FIRST POST
December 2020
Bringing together Security and Incident Response teams from around the globe.

OVER 2500 CYBERSECURITY PROFESSIONALS PARTICIPATE IN 32ND FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE - Where Defenders Share

Over 2500 cybersecurity professionals from 111 countries signed up for our recent 32nd Annual Conference. The three-day event, which took place online for the first time, featured 33 sessions from industry experts and academics in our global community.

Seventy-two speakers, including Ronald Deibert (Citizen Lab, University of Toronto), Ben Hawkes (Google), and Kathleen Moriarty (Center for Internet Security), from 22 countries presented on subjects covering cyber resilience, building security teams, secure software development, and ethics.

The program included:

- Product Security: Education and Prevention through Root Cause Analysis in Secure Software Development Lifecycle
- Defending the Community through Trusted Sharing
- Building Your Team of Teams: Applying Military Operational and Organizational Methodologies to Defend Large-Scale Enterprises
- The Craft of Cyber-Resilience: Lessons from the Trenches

"The annual FIRST conference is a highlight in my calendar. While we sadly could not meet in person, I'm delighted to see that the online program made no compromise in the quality of the accepted talks. In fact, the online format made the event accessible to people who would otherwise not have been able to participate. This is in line with our mission of becoming even more inclusive. My thanks go to the FIRST events team and the program committee, who are instrumental in delivering such a high-profile event"

Serge Droz, Chair of FIRST

"It was rewarding to see the audience's engagement: excellent attendance, active Q&A sessions, many newcomers, and loyal veterans. We did it, and we are grateful to the speakers, the program committee, the events team, and the sponsors for supporting us"

Lucimara Desiderá, CERT.br/NIC.br (Brazil) and 2020 Conference Program Chair.

Details of how you can view the event presentations can be found at www.first.org

2021 33RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE THEME AND CALL FOR PAPERS

Next year's Annual Conference theme is Crossing Uncertain Times and it will be held virtually. Members from across the globe chose the conference theme - the theme winner, Yoshiki Sugiura, is a manager with NTT Intellilink and a member of NTT-CERT in Japan.

The official call for speakers will tentatively open in December 2020. We will be looking for engaging speakers to present on the latest incident response and information security topics and ideas to strengthen our individual and collective ability to prevent and respond to computer security incidents.

Natsuko Inui will chair the conference. Natsuko is based in Japan and works for FS-ISAC to foster the Asia Pacific community in sharing, collaboration, and engagement. Previous to FS-ISAC, she was an Analyst at Cyber Defense Institute involved in government research projects regarding incident response and cyber-exercises. She is also Vice-Chair of the Nippon CSIRT Association, the CSIRT community of Japan.

2020 FIRST VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM FOR AFRICA AND THE ARAB REGION - SUPPORTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INCIDENT RESPONSE WITHIN AFRICA

By Jean-Robert Hountomey Executive Director of AFRICACERT
and Kaleem Ahmed Usmani Head of CERT Mauritius

AfricaCERT, The African Union Commission, and the Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius (CERT-MU) jointly organized the 2020 FIRST Virtual Symposium for Africa and Arab Region on October 21-23, 2020. The theme was - supporting the effectiveness of incident response within Africa.

The African Union released the digital transformation strategy for Africa (2020-2030) during the virtual conference. Participants and panelists recognized that one of the biggest challenges of the said digital transformation strategy was to address the region's cyber vulnerabilities and threats. Topics discussed were cybersecurity trends, incident response challenges and opportunities, cyber diplomacy, and crisis management during COVID-19.

Three training tracks took place on the first two days on CSIRT creation and management, CSIRT maturity, and cyber threat Intelligence. Participants from 12 African countries attended.

On the final day, the Honorable Deepak Balgobin, the Mauritian Minister of Information Technology, Communication, and Innovation, held a session which saw participants from 24 countries attend. The Minister explained the critical role of cybersecurity and the Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius (CERT-MU) on its digital transformation strategy long before COVID-19 became a catalyst for innovation.

The Global Trends panel, also on day three, provided an understanding of the threat landscape. At the same time, African CSIRTs from various sectors discussed challenges and lessons learned from creating and managing CSIRTs. In the session, On-going Cybersecurity in Africa, multiple contributors to African cyber capacity building initiatives and beneficiaries reflected on improvement areas. The session on the role of CSIRTs in Cyber Diplomacy explored the role CSIRTs have played in international cooperation in cybersecurity through information sharing, norms, and best practices. Teams from Africa, Japan, and France exchanged views about crisis management during COVID19.

Participants and speakers enjoyed the events and reported that they gained valuable information on the Nations' cybersecurity capacity. The discussion on cyber diplomacy has set the African Region scene to come forward as one voice enhancing cooperation, promoting collective actions, developing incident response frameworks, and supporting capacity building.
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The FIRST Symposium for Africa and Arab Region, hosted by an African country, is part of an AfricaCERT engagement strategy that started at the Accra regional symposium around the theme: Joining Forces to Promote Cybersecurity in Africa; hosted in Accra, Ghana on September 28-30 2015 by AfricaCERT, Ministry of Communications, National Communications Authority, and National Information Technology Agency.
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IAN COOK AND DON STIKVOORT RECEIVE JOINT HONORS IN THE INCIDENT RESPONSE HALL OF FAME AWARDS

We recently honored Ian Charles Cook and Don Stikvoort in the second edition of the Incident Response Hall of Fame awards. Ian and Don were chosen based on their enormous impact on the development and growth of global Incident Response, their continued impact on the advancement and evolution of the Internet as well as contributing to the Internet's reach across the globe.

"I am delighted to accept this award. Being recognized by such a great organization and by my peers is a tremendous honor. My first FIRST conference was Bristol 1997, which was hosted by JANET-CERT. I was made to feel welcome from the start. I am pleased to see that Don Stikvoort has also been recognized by FIRST and that we both join Klaus-Peter Kossakowski, who received the award in 2019."

Ian Cook

Ian Cook is a cybersecurity veteran with 43 years' cybersecurity experience, including six years on the FIRST Board. He has held senior technical and management positions at the UK NHS, Tricentrol Oil Corporation, Saudi American Bank, Citigroup, Merrill Lynch, Pentest Ltd, Barclays Bank, and Team Cymru.

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Ian has been an active member of FIRST since 1997 and has sponsored many companies to join too. As well as co-chairing the 19th Annual FIRST Conference and leading many other initiatives, Ian was one of the key drivers. He transformed FIRST into a professional and influential global organization. More recently, Ian was instrumental in forming the FIRST **Cyber Threat Intelligence SIG** and facilitated the 2019 FIRST CTI Symposium in London.

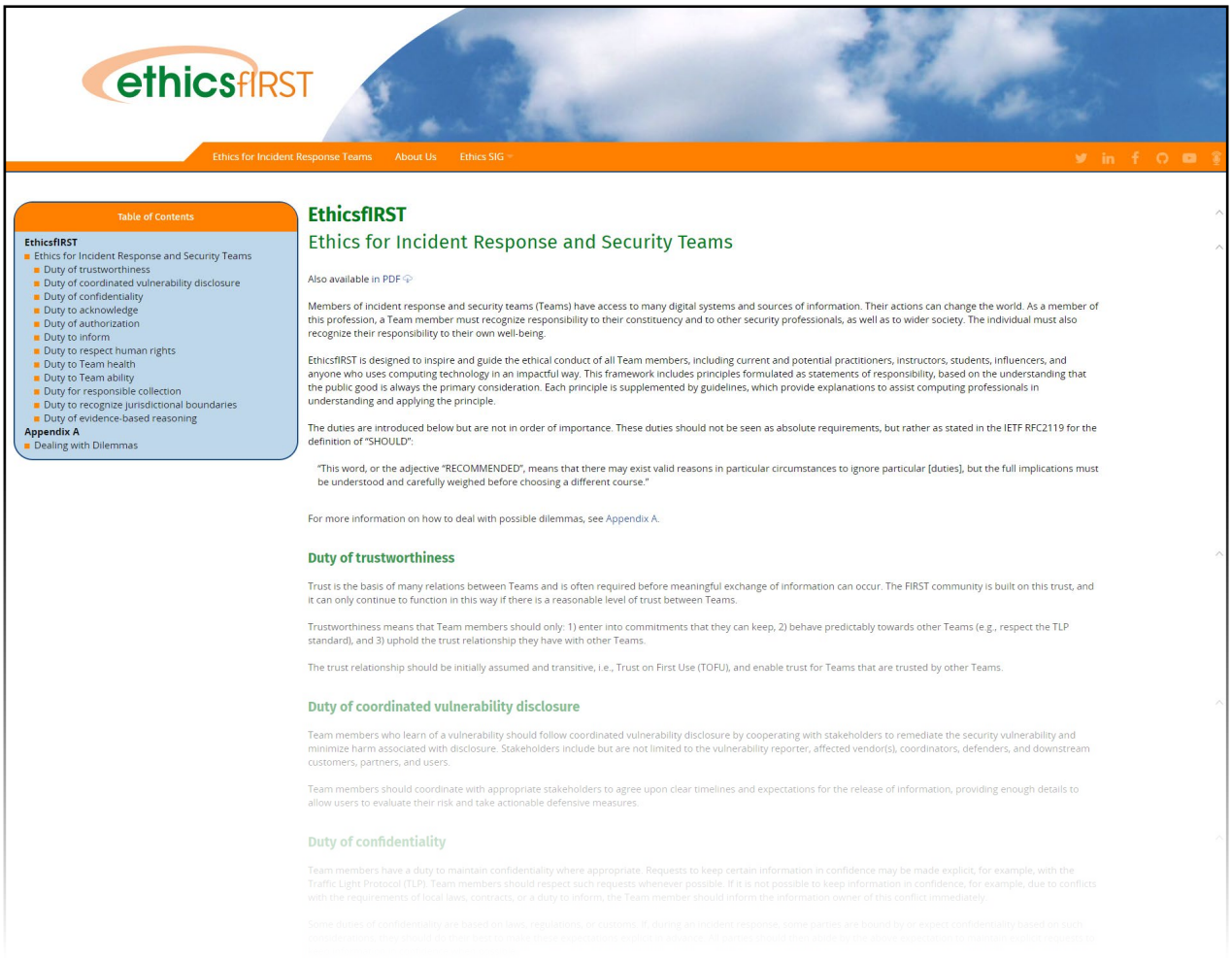
In 1988 Don joined the Dutch national research network SURFnet. Don was among the pioneers who created the European Internet starting in 1989. He recognized "security" as a concern in 1991, chaired SURFcert between 1992-8, and was the founding father of NCSC-NL, the Dutch national team. Don became a member of FIRST in 1992 and has been incredibly active during his membership from chairing the FIRST conference in Australia, co-chair of the Traffic Light Protocol working group, and participating in CSIRT, Metrics, and Ethics working groups. In 1998 he co-wrote the 'Handbook for Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs)'. Don continues to support the global cybersecurity community through S-CURE, the company he founded in 1998.

"This award is more than anything else, a wonderful inspiration to continue on my path. In my eyes, we have built an Internet, for me personally since 1989, that is one of the major game-changers in history. That work is by far not done yet: together, we need to continue to make this amazing "tool" safe and free to use for all of mankind. FIRST is a unique meeting place to help shape this future."

Don Stikvoort

"The Incident Response Hall of Fame recognizes the significant contributions and positive impact that both individuals have brought to the Incident Response and cybersecurity community," stated Serge Droz, Chair of FIRST. "Both Ian and Don are well-deserved honorees and role models who inspire both our members and non-members."

Past inductees nominated Ian and Don, including members of the FIRST Board of Directors, representatives, secondary representatives of a team that is a member of FIRST, and FIRST Liaison members. All nominations were reviewed and screened to ensure that they met the nomination criteria and eligibility. The awards have now taken place for two years.



NEW CODE OF ETHICS LAUNCHED ON GLOBAL ETHICS DAY

Following a global consultation, we launched our new ethics guidelines website for incident response and security teams on Global Ethics Day (October 21). **ethicsfIRST** reinforces the duties of trustworthiness, coordinated vulnerability disclosure, authorization, team health, and recognition of jurisdictional boundaries, among others. It empowers security teams to handle difficult ethical situations confidently and methodically.

Developed by FIRST's Ethics special interest group, the framework covers a list of principles, explaining how to apply each one, detailing cybersecurity professionals' responsibility during an incident to ensure that the public's interest is always the primary consideration. Senior practitioners thoroughly reviewed each principle based on real-life scenarios.

"Integrity and professionalism are paramount in our industry. The new ethicsfIRST principles were developed and examined by some of the world's most senior cyber-security experts. They provide a universal language on how to deal with incidents and make the internet safe for everyone," stated Jeroen van der Ham and Shawn Richardson, Ethics SIG co-Chairs of FIRST.

The announcement received much interest from global security media.

ethicsfIRST

FIRST PARTNERS WITH ITU AND EQUALS GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN CYBERSECURITY

Women currently make up around 24% of the cybersecurity workforce worldwide. Many of these women earn less than men, and there is still a significant lack of women in managerial positions in cybersecurity. With this in mind, the ITU, Equals Global Partnership, and FIRST have developed a Mentorship Programme to empower women in cybersecurity.

Activities are in development, but the Programme will likely consist of a range of knowledge sharing sessions, training, and mentoring workshops led by women leaders in the cybersecurity industry. There will also be opportunities for mentors and mentees to meet up and learn from each other.

The Programme will target women in the cybersecurity field at junior levels and women in ICT/STEM wishing to enter the cybersecurity workforce in the Arab and African regions. The Mentorship Programme will launch in Q1 of 2021, and we'll share more information in our next newsletter.

FIRST TO CONTRIBUTE TO ITU NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY STRATEGY GUIDE

Part of our mission is to make sure policy-makers and governments understand what we do. Therefore, we are very grateful to be invited to review and co-create a second edition of the Guide to Developing a National Cybersecurity Strategy facilitated and coordinated by the ITU. More than 18 partners from across the world, including FIRST, UN agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and academia, will participate in the review.

The purpose of the Guide, according to ITU, is to assist national leaders and policy-makers to "encourage the pursuit of secure, resilient, ICT-enhanced, and connected societies". The second edition of the Guide will cover legal aspects, law enforcement, incident response teams, critical infrastructure, capacity development & training, cyber norms, and diplomacy.

The revised Guide is due to be published in August 2021.

FIRST's engagement is led by Koichiro Komiyama and Yukako Uchida from JPCERT/CC - if you'd like more information, please get in touch with them directly or first-sec@first.org.

MOU SIGNED BETWEEN FIRST AND OCF TO ADVANCE MEMBERSHIP OF INCIDENT RESPONDERS AND SECURITY TEAMS ACROSS THE GLOBE

FIRST has signed an MOU with the Open CSIRT Foundation (**OCF**) to further the maturity of cybersecurity incident response teams worldwide.

The partnership will allow FIRST to make it easier for newly formed teams to assess their maturity, improve faster, and subsequently join our organization. Existing members will also be able to use the methodology to evaluate their maturity and receive feedback on what they need to do to improve their capabilities and practices.

OCF has been developing this verified maturity assessment model, called SIM3, since 2016 with input from global experts, including the FIRST community. Going forward, OCF and FIRST will improve the model to ensure that it remains a reliable measurement instrument for CSIRTs that addresses the increasing demands of a developing internet.

"The signing of an MoU between OCF and FIRST makes it clear that both organization's boards intend to cooperate to gain results that are beneficial for the Internet and its users, and for the membership of FIRST," Don Stikvoort, Chair of OCF, said.

We will let you know once the new assessment tool goes live.

REMINDER - 2021 FIRST MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The FIRST annual dues renewal for 2021 is underway. All teams should have received their yearly invoice in late November. The payment deadline is February 2021. Please note that members who do not renew by the deadline will lose access to some areas of the FIRST Portal in due course.

You can find a copy of your invoice in the FIRST Portal under 'Billing and Payment'. The Portal includes additional functionality this year, enabling teams to update their data, request dues quote for a purchase order and payment options details.

Please contact the FIRST Secretariat at **first-sec@first.org** if you have any questions.