Accra, November 13, 2023.

PRESS RELEASE: THIRD AFRICA CYBERDRILL: FILL THE GAPS.

The Forum of Africa Emergency Response Teams (also known as AfricaCERT) has completed the third Annual Cyber drill (also known as Africa Cyber Drill) under the theme: "Fill the Gaps" in Maputo, Mozambique from 7th to 10th November 2023. The third cyber drill followed the successful second edition: "Stay on Alert" and the first edition: "Testing the waters".

The hybrid event was hosted by the National Institute of ICT (INTIC) which is the host for the Mozambique National Computer Security Incident Response Team (nCSIRT.Mz), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Software Engineering Institute (SEI) with the support from the Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy (CDP) – United States Department of State. The main objective of the cyber drill was to enhance the preparedness of the African teams against cyber threats. The joint event with the SADC Secretariat was a first-of-its-kind.

The Cyberdrills have become for both the SADC Community and the AfricaCERT a critical capacity-building platform to enhance the existing communication mechanisms, to connect and strengthen innovative cooperation approaches between Computer Security Incident Response Teams, and most importantly to improve the region's cybersecurity readiness, protection, and incident response preparedness and capabilities (increase their cyber security maturity) through hands-on and practical exercises.

The drill was structured as follows:

Protocol:

On November 7th, following the welcome address by Mr. Jean-Robert Hountomey, co-founder of AfricaCERT, representatives of the host country and organizing institutions delivered keynote addresses:

- Dr. Angel L. Hueca, Representative of CERT/CC, Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie Mellon University
- Dr. George Ah-Thew – Senior Programme Officer (SPO) ICT, Southern African Development Community (SADC),
- Ms. Kathrine Fitrell Representative from U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy,

- Mr. Hecdiantro Wilson da Costa Mena, the National Director of Cybersecurity Policies and Digital Services of the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technologies and Social Communications (MINTTICS) of Angola, the Representative of the Chairperson of SADC and Chairman of this continental Cyber Drill;
- Professor Lourino Chemane, the Chairman of the National Institute of ICT (INTIC) which is the host for the Mozambique National Computer Security Incident Response Team (nCSIRT.Mz).

Eng. Nilsa Miquidade, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education of Mozambique, our Host and Guest of Honor; delivered the Ministerial address on behalf of The Honorable Minister Daniel Nivagara.

Training.

The Drill included two days of onsite capacity-building sessions in parallel on Digital Forensics, CSIRT Creation and Management, and Cyber Risk and Resiliency, on the 7- 8 of November 2023. The other (2) days focused on the drill exercises which were delivered in the hybrid mode.

Cyber Drill.

During the drill exercise, several presentations were conducted as follows:

- Development of Cyber Simulation Exercises by Dr Kaleem Usmani. CERT MU
- Making Incident Response Effective in Africa and Fostering Relationships with Global Communities by AfricaCERT
- Introduction of FIRST Membership by Mrs. Tracy Bills, Chair of the FIRST Board of Directors,
- Case studies and Experience sharing from representatives of Benin, Bostwana, Malawi, Mozambique, Eswatini, and Zambia.

The Drill aimed to test the response capability of participating teams facing the following scenarios: Business Email Compromise, Supply chain vulnerabilities, and website defacement. The scenarios were designed to reflect the real-time environment by MaCERT, CERT MU, and The National KE-CIRT/CC, as well as organizers in addition to bjCSIRT and AfricaCERT.

The African countries that participated in the Drill were Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Gambia, Ghana, Kingdom of Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kingdom of Lesotho, Niger, Nigeria, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morrocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Togo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

Colleagues from OIC-CERT and APCERT (India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Pakistan) as well as from Trinidad and The Bahamas joined their colleagues from Africa.

Computer Security Incident Response Teams from 35 countries including 29 African countries participated in the Drill, including the organizing teams.

The organizing team thanks the sponsors including Cyber Range and Iservices Systems.

See you in fall 2024 for the Annual Cyberdrill 2024.