

**Malaysia's Stand On Cyber Security Grabs Attention Of Delegates In ST Petersburg**  
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**From Voon Miau Ping**

ST PETERSBURG (RUSSIA), Aug 8 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's stand on the issue of cyber security and the need for better enforcement to safeguard states' sovereignty and the people during the APEC Telecommunications and Information Ministerial Meeting (Telmin-9) has grabbed the attention of the delegates.

Russian Communications and Mass Media Minister Nikolay Nikiforov said the issue raised by Information, Communications and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim during the meeting yesterday, was very timely.

During a ministerial joint news conference at the end of the two-day meeting here, Nikiforov who was also Telmin-9 chairman, said cyber threats would not only affect the social aspect of a community but also the business environment of a country.

He said there was a need for cooperation from APEC members to address this matter.

"It is important that we have a synchronised direction in APEC pertaining to ICT which will be an important platform for development and prosperity of our economy," he said.

Rais had yesterday called on the global community to be more resilient and to forge ahead with positive law enforcement programmes to combat crimes in cyberspace.

Rais told the news conference Wednesday that cyber threats on state sovereignty and safety of the people should not be taken lightly.

"Many of us regard the world through ICT and cyberspace as a seamless and borderless world.

"But at the same time, it is pertinent that we should accept the reality that cyber security for each state to serve their own domestic need should be upheld," Rais said.

For that, he suggested that APEC members delve further into the issue collectively in order to come up with certain formulation that can help to address it.

"This is an area in which I believe we should work more closely and in the end, come out with suggestions so that our society and sovereignty of our state are safeguarded," he said.

Rais said although APEC members might have different views on this matter, safeguarding citizens against cybercrime should be a priority.

"When we talk about cyber security, we have to take into account our domestic limitations in providing that kind of freedom, that is to say that an action regarded as crime when committed outside cyberspace should also be seen as crime when committed within the system of the cyberspace," he said.

Otherwise, he said, laws and regulations in governing the use of ICT would be deemed meaningless.

Speaking to Bernama, Rais reiterated that having ICT law in place did not mean the government was attempting to control and censor the content of the Internet but rather to safeguard the country's domestic security.

"The security of a country is vital; the future is no longer to be regarded as involving M16 guns or grenades.

"What will become the issue is that they will destroy the system of the country through the Internet and this is something that should be regarded as potentially explosive," he said.

Earlier, leaders to Telmin-9 unanimously adopted the St Petersburg Declaration.

The 37-point declaration is themed "Building Confidence and Security in the Use of ICT to Promote Economic Growth and Prosperity".

It focuses on five main areas, namely Developing ICT to Promote New Growth, Enhancing Socio-Economic Activities through the Use of ICT, Promoting Safe and Trusted ICT Environment, Promoting Regional Economic Integration and Strengthening Cooperation in the ICT Sector.

Among the key points are the leaders agreed that all stakeholders in the APEC region should cooperate to promote network integrity and resilience, consider existing and potential threats to ICT and to take measures to improve ICT security.

In the goal to achieve universal broadband access by ICT as stated in the Bangkok Declaration 2008, delegates also agreed to encourage member economies to work towards achieving affordable and quality access to broadband in the APEC region by 2015.

The Telmin-9 delegates also acknowledged that the vulnerable groups, especially children and young people are particularly susceptible to threats in an online community, and therefore, the respective APEC members should undertake strategies to counteract these threats.

The outcome of the meeting will be submitted to the 20th APEC Economic Leaders' Summit and the 24th APEC Ministerial Meeting in Vladivostok next month.

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