



**Closing Speech by Maud de Boer-Buquicchio,
Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

Budapest Convention – 10th anniversary meeting

Strasbourg, 23 November 2011

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Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Internet has changed our world in a way and to an extent that few other technological advancements have done in the past.

The agreement on a comprehensive treaty against cybercrime reached 10 years ago was a remarkable achievement, anticipating and acknowledging this development and aiming at ensuring that this change would be for the better. For the protection of safety, human rights and human dignity, online as well as offline.

This was, to use a cliché, a shot at a very fast moving target, and it is therefore remarkable that - in spite of the tremendous evolution of technology, and with it, of cybercrime during the past ten years - the Budapest Convention is still a most relevant and effective response to the threats associated with the use and abuse of the Internet.

The “founding mothers and fathers” that elaborated this treaty deserve our appreciation.

The Budapest Convention has, indeed, made a difference, as was witnessed by many speakers this morning.

We note that not only European countries, but also countries such as Argentina, Botswana, Colombia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Tonga and many others have now put legislation in place which is compatible with the Budapest Convention. And we know that many others are following the same path. The Budapest Convention has inspired - if not triggered - a global process of legislative reform in recent years.

Such legislation has been the basis for enhanced criminal justice action in many countries. Law enforcement authorities are becoming more and more specialised and professional. This has led to more cybercrime investigations, prosecutions and adjudications.

And we see that there is an increasing level of international co-operation between the Parties to the Budapest Convention. Such co-operation is based not only on the legal framework, but also on the trust which this Convention has helped to establish.

The same applies to public-private co-operation, which now is a central feature of action against cybercrime.

Clearly, the Budapest Convention is NOT a “symbolic” treaty. It is a treaty that has made an impact around the world.

For the Council of Europe, the Budapest Convention is an essential part of our broader approach on Internet governance. We will discuss the proposed Internet Governance Strategy of the Council of Europe for the coming years later this week at a high-level conference in Vienna.

We believe that the impact of the Budapest Convention will increase if we link it with other standards and tools, such as our treaties on data protection or the Lanzarote Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse.

One of the challenges which lies ahead is to encourage more States to become Parties. I call particularly on the remaining member states of the Council of Europe and of the EU to ratify the Budapest Convention as soon as possible. And I am grateful for the support received in this endeavour from Commissioner Malmström. The same applies to other states that have signed or been invited to accede.

Obviously, many other challenges remain as was pointed out this morning.

However, there is reason for optimism because, in addition to the Budapest Convention, we actually have the magic formula to address the threat of cybercrime.

The magic formula was discovered during the 2007 Octopus conference. The ten pages of conclusions drawn up following the conference were summarised on half a page. And from there the formula was distilled. It consists of one word: CO-OPERATE!

We need engagement from political decision-makers in the co-operation against cybercrime. We need the type of political engagement expressed this morning by senior representatives from Australia, Canada, Hungary, United Kingdom and the USA. We need such engagement from all Parties, signatories and invitees to the Budapest Convention.

We need co-operation with and between countries from all regions of the world. This was illustrated by speakers from Argentina, Senegal, Sri Lanka, and Tonga this morning and was a view shared by many others during the Octopus conference earlier this week.

We need stronger public-private co-operation against cybercrime. Much progress has been made in recent years in this respect. Our experience of co-operation with Microsoft and other private sector partners and initiatives has been most constructive.

We also need stronger co-operation between international organisations. The Council of Europe and the European Union already co-operate very closely with each other. We are also co-operating with the OECD, the OSCE, Interpol and other organisations. Yesterday, for example, we finalised an agreement to co-operate with the Virtual Global Taskforce against online child exploitation. We are certainly prepared to engage in stronger co-operation with relevant organisations of the United Nations system.

We need more technical co-operation to assist countries worldwide in the implementation of the Budapest Convention and related tools and good practices. Technical assistance and capacity-building programmes are conducive to partnerships. They allow different partners and organisations to prove their commitment, to mobilise resources and to join efforts in order to achieve tangible results.

If co-operation at all levels is the magic formula to respond to the challenges of cybercrime, this also implies co-operation between different organisations from public or private sectors.

Of course, like most of our major treaties, the Budapest Convention is not a static treaty. It allows for an effective response to new challenges. A major one, as was said before, is cloud computing - which poses problems of jurisdiction and law enforcement. I am looking forward to the outcome of this afternoon's reflections of the Cybercrime Committee on how best to tackle this issue and to show us the much-needed silver lining.

But one thing is certain: the Budapest Convention is the best tool that exists to effectively fight crime on-line.

With this, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to invite you to mark this special birthday by symbolically blowing out the ten candles with a round of applause.