

Nordic Security Conference, August 29th 2013
Opening marks by Hanna Birna Kristjansdottir, Minister of Interior

Good morning.

I would like to thank the organisers for the opportunity to address this conference and at the same time acknowledge the need for conferences like this.

A modern society relies upon information technology; it couldn't function without it. We see technological advances and increased linking of existing technologies open up new possibilities every day - at a fast rate. Mastering new developments in information technology is necessary for economic growth.

But along with the positive effects come also new dangers for misuse and criminal activity. We are faced with new threats that even few years ago would have been considered unrealistic. Not only do government agencies face these new threats but also the business community and individuals.

Law enforcement agencies must be able to counter this, but at the same time respecting the basic values of privacy our society is based on. To be able to enjoy the benefits of the digital age we need to recognize and adapt to these new threats. Opportunities of the Internet for communication, innovation, business development and free exchange of information, need to be guarded.

Governments have to provide the framework and make sure that the solutions offered meet the standards of the society for protection of personal and commercial information. But we must all unite in our efforts to make this happen; we all have our responsibility in creating the vibrant, flexible, secure and resilient cyberspace we all need.

It is no longer sufficient to think in terms of specific technical solutions such as firewalls and virus protection systems; we need to aim for a progressive cyber security culture and awareness. It should not be regarded as slowing down progress; on the contrary, it is the key to progress.

Secure information technology should not only be regarded as a necessity, but as field of development and business opportunities. Cyber security is not only for fixing problems, it offers opportunities for creating valuable products and export.

This summer we've seen some important steps made to increase cyber security in Iceland. The Icelandic national CERT centre has begun its operation on developing a cyber-security strategy for Iceland. The challenges and opportunities we face for our information systems and technologies are global, therefore we need to aim for solutions that are global and meet global requirements.

One of the important ingredients of having a progressive cyber security culture and awareness is to have a vibrant community of cyber security experts, which can have an international forum for informing and exchanging views on the latest developments and techniques. It is therefore a pleasure for me to open this conference and I wish you all a productive and enjoyable time.

Thank you!