



**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, August 25, 2021

**Government committed to strengthen cybersecurity awareness, says  
Minister Chang**

Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang has reiterated the Government's commitment to strengthening cybersecurity training and education in Jamaica.

Minister Chang made the remarks during his address at the two-day virtual Inaugural Caribbean Cybersecurity Skills Symposium earlier today (August 25, 2021) and added that cybercrime is a clear and present danger to Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

The Caribbean Cybersecurity Skills Symposium aims to update regional partners on measures to limit the reach and impact of cybercrime activities.

Citing a Bank of Jamaica 2018 Financial Stability Report, Minister Chang indicated that for the period January to September 2018, Jamaican banks experienced 62 counts of internet banking fraud amounting to J\$38.2 million in losses. He noted that this is consistent with the 2019 Annual Cybercrime Report by Cybersecurity Ventures, which estimates that cybercrime will cost the world over \$6 trillion annually by 2021.

**“Ransomware cyberattacks have disrupted businesses in the United States and other parts of the industrialized world since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and represent one of the many urgent challenges that both international and domestic businesses will now have to increase focus on. The protocols designed to protect us through this public health crisis have contributed to a level of cyber-migration never before witnessed in history. The outbreak of COVID-19 has pushed global citizens to use the internet to carry out most of their day-to-day obligations, including work, purchase of groceries and to connect with loved ones,”** Minister Chang said while adding that the migration has not been lost on criminals, who have also migrated illicit operations to cyberspace.

He highlighted that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the consequent increased reliance on Information Communication Technology (ICT) and accompanying cyber-threats, one could presume that estimated banking fraud losses will be surpassed by the end of this year.

Minister Chang added that Jamaica's pursuit of a *‘technology-enabled society’* is a priority outcome of the national development plan, noting that it is, for this reason, that effective mitigation of all emerging cyber threats is considered with urgency.

**“This will enable us to better inform the knowledge, skills and abilities required to deliver and sustain our strategic responses to combat malicious cyber activities. Broad stakeholder engagement and involvement, such as what will be facilitated over these two**

**days, will ensure that the regional need for cybersecurity talent is identified and met,”**  
said Dr. Chang.

**-30-**