority for us.

Cybercrime is the most transnational of all crimes. For this reason we need to work globally. The Office here in Bucharest will be a cornerstone of our approach.
The primary role of this Office is to support capacity building on cybercrime worldwide.

I am very pleased with the way the setting up of the office is going, with the interest and resources it is generating and with the cooperation and support that we are receiving.

We are based in the UN House and with UNICEF, UNDP, WHO and UNHCR we have wonderful neighbours.

Here are some answers to the five most frequently asked questions related to this office.

1. FAQ: Why capacity building?

“Capacity building” is both,

- A practical necessity.
- And a policy choice.

It is an urgent necessity because we are all affected by the threat of cybercrime, be it because of intrusions in our most intimate and private data, be it because our identity is stolen, be it because we are defrauded, or be it because our children are at risk of sexual violence online.

It is a necessity because public authorities must have the capacity to protect the critical infrastructure that we rely upon every day.

It is a necessity because cybercrime is a violation of our rights, and governments must have the capacity to protect our rights.

And it is a practical necessity because most evidence in relation to almost any crime is now stored in electronic form.
Any police officer, any prosecutor and any judge will need to have the skills to deal with electronic evidence here in Romania and in any country in the world.

It is a policy choice because capacity building on cybercrime is of one of the few areas that the international community can agree upon when it comes to security in cyberspace.

Therefore, the Parties to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and the European Union, but also other organisations and states on all continents give so much importance to capacity building.

2. FAQ: Why a Council of Europe office on cybercrime?

If we want to be credible with cybercrime capacity building as our policy choice, we need to able to deliver.

Therefore, in the beginning of last year, we were looking for ways to enhance our own ability to support countries worldwide.

We thought about an office:

- that is specialised and focused
- that is visible
- that is efficient and cost effective
- that is sufficiently attractive to engage partners and donors
- and that is supported also politically.
3. FAQ: Why establish this office in Bucharest?

There are several reasons for this:

a) While we were wondering in February 2013 how to put in place the infrastructure necessary for enhanced capacity building, the Prime Minister of Romania offered to host an office on cybercrime when our Secretary General visited Romania in March 2013. And here we are ....

However, there are also other reasons:

b) Romania has much experience with cybercrime as a source and victim but also with fighting cybercrime.

When we studied the feasibility of the office last year we were impressed by efforts of the authorities to strengthen interagency cooperation and coordination to deal with cybercrime and other forms of crime.

In June 2013, the Prime Minister decided to establish the Inter-ministerial Strategic Group for the Prevention and Control of Macro-Criminality (GIS). Within the GIS, a Specific Sub-group on Cybercrime was created.

The support of this Sub-group and by Vice-Prime Minister Oprea were crucial when establishing the Cybercrime Office of the Council of Europe. Such an integrated approach is much welcome. It will allow us to interact with public authorities here in Romania in a coordinated manner also in the future.

c) Romania has been a partner of the Council of Europe in cybercrime matters for more than ten years. For example:

- Romania became a Party to the Convention on Cybercrime in 2004. The law on cybercrime of 2003 was a 1:1 transposition of the Budapest Convention and has been a popular model for countries all over the world.
- We have been working closely with the specialised cybercrime prosecution office at DICOT and we have been sharing the experience of the cybercrime unit at your national police with many countries.

- The Ministry of Justice seconded an expert to the Council of Europe for several years.

- And the Permanent Representation of Romania in Strasbourg has been essential in mobilising political support to the Convention on Cybercrime.

As you can see, our cooperation with Romania has a long history and a solid foundation.

4. FAQ: What will this office be doing?

The Cybercrime Programme Office will support countries worldwide in the strengthening of legislation, training, public/private cooperation, international cooperation and whatever else it takes to have stronger criminal justice capacities to deal with cybercrime and electronic evidence.

For example, today and tomorrow we are holding a workshop on judicial training at the National Institute of Magistrates here in Bucharest. We have participants from the Eastern Partnership region Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, but also from Mauritius, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Tonga.

They are here in the room today.

All these countries are already Parties or intend to become Parties to the Convention on Cybercrime.

Many activities are actually carried out under joint projects with the European Union. We are pleased that the EU as well is focusing on cybercrime capacity building worldwide in partnership with the Council of Europe.
5. FAQ: How can you partner up with this office?

We believe in cooperation. The Internet is a web, cybercrime relies on a criminal web, and we need a web of partners if we want to make a difference.

Romanian institutions have been partnering with us for many years.

The EU, including the European Cybercrime Centre in The Hague, is our partner in numerous joint projects.

The United Kingdom is a partner and provided initial funding that helped us equip the office here in Bucharest.

I would like to invite all of you to engage with us to see how we can cooperate with each other in order to protect people and their rights in cyberspace.

Dear Prime Minister, thank you once again for your excellent and generous proposal to establish here in Bucharest the Cybercrime Office of the Council of Europe with a global vocation.

And thank you Vice-Prime Minister Oprea, thank you Ministry of Justice and other partners for all your support to make it a reality.

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