

OPENING REMARKS AT CISS-OL 2020

COMD CDG – COL Edward Chen

27 JUL 2020 AT 0830HRS

1. Thank you Professor Aditya.
 2. Good morning, and welcome to all our participants.
 3. I am Colonel Edward Chen – the Commander of the Singapore Armed Forces Cyber Defence Group. On behalf of MINDEF/SAF, I would like to thank SUTD iTrust for the opportunity to co-organise the 4th CISS, and for CDG to participate in this unique event.
 4. Operational Technology, or OT in short, forms the backbone of our daily lives, particularly in providing essential services such as water and power. Recent events keenly remind us that the cyber threats to OT critical infrastructure are real.
 - In 2015 and 2016, the cyber-attacks on Ukraine disabled its power grid and plunged more than two hundred thousand residents into complete blackout, some for weeks in the middle of winter.
 - Since then, the OT threats have continued to intensify in frequency, complexity and scope across the world.
 - For example, in this year, it was reported that there were already three cyber-attacks on water treatment and distribution facilities in Israel to date.
 - Just last Friday, the US NSA and CISA published an urgent advisory to recommend immediate actions for government agencies to secure their OT systems. This follows their announcement of a CVSS 10.0 vulnerability of a popular brand of ICS components.
- As a big clue to our exercise participants: This vendor's brand of PLCs are also deployed here in the SWAT facility.
5. These are but just a few examples that underscore the need to focus and invest in OT cybersecurity.
 6. Therefore, MINDEF/SAF recognises the importance of developing deep OT cyber defence expertise, and understanding new vulnerabilities as potential attack vectors continue to evolve. Therefore, CISS is a valuable platform for both cyber defenders and researchers to collectively hone our skills, and share our experience in protecting our OT systems.
 7. On this note, I am pleased to highlight that this year is the largest scale in the history of CISS – involving over twenty invitation-only teams from across North America, Europe and Asia. I am also confident that under the able leadership of iTrust Centre Director Professor Aditya and his deputy Mr Ivan Lee, CISS will continue to grow from strength to strength to be the flagship cybersecurity event for OT Critical Infrastructure.
 8. With that, I wish everyone an exciting and fulfilling competition ahead. Thank you.